

Woodhall Book 2

Asymmetry

20 Scottish Country Dances
Devised by Murrough Landon



Cover photograph: Bridge over Kenick Burn (Laurieston)

Woodhall Book 2: Asymmetry

This volume is a companion to Woodhall Book 1. It contains dances which are not entirely symmetric but many of them still have symmetric elements or repeated patterns. My more symmetric dances are collected in the first volume. Few of these dances are easy. They are more suitable for reasonably experienced dancers but even for them some dances will take a bit of learning and practice.

This book is dedicated to all those who have help test the dances – mainly experts from the Gay Gordons, other groups in London and the Geneva and Lausanne Scottish Dance Clubs.

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The dances are in alphabetic order except for the last one.



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PDF available at <https://my.strathspey.org/u/murrough/book/WoodhallBook2.pdf>

Alan's Romp

A 32 bar jig for three couples in a four couple longwise set.

This dance is for Alan Ip who liked it on its first test.

Bars Description

- 1-4 1st couple turn by the right hand and cast off one place to face their 1st corners as 2nd couple step up.
- 5-8 1st couple turn their 1st corners by the right hand and pass their partner right shoulder to end on the centre line with 1st man above 1st woman.
- 9-12 1st man with 2nd couple and 1st woman with 3rd couple dance left hands across. 1st couple end facing their 2nd corners.
- 13-16 1st couple dance half a diagonal reel of four with their 2nd corners, starting by passing them left shoulder. 1st couple sweep past each other left shoulder to end in 2nd place own side facing their 2nd corner person again (in 4th corner position).
- 17-20 1st couple turn their 2nd corner person by the left hand and pass their partner left shoulder to end on the centre line with 1st man above 1st woman.
- 21-24 1st man with 2nd and 3rd men at the top and 1st woman with 2nd and 3rd women at the bottom dance right hands across. 1st couple end facing their 3rd corners.
- 25-28 1st couple dance half a diagonal reel of four with their 3rd corners, starting by passing them right shoulder. 1st couple pass each other right shoulder to end in 2nd place on opposite sides.
- 29-32 All three couples chase clockwise half way round the set to end in the order 2,1,3.

Music

- Suggested tune: Out in the Ocean (Traditional).
- Suitable recording: The Topsy Vicar (Marian Anderson and her SDB: The Sunday Class Book 2).

All Shall Be Well

A 32 bar strathspey for three couples in a longwise set.

“All shall be well and all manner of things shall be well” was the motto of Julian of Norwich, a 14th century woman who survived the Black Death and later became an anchoress, walling herself up in the tower of St Julian's church after a series of religious visions. She described her views of a benevolent loving deity to those visiting her cell and also in a book, the earliest surviving work by a woman writing in English. This was suppressed by the church, but copies were preserved by an order of nuns until its popular rediscovery in the 20th century. In these times of mass self-isolation even atheist dance devisers may take comfort from her optimism.

As a woman known by a male name, she is represented here by both members of 1st couple who are isolated in the centre for bars 17-24. The last 8 bars depict the ringing of church bells. Although hands would normally be taken here, this phrase may also be danced hands free. The dancers should align in geometric cross shapes at the end of bars 13, 15 and 19.

Bars Description

- 1-4 1st couple dance towards each other then cast off one place as 2nd couple step up.
- 5-8 1st couple dance half reels of three across the dance, giving left shoulder to their 1st corners.
- 9-12 1st couple then dance half reels of three on the sides, giving right shoulders to their 2nd corner position. 1st couple end in 2nd place opposite sides.
- 13-16 1st couple dance back to back across the set while the corners dance back to back on the sides starting by passing left shoulder.
- 17-20 1st couple petronella to the centre line then, with small steps to the side, set advancing past each other. Meanwhile the corners chase half way round clockwise and end pulling back left shoulder to face anticlockwise.
- 21-24 The corners chase anticlockwise back to opposite sides while 1st couple dance one and quarter times around each other in the centre of the dance, passing by the left shoulder and ending in 2nd place opposite sides.
- 25-28 All advance for one and retire for one. Then, giving both hands, all turn their partner three quarters to end facing up and down on the centre line.
- 29-32 All set to their partner and, giving both hands, turn three quarters to end on own sides in the order 3,1,2.

Music

- Tune: To be decided.
- Suitable recording: 3x32 Strathspeys (Macadians: Dancing Master).

Ashley and Her Husbands

A 32 bar jig for three couples in a four couple longwise set.

For Ashley Weller, with many thanks for organising the Gay Gordons expert evenings.

Ashley's husband Steve does not dance, so Ashley travels to dance events with past and present members of the Gay Gordons who are sometimes assumed to be her partner and whom she collectively refers to as her extra husbands. In this dance 1st woman goes on promenades with other men while her partner is solo for the central 16 bars.

Bars Description

- 1-4 1st couple lead down with right hands joined, cross below 3rd couple and cast back up to 2nd place on opposite sides. 2nd couple step up on bars 3-4.
- 5-8 1st couple cross giving right hands and cast to their right ending with 1st man between 2nd couple and 1st woman between 3rd couple.
- 9-10 1st couple, giving left hands, turn three quarters to face their 1st corners.
- 11-12 1st couple, giving right hands, turn their 1st corners three quarters to end in lines across facing their 4th corners. 1st man ends alone while 1st woman takes promenade hold with 2nd man on her right.
- 13-16 Corners Loop and Turn: this is like Corners Pass and Turn but 1st couple start and end in lines across and the phrasing is different for the corners. 1st couple (plus 2nd man) loop around 4th corners passing left shoulder and return to 1st and 3rd places with 1st woman releasing promenade hold. Meanwhile the corners have 2 bars to loop and dance in, 1 bar to turn left hand and 1 bar to return to places.
- 17-24 Repeat 9-16 with 2nd corners using opposite hands: 1st couple turn each other right hand and their corners left hand. 1st woman takes promenade hold with 3rd man on her left. 1st couple dance Corners Loop and Turn passing their 3rd corners right shoulder with the corners turning right hand. 1st man ends between 2nd couple at the top and 1st woman, releasing promenade hold, ends between 3rd couple.
- 25-28 All chase clockwise half way round the set.
- 29-32 1st couple giving right hands, turn one and a quarter times while the corners continue to chase back to places. End in the order 2,1,3.

Music

- Original tune: Ashley Weller's Jig (Ian Robertson).
- An 8x32 recording of this is available via <https://my.strathspey.org/u/murrough/recording/>
- The video used: Young At Heart (Marian Anderson: Belfast Platinum)

Jig

Ashley Weller's Jig

Original tune for the dance "Ashley and her Husbands"

Ian Robertson

D G A⁷ D Bm Em A⁷
D G A⁷ D A⁷ D
G D/F# A/E D D⁷/F#
G D/F# D A⁷ D

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Ashley with her Steve

and with James

and with Arthur

Creaky Floorboards

A 32 bar strathspey for 3 couples in a 4 couple longwise set.

Dedicated to Fiona Wilkie and Michael Lawson with many thanks for the warm hospitality I have received over several years of visits to the Wilkie-Lawson household. This is a lovely converted barn but has lots of very creaky floorboards.

The dancers, especially 2nd and 3rd couples, will lose sight of their partners in the central "set and slither" figures, but they should keep calm and tell themselves "I'm not going to panic - it's all going to be OK!". The figure is named after the combination of a modified set and link with the snake pass but is also reminiscent of the way the household cats and their tails sinuously wind themselves around a visitor's ankles.

Bars Description

- 1-4 1st and 2nd couples set advancing on the sides passing left shoulders, then 1st couple turn 3rd couple with both hands and end facing 2nd couple on the sides.
- 5-8 All dance half a reel of three on the sides. 1st couple start by giving left shoulder to 2nd couple. 1st woman and 3rd man curve into place to end in the order 3,1,2.
- All dance the "set and slither" figure (bars 9-16) as follows:
- 9-12 All set on the sides. Then the central couple and those with right hands free (1st couple, 2nd man and 3rd woman) cast as in "set and link" while those with left hands free (2nd woman and 3rd man) turn left hand to end in the centre facing the position they just left.
- 13-16 1st man followed by 2nd man and 3rd man also 1st woman followed by 3rd woman and 2nd woman each dance the path of the snake pass figure curving around each other passing left shoulder.
- 1st couple end by crossing over into their 1st corner's place. 2nd man and 3rd woman (who had right hands free) end back in the same places as at bar 9 while 2nd woman and 3rd man (who had left hands free) end in the centre of each line on their own sides.
- 17-24 Repeat bars 9-16 from new places ending with 2nd woman, 1st woman and 2nd man down the men's side and 3rd woman, 1st man and 3rd man down the women's side.
- 25-28 All dance a slightly modified three couple bourrel: 3rd woman and 2nd man chase half way around the set anticlockwise as usual while 2nd woman and 1st man, also 1st woman and 3rd man, set advancing and turn with both hands all the way around so that all end facing their partners up and down the centre line.
- 29-32 All set and turn their partner with both hands to end on the sides in the order 2,1,3. After the second repeat, 1st couple can dance bars 1-2 again to end in 4th place.

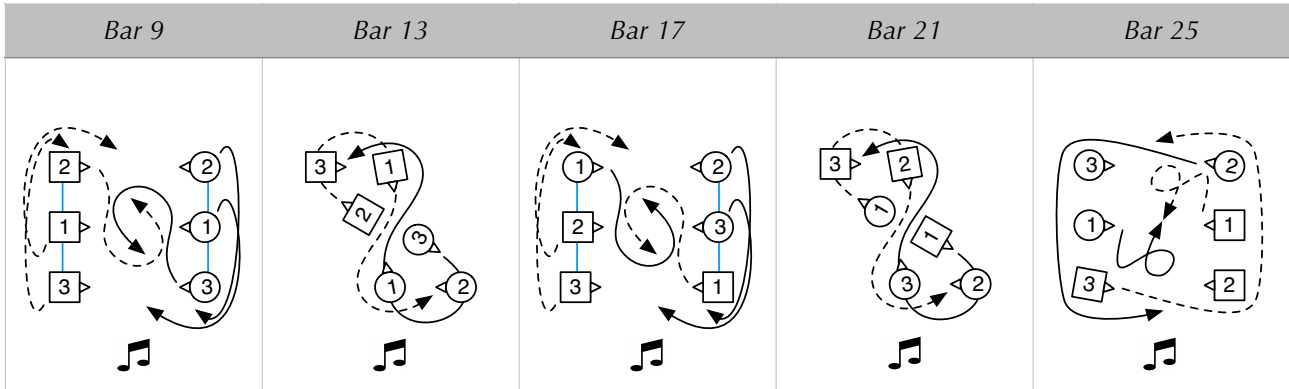
Music

- Suggested tune: Miss Margaret Grant of Catrine (Alan Humberstone).
- Recording: The White Rose of Scotland (David Hall and his SDB: RSCDS London 75th Anniversary).
- Suitable recording for 3C set: The Partnership (Keith Smith and Muriel Johnstone: Vintage Goldring).

Three couple set variation

For a three couple set, replace the turn in bars 3-4 by 1st couple set advancing past 3rd couple, then in bars 5-8 3rd couple start the reel giving right shoulder to 2nd couple to end in the order 1,3,2 (instead of 3,1,2) now with 2nd woman putting on the extra loop. Continue from bar 9 with 3rd couple as the central couple (swapping 1 and 3 in the diagrams below). In this case the final progression is 2,3,1.

Diagrams (music at the bottom)



Michael Lawson and Fiona Wilkie



Vanessa de Schoene

DAVID

(David Admires Very Involved Dances)

A 40 bar reel for five couples in a longwise set. 1st and 3rd couples are the dancing couples.

This dance is for David Lieberman, one of the Gay Gordons enthusiasts for difficult or unusual dances. It was inspired by "Mrs Stuart Linnell" which is one of his favourites.

Bars Description

- 1-4 1st and 3rd couples set and cast off one place as 2nd and 4th couples step up.
- 5-8 1st and 3rd couples, giving left hands, turn to face their 1st corner positions while 2nd, 4th and 5th couples set, pulling right shoulder back on the second setting step, and dance on to the next corner position clockwise.
- 9-16 1st and 3rd couples dance the "Linnell" figure on the 1st corner diagonals:
- 1-4: Half a diagonal reel of four, passing 1st corners right shoulder to start and ending facing each other after passing left shoulder on bar 4 (optionally giving left hands).
- 5-6: Turn three quarters left hand to face 2nd corners.
- 7-8: Half turn 2nd corners right hand and face them.
The dancing couples end in their 2nd corner positions (on their left when they start the half reel). 2nd man, 4th couple and 5th woman are now in the centre facing the 2nd corner positions.
- 17-24 2nd man and 4th woman, also 4th man and 5th woman, repeat bars 9-16 on the 2nd corner diagonals ending with 2nd and 3rd women and 5th and 1st men in the centre.
- 25-28 4th, 3rd and 2nd women with 2nd man, also 5th woman with 5th, 1st and 4th men, dance half a right shoulder reel of four on the 1st corner diagonals. 3rd and 2nd women and 5th and 1st men end on the centre line.
- 29-32 All dance right hands across: 4th, 1st and 3rd women at the top, 5th and 2nd couples in the centre and 1st, 3rd and 4th men at the bottom.
- 33-36 The centre two couples each chase clockwise to the ends: 5th woman leading 5th man to 1st place and 2nd man leading 2nd woman to 5th place. Meanwhile the top and bottom three dancers chase clockwise, with 1st woman and 3rd man leading, to take hands in a circle with 3rd and 4th men in 2nd place, 1st man and 3rd woman in 3rd place and 1st and 4th women in 4th place.
- 37-40 3rd, 4th and 1st couples circle six hands three quarters round to the left only while 5th and 2nd couples turn right hand or birl at the ends. The final order is 5,3,4,1,2.

Variation of 33-40 for 5th and 2nd couples: chase for 3 bars then birl for 5 bars.

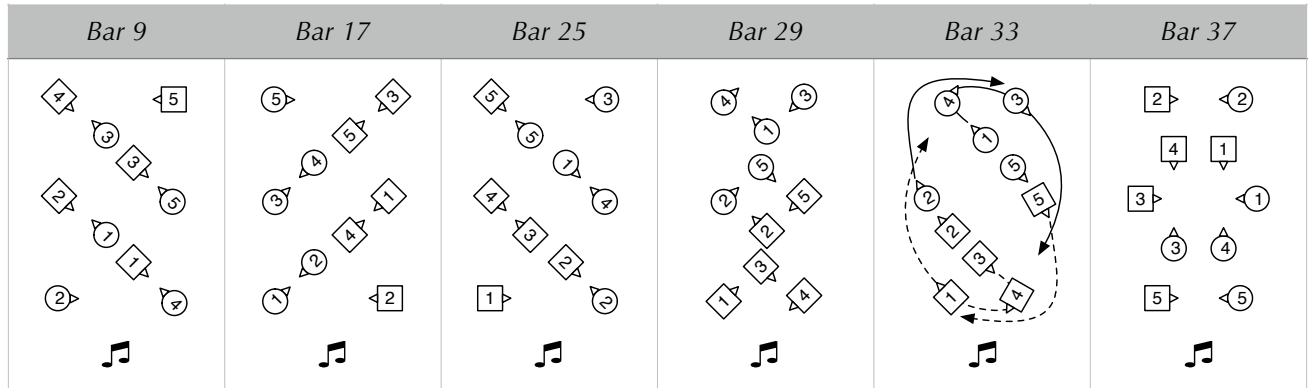
Music

- Suggested tune: The Mathematicians' Canon (James Gray).
- Suitable recording: The Mathematicians (J Gray and S Petrov: Opus Dance - Tweeddale).

Notes

- Three couple and seven couple variations (affecting the last 8 bars) are also possible. These are known as DAVID Minor and DAVID Major respectively. At the time of writing the latter has not been tested.

Diagrams (music at the bottom)



David Lieberman



Hester Wallington

Enigma

A 32 bar strathspey for three couples in a longwise set to commemorate the work of Hugh Foss, along with Alan Turing and others, at Bletchley Park during the 2nd World War. Devised in response to a suggestion from Judith Hanson in discussions during the interval at the 2019 Richmond Spring Dance.

The Enigma Machine had three coding wheels to scramble messages to a ciphered form or to decipher encoded messages. These are represented here by hands across, circles and turning with both hands.

Cryptographic literature often uses a few stock characters to illustrate problems. Alice and Bob are the main actors who hope to exchange secret messages without them being intercepted or decrypted by Eve, the eavesdropper. Here 1st woman and 2nd man are Alice and Bob while 3rd woman is Eve. Bars 1-8 and 9-16 represent encryption and decryption with Alice and Bob exchanging places as Eve tries to get close to Bob. The final progression is suitably scrambled with all changing partners. Alice and Bob end up together for the repeat.

Bars Description

- 1-4 1st woman and 2nd man change places giving right hands while 3rd woman casts up as 2nd woman steps down. Then 2nd man and 3rd woman pass each other right shoulder on the sides as 1st woman and 3rd man pass left shoulder.
- 5-8 3rd man, 2nd man, 1st woman and 2nd woman (in the bottom two places) dance left hands across one and a quarter times ending on the sides. 1st woman and 3rd woman are in exchanged places, all others are back in original places.
- 9-12 1st woman and 2nd man change places giving left hands while 3rd woman casts off as 2nd woman steps up. Then 1st couple pass each other right shoulder on the sides as 3rd woman and 2nd man pass left shoulder.
- 13-16 1st and 2nd couples circle four hands round one and a quarter round to the left so that all are now back in original places.
- 17-20 All dance a modified set and link for three couples. All set on the sides, those with left hand free coming into the centre. Then 2nd couple and those with right hand free (1st woman and 3rd man) cast clockwise to the ends as usual. Meanwhile 1st man and 3rd woman turn with the left hand to end in the centre facing up or down to the ends.
For teaching purposes it may be fun to refer to this figure as Set and Cryptolink.
- 21-24 The three men at the top and three women at the bottom dance right hands across. 1st man and 3rd woman end on the diagonal facing their 2nd corner positions which are occupied by 2nd man and 2nd woman respectively. 3rd man and 1st woman end in 1st and 3rd places on their own sides.
- 25-28 2nd man, 1st man, 3rd woman and 2nd woman dance half a right shoulder diagonal reel of four. 1st man and 3rd woman end passing right shoulders to own sides. The men are now in the order 3,1,2 and the women in the order 2,3,1.
- 29-32 All turn their new partners once round with both hands.

Music

- Suggested tune: Cate Gray (James Gray).
- Suitable recording: Cate's Conundrum (J Gray and S Petrov: Opus Dance - Tweeddale).

Evening Primrose

A 32 bar jig for four couples in a longwise set.

This dance is for Hester Wallington, a very faithful participant of the Gay Gordons residential dance weeks. Hester lives on a narrow boat called Evening Primrose which is also home to a large number of guinea pigs who run all around it.

Bars Description

- 1-8 All dance mirror reels of four on the sides, 1st and 3rd couples start dancing down and in while 2nd and 4th couples start up and out.
- 9-12 1st with 2nd couples, also 3rd with 4th couples, dance half double figures of eight.
- 13-16 1st and 3rd couples each take promenade hold and dance half reels of three across with 2nd and 4th couples respectively, starting by giving left shoulder to 2nd and 4th men (who are currently on the women's side).
- 17-20 1st and 3rd couples dance right hands across with 2nd and 4th men who end in 1st and 3rd places.
- 21-24 1st and 3rd couples dance left hands across with 2nd and 4th women who end in 1st and 3rd places while 1st and 3rd couples end in the centre facing up with left hands joined.
- 25-28 1st and 3rd couples lead up to the top with the left hand, cross and cast down to 4th and 2nd places on opposite sides.
- 29-32 1st and 3rd couples, giving right hands, turn one and a half times to end facing out on their own sides ready to start again. The progressed order is 2,3,4,1.

Music

- Suggested tune: Jean Ireland (Jimmy Shand, Senior).
- Suitable recording: The Craven Jig (Marian Anderson and her SDB: Dancers Choice 1).

La Fidèle de Lausanne

A 32 bar strathspey for three couples in a triangular set.

Dedicated to Vanessa de Schoene who has been faithfully caring for the Scottish Country Dance group in Lausanne almost since time immemorial.

Bars Description

- 1-2 1st couple turn once round with both hands, opening out to face down with nearer hands joined.
- 3-6 1st couple dance down, out between the side couples, cast back up on their own sides and end facing each other in their original places.
- 7-8 1st couple again turn once round with both hands opening out to face in.
- 9-12 All dance set and link for two couples and end facing their partner around the set with the men facing clockwise and the women anticlockwise.
- 13-16 All dance half an interlocking reel of four starting by giving right shoulder to their partner and on the last bar half turn their partner with the left hand to end facing them around the set. The women are now facing clockwise, the men anticlockwise.
- 17-24 All dance a Bourrel-like sequence around the set:
- Set advancing, passing their partner left shoulder to face the next person.
 - Half turn that person with both hands and twirl away to face the next person.
 - Set advancing, passing that person left shoulder to face their partner.
 - Turn their partner once round with the right hand (or both hands if preferred) to end in their original places with the men facing in and the women facing out.
- 25-32 All dance a triangular Schiehallion reel progressing two places round the set to end in the order 3,1,2.

Music

- Original tune: Vanessa's Pleasure (Marian Anderson)
- A 3x32 recording of this is available via <https://my.strathspey.org/u/murrough/recording/>
- The video used The Quaker's Daughter (Ian Robertson and Muriel Johnstone: A Reel for Alice).

Notes

- If the figure of bars 17-24 needs a name (which it probably does not) maybe Périphérel would do. With one syllable per two bars, pass on “pé” and “phé” and rotate (turn) on “riph” and “rel”.

Vanessa's Pleasure

Original tune for La Fidele de Lausanne
3 x 32 Strathspey

Marian Anderson - February 2019

Am Dm F G7 C Dm Dm G

Am Dm B/G C F G Am

Dm G7 Em F Em Am F G

Am Dm Em F Am B/G Am

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A Hollywood Production

A 32 bar strathspey for three couples in a longwise set. The dance starts with 2nd and 3rd couples setting the scene. 1st couple only make their entrance on bar 5. 1st couple's path in bars 9-16 is very like the "pass half round" figure. The "push-me pull-you" reels in bars 17-24 were devised by Terry Glasspool in Back To Back (An Itch to Dance).

The dance is for Patrick Brunskill who is responsible for filming, editing and occasionally appearing in the excellent series of Belfast Branch videos (many thanks also to the other members of their demonstration team). Patrick lives in the Hollywood district of Belfast which is pronounced exactly like the more famous film district of Los Angeles.

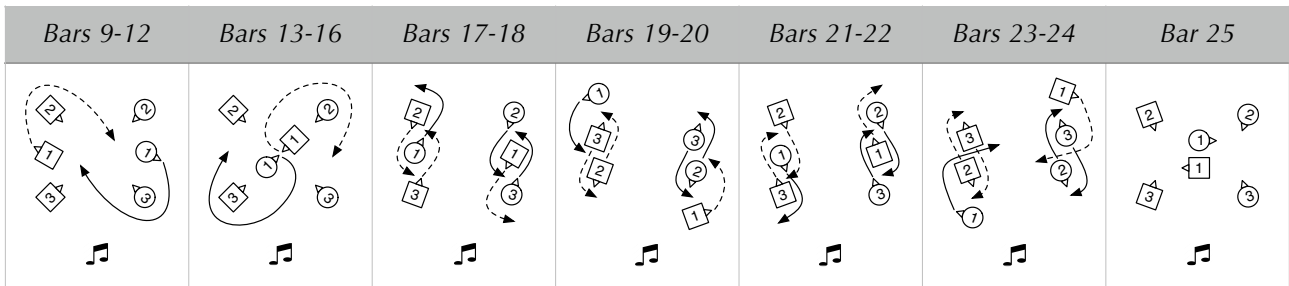
Bars Description

- 1-4 2nd and 3rd couples dance mirror set and link: 2nd couple dance down the centre, touching nearer hands, as 3rd couple cast up. 1st couple stand.
- 5-8 1st and 3rd couples dance mirror set and link: 1st couple dance down, touching nearer hands, to end facing out in 2nd place as 3rd couple cast up. The order is now 3,1,2.
- 9-12 1st couple cast to their right around 3rd corners and come in to face each other on the 2nd corner diagonal, briefly taking both hands.
Meanwhile 3rd and 2nd couples advance diagonally, briefly taking hands in a circle (1st corners offering their hands palm up) and retire to place.
- 13-16 1st couple pull right shoulder back and cast to their right around 2nd corners to end in 2nd place facing in.
Meanwhile 3rd and 2nd couples again advance and retire as in bars 9-12.
- 17-24 All dance "push-me pull-you" reels on the sides. 1st couple follow the track of a left shoulder reel of three while 3rd and 2nd couples dance back to back twice, first passing left shoulder on bar 17, then right shoulder on bar 21. 1st couple end on the centre line, right shoulder to each other, 1st man below 1st woman.
- 25-28 1st woman with 3rd couple at the top and 1st man with 2nd couple at the bottom dance left hands across. At the end 1st couple pass left shoulder to face each other up and down on the centre line, 1st man above 1st woman.
- 29-32 1st couple set to each other then turn three quarters with both hands to end on the sidelines in the order 3,1,2.

Music

- Suggested tune: J Scott Skinner (J Murdoch Henderson).
- Suitable recording: The Sands of Forvie (Keith Smith and Muriel Johnstone: Vintage Goldring).

Diagrams (music at the bottom)



Alan Ip



Patrick Brunskill

An Incursion of Weasels

A 32 bar jig for three couples in a four couple longwise set.

Bars Description

- 1-2 1st couple cast off one place as 2nd couple step up immediately.
- 3-4 1st couple, giving right hands, turn once round to end on the centre line, 1st man below 1st woman, facing own sides.
- 5-8 1st couple dance half a figure of eight, passing left shoulder around their 4th corner, to end on the diagonal facing their 1st corner.
- 9-16 1st couple dance a diagonal Weasel reel, starting by passing their 1st corner right shoulder. 1st couple end on the centre line, 1st man below 1st woman.
- 17-24 2nd couple with 1st woman and 1st man with 3rd couple dance right hands across. 1st couple pass right shoulder to change ends and dance left hands across. 1st couple end facing their 2nd corner on the diagonal.
- 25-32 1st couple dance a diagonal Weasel reel, starting by passing their 2nd corner left shoulder. 1st couple do not pass right shoulder on the last bar but curve left to face out in 2nd place own sides ready to repeat the dance. The final order is 2,1,3.
After their second turn 1st couple cast off to 4th place as 4th couple step up on bars 1-2 of the next repeat.

Music

- Suggested tune: Haddington Assembly (William Fraser).
- Suitable recording: Haddington Assembly (Marian Anderson and her SDB: Dancer's Choice 1).

The Large Hadron Collider

A 32 bar reel for four couples in a square set.

The four couples can be taken to represent the four experiments round the LHC ring. The figures (very) vaguely reflect the operation of the LHC starting with injection of “probe” beams (1st couple solo), full circulating “physics” beams round the two rings (interlocking reels), acceleration (right or left hands across and chase) and stable collisions (Schiehallion reel) - though of course the dancers should not actually collide! The quick turns at the end of bars 12 and 20 are quite contrary to the way the proton beams behave but allow the dancers to change direction from time to time. The Schiehallion reel is only three quarters to suggest that quite often the LHC fills are interrupted earlier than expected due to one of the many safety systems cutting in.

Bars Description

- 1-8 1st couple cross right hand, dance half way around the outside of the set, cross left hand below 3rd couple and continue dancing around the outside of the set back to place.
- 9-12 All dance the first three bars of half an interlocking reel of four, starting by giving right shoulder to their partner. On bar 12, instead of turning back, all quickly half turn the next dancer by the left hand to put the men in the centre: 1st man half turns 2nd woman at the corner between 3rd and 4th places, etc, so that all are now on the diagonals.
- 13-16 The women chase round anticlockwise just under half way back to their original places. Meanwhile the men dance a complete right hands across, ending by dropping hands and dancing out of the corners, passing left shoulder (no hands) with the opposite woman: 1st man passes 3rd woman left shoulder, etc.
- 17-20 The women dance a complete left hands across while the men chase round clockwise just under half way back to their original places ending with a quick quarter right hand turn with their partner to leave the men facing in and the women facing out.
- 21-32 All dance three quarters of a full Schiehallion reel ending in the order 4,1,2,3.

Music

- Suggested tune: Haulin' the Ropes (John Renton).
- Suitable recording: Perth Meets Perth (Marian Anderson: The Other Kangaroo Paw).

Variation

For those capable of dancing at nearly the speed light a more challenging version of bars 1-8 could be: 1st couple cross right hand, cast around the corners, dance in between the side couples and out between the next corners, cross left hand below 3rd couple, dance in between the next corners, out between the side couples and back to place.

Otters in Kenick Burn

A 32 bar jig for three couples in a four couple set.

This dance was inspired on 14 May 2015 by seeing a pair of otters darting around in the pools and cascades of Kenick Burn, in the grounds of Laurieston Hall, with first one, then the other catching and eating a fish before swimming off downstream.

Bars Description

- 1-8 1st woman dances down and out between 2nd and 3rd women, crosses below 3rd couple and casts up around 3rd man to end facing 3rd woman while 1st man dances straight across, casts around 2nd woman, crosses down below 3rd couple and chases 1st woman up around 3rd man to end in tandem behind her facing 3rd woman. The 2nd couple step up on bars 7-8.
- 9-12 1st couple, with 1st woman leading, dance half an alternating tandem diagonal reel of three with 3rd woman and 2nd man, starting right shoulder to 3rd woman. 1st man takes the lead and lengthens steps to catch 3rd woman by the right hand in 1st man's place while 1st woman ends facing 2nd woman on the side.
- 13-16 1st man sets to 3rd woman with right hands joined, then turns her once round and ends facing 3rd man while 1st woman dances half a reel of three on the side with 2nd couple, starting left shoulder to 2nd woman, to end in tandem behind 1st man.
- 17-20 1st couple, with 1st man leading, dance half an alternating tandem right shoulder diagonal reel of three with 3rd man and 2nd man. 1st woman takes the lead and lengthens steps to catch 3rd man by the right hand in 1st woman's place while 1st man ends in the centre in 3rd place facing 2nd woman.
- 21-24 1st woman sets to 3rd man with right hands joined, then turns him while 1st man dances half a reel of three across with 2nd couple in 3rd place starting left shoulder to 2nd woman. 1st couple end in tandem, with 1st woman leading, in 2nd place on the women's side.
- 25-28 1st couple dance across in tandem and cast around 3rd man's place to end side by side in the centre in 3rd place facing up. Meanwhile 2nd and 3rd couples set to their partners and cross over (no hands) to end facing up and down on the sidelines. Ideally the women start by casting away from each other and cross outside their partners whereas the men cross and then cast away from each other into places. This is supposed to represent counter rotating vortices in the water.
- 29-32 1st couple dance up to the top, side by side, but without joining hands, and cast off to 2nd place on their own sides while 2nd and 3rd couples set and change places on the sidelines (no hands) with 3rd couple casting away from each other first and passing outside 2nd couple who end by casting into place. The final order is 2,1,3.

Music

- Suggested tune: The Famous Baravan (Gordon Duncan).
- Recording: Set of Jigs (Marian Anderson and her Band: Diamond Jubilee Dances - Belfast Branch).

Notes

Alternating tandem reels were first invented for falcons and later reused for dolphins but they do very nicely for otters as well. Here 1st couple are the otters. The supporting couples are rocks in the pools for bars 1-8, then fish being chased in bars 9-24 (lucky 2nd couple escape but the hapless 3rd couple get caught, metaphorically eaten and their remains neatly discarded in the corner - sorry!) and finally in bars 25-32 they are flotsam eddying with little vortices in the wake of the departing otters.

This dance was first envisaged as a reel but I was later encouraged to change it to a jig.



*Avril and David Quarrie
doing a demonstration in the Globe at CERN in Geneva*



*Gordon and Liz Matthew
having a party at the French house*

A Party at the French House

A 40 bar reel for three couples in a four couple longwise set.

For Liz and Gordon Matthew who live in Geneva but also have a lovely house in France to which the Geneva Scottish Country Dancing Club get invited for summer parties.

1st couple are the hosts, 2nd and 3rd couples are the guests. 2nd couple arrive a bit too early and get parked in top place as 1st couple survey their preparations. The hosts then encourage their guests to mingle on the sides as they dart across and back. 1st couple can then spend some quality time with each guest, working round from 4th to 1st corners. By this time the party has developed a rowdier life of its own and the dance ends with a circle.

Bars Description

- 1-4 1st and 2nd couples dance mirror set and link: 1st couple cast off as 2nd couple dance up to 1st place touching nearer hands.
- 5-8 1st couple turn once round with the left hand to end in 2nd place own sides facing their 4th corner.
- 9-16 1st couple, giving left shoulder to their 4th corner, dance the track of reels of three across the set while 2nd and 3rd couples dance the track of left shoulder reels of three on the sides. 1st couple end in the centre facing their 4th corners again.
- 17-20 1st couple turn their 4th corners with the left hand and end back in the centre, right shoulder to each other, facing their 3rd corners.
- 21-24 1st couple turn their 3rd corners with the right hand and end back in the centre, right shoulder to each other, facing their 2nd corners.
- 25-32 1st couple repeat bars 17-24 with their 2nd and 1st corners but end in 2nd place own sides.
- 33-40 All circle six hands round and back ending in the order 2,1,3. After their second repeat 1st couple dance bars 1-4 again with 4th couple to end in 4th place.

Music

- Suggested tune: The Bleu Ribbon.
- Suitable recording: The Bleu Ribbon (Jim Lindsay and his Band: RSCDS Book 8).

Notes

- The figure in bars 9-16 comes from The Hyperactive Reel by Jill Garrett and Ralph Stoddard.

Pentamime

A 32 bar jig for five couples inspired by Best Set in the Hall. It features the “pantomime” (“behind you!”) figure from that dance but in a five couple set hence the name “Pentamime”. The 1st and 3rd couples are the active couples.

Bars Description

- 1-4 1st and 3rd couples set and cast off one place as 2nd and 4th couples step up. 1st and 3rd couples end in the centre, right shoulder to their partner, facing their 2nd corners.
- 5-8 1st and 3rd couples each dance half a right shoulder diagonal reel of four with their 2nd corners ending by passing their partners left shoulder to be back to back facing their 3rd corner positions.
- 9-16 1st and 3rd couples dance the “Set to corners and cast away” figure on the 3rd corner diagonal to end facing their 4th corner positions:
- 1st and 3rd couples set and cast away, pulling right shoulder back, to the corner position behind them while the corners set and, starting to their left, curve in right to face the positions they just left.
 - The 3rd corners (now in the centre) set and cast away to the corner position behind them while 1st and 3rd couples set and curve in to twirl away from each other and face their 4th corner positions.
- 17-24 1st and 3rd couples repeat bars 9-16 on the 4th corner diagonal. 1st and 3rd couples end sweeping past each other right shoulder to end on their own side, all the men facing up, all the women facing down in the order 5,1,4,3,2.
- 25-30 All chase clockwise half way round to the opposite side in the order 2,3,4,1,5.
- 31-32 2nd, 3rd and 4th couples, in the top three places, cross giving right hands while 1st and 5th couples, in the bottom two places, dance half right hands across to end in the order 2,3,4,5,1.

Music

- Suggested tune: Miss Barbara Hay's Favourite (Robert Mackintosh) as for Best Set in the Hall.
- In the absence of a 5x32 recording with that tune, a suitable alternative is Airie Bennan (Colin Dewar and his SDB: Special Requests Vol 5).

Quarries' Procession

A 40 bar reel for four couples in a longwise set.

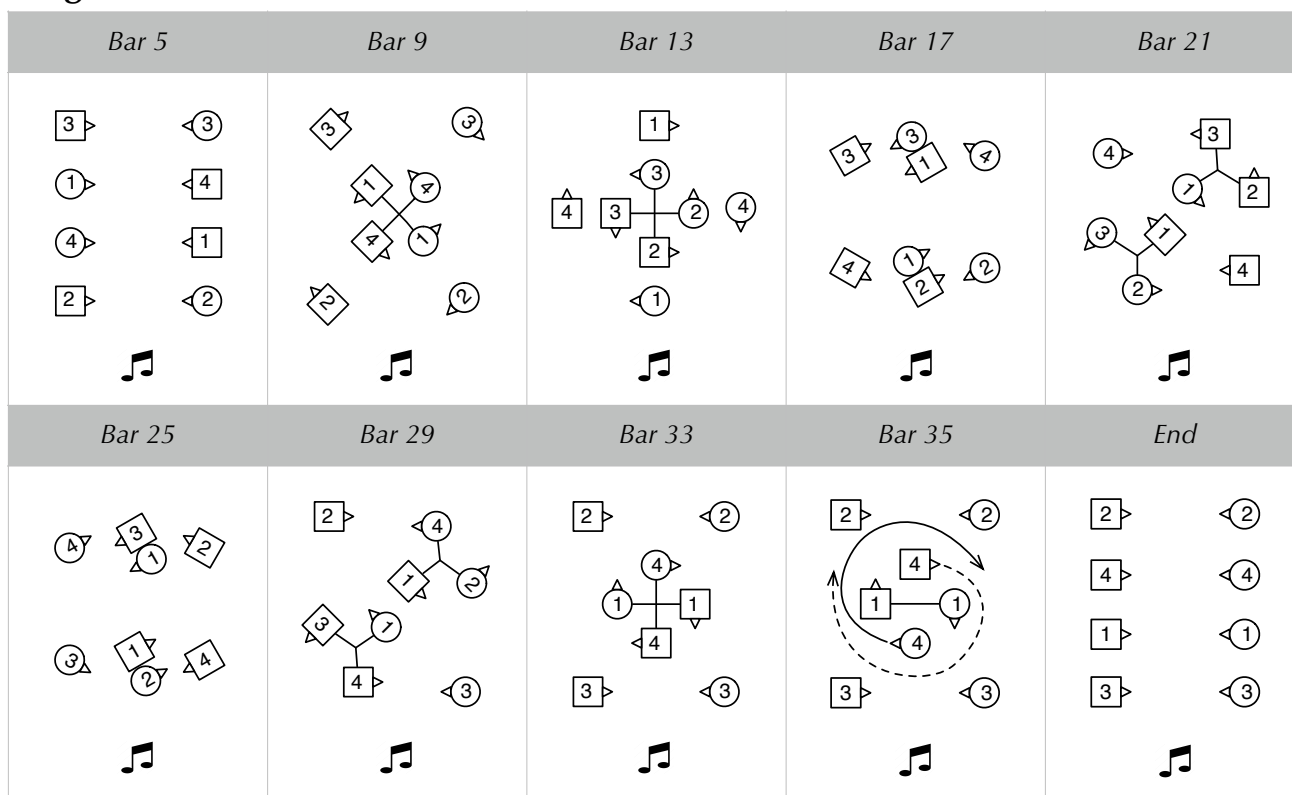
Bars Description

- 1-4 1st and 4th couples cross right hand, then 1st and 4th women cast in one place as 1st and 4th men cast in two places, passing right shoulder. 1st and 4th couples will be diagonally opposite their partners for most of the dance.
- 5-8 1st and 4th couples set, then dance half left hands across to balance in line position on the diagonals (St Andrew's Cross) retaining left hands in the centre and taking right hands with the corners: 1st with 2nd and 4th with 3rd men; 1st with 3rd and 4th with 2nd women.
- 9-12 All balance in line. Then 1st and 4th couples half turn the corners right hand, releasing hands quickly. 2nd and 3rd couples dance 1/8th anticlockwise and take left hands across in the centre while 1st and 4th couples dance 1/8th clockwise outside them ready to take right hands in a St George's Cross formation: 1st man, 2nd woman, 3rd man, 1st woman are on the centre line; 4th and 2nd men, 3rd and 4th woman are in a line across between 2nd and 3rd places.
- 13-16 All balance in line. Then 1st man and 2nd woman, also 1st woman and 3rd man, half turn right hand into promenade hold, 1st couple have their promenading partner on their right. Meanwhile 4th and 2nd men, also 4th and 3rd women, half turn right hand and dance up or down the sides to lines across. 1st man and 2nd woman face 2nd man, with 4th woman behind them in a line across at the top; 1st woman and 3rd man face 3rd woman, with 4th man behind them in a line across at the bottom. 1st couple are facing their 3rd corner.
- 17-20 1st couple with their promenading partners dance half a reel of three across, starting right shoulder to their 3rd corners, and end facing towards their 4th corners (the next corner anticlockwise). 1st couple need to keep the loop fairly small. The reels are danced slightly in from the ends of the set, between 1st and 2nd places and between 3rd and 4th places.
- 21-24 1st couple with their promenading partners each dance left hands across with the new 4th corner person in 2nd and 3rd places. Their old promenading partners (2nd woman and 3rd man) spiral out to the sides ready for the next half reel while 1st couple, retain left hands with their new promenading partners (3rd woman and 2nd man) and turn a bit extra into promenade hold, 1st couple on the left, to face their 1st corner position. 4th couple stand.
- 25-28 1st couple, with their new promenading partner, dance another half reel of three across, starting right shoulder to their 1st corners, and face towards their 2nd corner position. 2nd woman and 3rd man end in 1st and 4th places own side.
- 29-32 1st man and 1st woman, with their promenading partners, dance left hands across with 4th woman and 4th man. 1st couple end curving left into the centre to take right hands across the set. 4th couple follow them in and take right hands up and down. 2nd man and 3rd woman release hold early and end in 1st and 4th places own side opposite partners.
- 33-34 1st and 4th couples dance half right hands across. 1st couple retain right hands .
- 35-38 1st couple turn right hand once round moving up to end in 2nd place own side while 4th couple release hold and spiral out to 3rd place own sides. 4th man lets 1st man pass him.
- 39-40 All set on the sides. The progressed order is 3,1,4,2.

Music

- Suggested tune: Callum Dewar's Reel (Colin Dewar).
- Suitable recording: Callum Dewar's Reel (Colin Dewar and his SDB: Special Requests Volume 7).

Diagrams (music at the bottom)



Notes

This dance was written for David and Avril Quarrie on the occasion of their moving from Geneva back to the Hamburg area where they first met.

The dance includes St Andrew's and St George's cross figures. Then 1st couple make a metaphorical procession around the four corners of the globe dancing with various people for a while and then moving on to a new corner. This is supposed to reflect the Scottish and English backgrounds of Avril and David respectively and their successive sojourns in Hamburg (the centre) then Chicago, Virginia, San Francisco and Geneva before finally returning to the Hamburg area. They continually meet new friends but sadly leave old friends behind - after they have been trained up to be better dancers!

The dance starts with a little broken symmetry, appropriate for a particle physicist, as the men and women do something slightly different. It ends with 1st couple finally getting to dance more with each other, turning right hand into retirement to their new home in 2nd place surrounded by their most recent friends, 4th couple, who spiral out singly to 3rd place.

1st couple are the Quarries and 4th couple are mostly friends and family in the Hamburg area (the centre of the set). 2nd and 3rd couples are dancers in the other corners of the world that the Quarries have lived in.

Soaring and Swooping

A 32 bar jig for three couples in a four couple longwise set.

Bars Description

- 1-4 1st couple turn right hand to end in tandem, with 1st woman leading, closer to and facing the women's side. They then cast off one place as 2nd couple step up and end side by side on the centre line facing the men's side, 1st woman below 1st man.
- 5-8 1st man dances right hands across with 2nd couple while 1st woman dances left hands across with 3rd couple. 1st couple end in tandem, with 1st woman leading, facing the men's side.
- 9-12 1st couple dance half an alternating tandem reel of three on the men's side, starting left shoulder to 3rd man.
- 13-16 With 1st man leading they cross over to dance half an alternating tandem reel of three on the women's side, starting left shoulder to 2nd woman. 1st couple end side by side in the centre in 2nd place facing down with 1st woman on the right. 2nd woman makes an extra loop to face up.
- 17-20 1st woman dances right hands across with 3rd and 2nd men while 1st man dances left hands across with 3rd and 2nd women. 1st couple end in tandem, with 1st woman leading, facing down.
- 21-24 1st couple dance half an alternating tandem reel of three across in 3rd place, starting right shoulder to 2nd man (in 3rd man's place).
- 25-28 With 1st man leading they cross up to dance half an alternating tandem reel of three across in 1st place, starting right shoulder to 3rd woman (in 1st woman's place). 1st woman takes the lead and crosses over so that 1st couple each end in 2nd place opposite sides. 3rd woman ends with an extra loop and all face clockwise.
- 29-32 All chase half way round clockwise to end in the order 2,1,3.

Music

- Suggested tune: Jackie Johnstone (Ian Holmes).
- Suitable recording: The Flight of the Falcon (Colin Dewar and his SDB: Special Requests Vol 6).

A Stroller in Hades

A 32 bar reel for three couples in a four couple longwise set.

This dance was inspired by "The Australian Ladies" with the aim of having equal amounts of right and left handedness in both the "signature" last 16 bars and also the first 16 which consequently ended up being very different from the original. The word "Stroller" in the title contains the R,L,L,R sequence indicating the handedness of each successive four bars (for 1st couple).

Bars Description

- 1-4 1st and 2nd couples, giving right hands, half turn their partner, then dance half right hands across.
- 5-8 1st and 3rd couples dance complete left hands across. 1st couple retain left hands.
- 9-12 1st couple, giving left hands, turn one and a quarter times to end on the centre line with 1st woman above 1st man.
- 13-16 1st woman with 2nd couple, and 1st man with 3rd couple, each dance right hands across. 1st couple end with a wide loop into 2nd place on their own sides.
- 17-20 1st couple cross giving right hands and cast to their right to end in the centre, 1st woman in 1st place, 1st man in 3rd place while 2nd and 3rd couples set and cross giving right hands, all ending in lines across facing up or down.
- 21-24 1st couple change places giving left hands and cast to their left to end in 2nd place on their own sides while 2nd and 3rd couples set and change places giving left hands on the sides.
- 25-28 1st couple cross giving left hands and cast to their left to end in the centre, 1st man in 1st place, 1st woman in 3rd place while 3rd and 2nd couples set and cross giving right hands, all ending in lines across facing up or down.
- 29-32 1st couple change places giving right hands and cast to their right to end in 2nd place on their own sides while 3rd and 2nd couples set and change places giving left hands on the sides.

After their second turn, 1st couple dance bars 1-4 again with 4th couple to end in 4th place (although this does sadly break the otherwise equal amounts of left and right handedness). For mathematical completeness 3rd and 4th couples could also do this at the start so that all four couples are dancing at the start of the 1st, 3rd, 5th and 7th times through.

Note that in bars 17-32 2nd and 3rd couples have a R,L,R,L pattern instead of the R,L,L,R sequence for 1st couple. This is to avoid an awkward repetition of right hands for 3rd couple at the start of the next repeat.

Music

- Suggested tunes: The Australian Ladies (William Fergusson), The Ladies frae Hell (J MacMillan Tait).
- Suitable recording: Australian Ladies (Colin Dewar and his Scottish Dance Band: Special Requests Volume 6).

Torque Back

A 32 bar jig for three couples in a four couple longwise set with plenty of opportunities for twirling.

Bars Description

- 1-4 1st couple cross by the right hand and cast off one place as 2nd couple step up.
- 5-8 1st couple, giving right hands, turn one and a quarter times to end in lines across with 1st woman between 2nd couple and 1st man between 3rd couple.
- 9-12 All set. Then 2nd and 3rd couples pull right shoulders back and rotate to the next corner position clockwise while 1st couple set advancing towards partner and twirl away to face their 4th corner position (now occupied by their 1st corner person).
- 13-16 1st couple dance the second part of the "Best Set in the Hall" figure: 1st couple set to those in their 4th corner positions (2nd man and 3rd woman). Then 1st couple cast away to the corner position behind them while the 4th corners dance in and twirl away from each other to face the 1st corner positions (occupied by their partner).
- 17-20 The former 4th corners (2nd man and 3rd woman) repeat bars 13-16 as dancing couple, ending in the 1st corner positions behind them while the 1st corners (3rd man and 2nd woman) dance in and twirl away to face 1st couple on the 2nd corner diagonal (man facing man, woman facing woman).
- 21-24 The former 1st corners (3rd man and 2nd woman) repeat bars 13-16 as dancing couple, ending in the 2nd corner positions behind them while 1st couple dance in passing right shoulder and end in 2nd place. All are now back on their own sides in the order 2,1,3.
- 25-32 All circle six hands round to the left, drop hands and twirl pulling left shoulders back, then taking hands again, circle six hands round back to the right.

Music

- Suggested tunes: Timothy's Jig (Tom Anderson), The Groom's Jig (Ian Findlay).
- Suitable recording: The Findlay's Jig (Keith Smith and Muriel Johnstone: Vintage Goldring).

Whirlwind Affairs

A 32 bar strathspey for three couples in a four couple longwise set. For the central part of the dance all couples have a little dalliance with another partner before thinking better of it and returning to their own partners at the end.

Bars Description

- 1-4 1st couple cross giving right hands and cast off one place as 2nd couple step up.
- 5-8 1st man with 2nd couple, also 1st woman with 3rd couple, dance right hands across. 1st couple end in the centre, left shoulder to each other, facing own sides.
- 9-16 Tourbillon for three couples:
- 2nd and 3rd couples half turn their partner with both hands to end beside them on the sidelines. Meanwhile 1st couple cast one place to their right.
 - All take hands on the sides and set.
 - 1st couple half turn the person on their right with both hands. 1st couple end in the same place with their new partner now opposite them. Meanwhile 3rd man and 2nd woman cast inwards to 2nd place own sides.
 - All cross to opposite sides giving right hands.
- Finish with 1st, 3rd, 2nd men down the women's side and 3rd, 2nd, 1st women down the men's side.
- 17-20 All take hands on the sides and set. Then all cross back to own sides giving right hands.
- 21-24 All take hands on the sides and set advancing. Then, pulling left shoulder back, cast away, curving back to own sides.
- 25-32 All dance the Bourrel for three couples to end back with original partners in the order 2,1,3.

Music

- Suggested tune: Sir George Clark of Pennycuik (Nathaniel Gow).
- Recording: Up in the Air (Catherine Fraser and Duncan Smith: Old Favourites and Odd Couples).

Notes

The tourbillon for three couples comes, slightly modified, from Sulis Minerva by Rosamund Rawlings.

The Great Permian Mass Extinction

A 40 bar reel for five couples in a longwise set. Each dancer also has a “volcanic partner” who is their 1st corner (except 1st woman and 5th man) with whom they dance from bar 25.

Dedicated to the memory of my dear friend Martin Hammond who would surely have been able to tell me more about trilobites, ammonites and other extinct species than I really needed to know (including that ammonites survived the Permian extinction and died out later).

Bars Description

- 1-8 1st and 2nd couples circle four hands round to the left and back while 3rd, 4th and 5th couples set to their partners with arms raised highland fashion, cross over giving right hands, set again with highland arms and cross back giving left hands.
- 9-12 2nd man and 4th woman exchange places by dancing across and casting right shoulder around 3rd couple. Meanwhile 1st man and 5th woman also exchange places, starting by following 2nd man and 4th woman but dancing between 3rd couple, passing each other right shoulder.
- 13-16 5th, 1st, 4th and 2nd women (at the top) also 4th, 2nd, 5th and 1st men (at the bottom) dance right hands across staying in the centre while 3rd couple turn one and a quarter times by the left hand to end on the centre line.
- 17-24 All dance a “snakestone pass” (an extended snake pass figure for five couples):
- 3rd man followed by 4th, 5th, 1st and 2nd men, passing the women by the left shoulder, dance up the women's side and back down the men's side;
- Meanwhile 3rd woman followed by 2nd, 1st, 5th and 4th women, passing the men by the left shoulder, dance down the men's side, across and back up the women's side.
All end opposite their “volcanic partner” with the men in the order 2,1,5,4,3 and the women 3,2,1,5,4. 3rd couple are at diametrically opposite corners of the set from their partner. All other couples have their partner diagonally to their right.
- 25-26 All set on the sides.
- 27-32 All dance up to the top, nearer hands joined with the opposite person (their “volcanic partner”) and cast down on their own sides. The order is now 3,4,5,1,2 on the men's side and 4,5,1,2,3 on the women's side.
- 33-34 All set on the sides.
- 35-36 All stand still.
- 37-40 3rd woman dances up alone to end in 1st place opposite her partner. The other four women step down on bars 39-40. The final order is 3,4,5,1,2.

Notes

I no longer remember why I ever thought it might be a good idea to try to represent the most severe of all known mass extinctions as a Scottish country dance, but it quickly occurred to me that I could dedicate it to the memory of my friend Martin. It was also an interesting and brain teasing challenge to organise the figures to allow the single surviving dancer's solo in the last four bars.

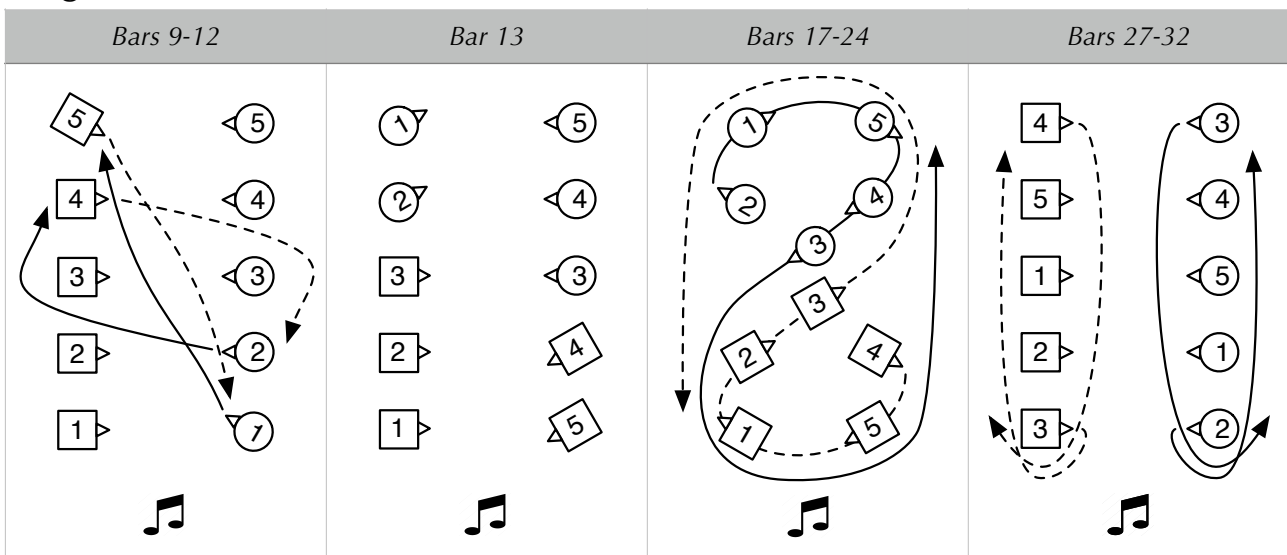
The first 8 bars are supposed to represent a trilobite (on its back) though the real ones had many more legs than are here depicted by the highland arms of six dancers while the first two couples are illustrating the head. Bars 9-12 are a convergent evolutionary progression via different paths leading into bars 13-24 which represent a pair of ammonites. Fossil ammonites used to be called snakestones, so an extended version of the "snake pass" figure seems suitable. Disaster arrives in bars 25-32. The figure here starts with a warning preshock which is followed by immense supervolcanic eruptions and falling ash and lava. Enthusiastic and extrovert dancers might add their own sound effects here! In bars 33-34 the dust settles and in bars 35-36 all is still. I am not normally in favour of dancers standing idle, but a moments silence after the "great dying" which ended the Palaeozoic era feels very appropriate. Finally in bars 37-40 3rd woman dances up alone to start the repopulation of an almost empty world.

Music

An ideal piece of music would be full of life in bars 1-24, then fairly explosive for 25-32, quietening down funereally for 33-34, even quieter for 35-36 but ending with a hopeful rising cadence for 37-40.

In lieu of that, try The Mathematicians (J Gray and S Petrov: Opus Dance - Tweeddale).

Diagrams (music at the bottom)



Trilobite (Cambrian-Permian)



Ammonite (Devonian-Cretaceous)



*Martin Hammond (1956-2014)
At an early gay pride march, signing his civil partnership to Nick and celebrating afterwards.*



THE LARGE HADRON COLLIDER 4x32 R

Murrough Landon, 2013, my.strathpey.org/u/murrough/LargeHadronCollider.pdf 4C/4C square set.

OTTERS IN KENICK BURN 8x32 J

Murrough Landon, 2015, my.strathpey.org/u/murrough/OttersInKenickBurn.pdf 3C/4C longwise set.

A PARTY AT THE FRENCH HOUSE 8x40 R

Murrough Landon, 2016, <http://my.strathpey.org/u/murrough/PartyAtTheFrenchHouse.pdf> 3C/4C longwise set.

PENTAMIME 5x32 J

Murrough Landon, 2015, my.strathpey.org/u/murrough/Pentamime.pdf 5C/5C longwise set.

QUARRIES' PROCESSION 4x40 R

Murrough Landon, 2015, my.strathpey.org/u/murrough/QuarriesProcession.pdf 4C/4C longwise set.

SOARING AND SWOOPING 8x32 J

Murrough Landon, 2018, my.strathpey.org/u/murrough/SoaringAndSwooping.pdf 3C/4C longwise set.

A STROLLER IN HADES 8x32 R

Murrough Landon, 2014, my.strathpey.org/u/murrough/StrollerInHades.pdf 3C/4C longwise set.

TORQUE BACK 8x32 J

Murrough Landon, 2017, my.strathpey.org/u/murrough/TorqueBack.pdf 3C/4C longwise set.

WHIRLWIND AFFAIRS 8x32 S

Murrough Landon, 2018, my.strathpey.org/u/murrough/WhirlwindAffairs.pdf 3C/4C longwise set.

THE GREAT PERMIAN MASS EXTINCTION 5x40 R

Murrough Landon, 2016, my.strathpey.org/u/murrough/GreatPermianMassExtinction.pdf 5C/5C longwise set.

