



The Overland Track Suite



Dances for Tasmania's wilderness

**David Wanless, Cathy Hutchinson,
Pauline Allingham and Rob Mahony**

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Contents

Foreword.....	4
Introduction.....	6
Acknowledgements.....	7
Where is the Overland Track?	9
Suggested Route	11
Workshop Description	12
Biographical Information.....	13
Glossary	17
Musical Notes	18
The Dances	19
Summary of the dances.....	19
Cradle Mountain Contra	20
Waterfall Valley Cascade	24
Pine Forest Moor	28
Mt Oakleigh Dash / Of Mud and Mountains	32
Pelion Waltz.....	36
Mt Ossa Reel.....	40
Windy Ridge.....	44
Narcissus Valley Square	48
Background Information.....	52
Dancing in the Vale of Rasselas	52
References.....	53
Our Dance Groups	53
Related Publications	54

Editions

First edition (v1.2), March 2010, launched at the National Folk Festival in Canberra

Second edition (v2.0), April 2010, with minor amendments

Photos

Unless otherwise noted all photos in this booklet are by Mahony/Allingham or Hutchinson/Wanless, from the Overland Track, December 2007. The photos in the section for each dance are from that region of the walk.

Front cover: near Mount Ossa summit, c. 1617m ASL

Back cover: Crater Lake, near Cradle Mountain

Contacting the authors

Copies of this booklet will be downloadable free of charge from www.folktas.org

The authors may be contacted with errata or questions via email to folkdancetas@gmail.com or ringing 03 6273 2127.

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[Overland Track Suite Dance Book v2.0.doc, David Wanless, March 2010]



Looking towards Mt Pelion West from Frog Flats

Dances include bush dances, balkan dances, mediaeval and renaissance dances, Irish dances, Scottish ceilidhs, contra dances, traditional Australian dances and whatever else we can find a band to play.

If you're ever visiting Tasmania to walk any of our wonderful tracks, feel free to contact us to see if there's any dancing on whilst you're here. Have a look at www.folkta.org, or contact Cathy or David as above. There's a lot of fun happening – come and join us!

Related Publications

The Tango is Tasmanian

Old Time and Set Dances of Tasmania - Our Forgotten Heritage

58 pages. Instructions for 23 dances and 11 tunes collected in Tasmania, with historical notes.

Compiled by David Wanless

Published by the Folk Federation of Tasmania Inc., 2009

Downloadable free of charge from
www.folkta.org/dancebook.php



Sundews on cushion plant

Below: Pademelon near Lake Windermere



Tiptoe through
the wet gear ...



Foreword

When asked to write this foreword I had just returned to Cradle for an early morning 'photo shoot' of what is arguably one of the most photogenic and iconic spots on this island.



Boat house, Dove Lake and Cradle Mountain

My connection and connectedness to Cradle Mountain began long before I was born. My mother, Kit Connell and my father, Ron Smith met at Cradle Mountain and later married in 1940. Mum was the daughter of Lyle and Margaret Connell. Lyle was the first ranger to be appointed to Cradle after the death of Waldheim's initiator and creator, Gustav Weindorfer in 1932.

Ron was the son of Major Ronald Smith who had been a very close friend of Weindorfer's and one of the original party who climbed Cradle when Weindorfer declared "this must be a national park for the people for all time".

References

Chapman, J, *Cradle Mountain Lake St Clair and Walls of Jerusalem National Parks*, 1993, Pindari Publications
Cradle Mountain Lake St Clair National Park Map and Notes, Tasmap 2001

Web sites for other related information:

Overland Track: www.parks.tas.gov.au/?base=7771

Tasmanian National Parks Association: www.tnpa.asn.au

The Wilderness Society: www.wilderness.org.au/tasmania

Our Dance Groups

Canberra:

The **Canberra Contra Club** dance on the first and third Tuesdays of each month and have a Saturday night dance approximately every 2 months

See pfoster.pcug.org.au/cc/index.htm

Hobart:

Danceholics Unanimous is a small, informal group of people who get together in Hobart on the second Friday of each month (except January) to laugh, chat and dance a lot. We do an eclectic mix of folk dances for those who want to try something different, or can't wait until the next big public dance.

See www.myspace.com/danceoholicsunanimous

Folk dances with live music

Last Saturday, most months March-Nov (except Easter): **Folk dances with live music** are held at Wesley Hall, 58 Melville St, Hobart; Admission: \$14/\$12/\$10/\$5 (U/14) and a plate of supper.

Contact: David Wanless/Cathy Hutchinson, 03 6273 2127 or folkdancetas@gmail.com or see the main events section of www.folktas.org for details of individual dances.

Background Information

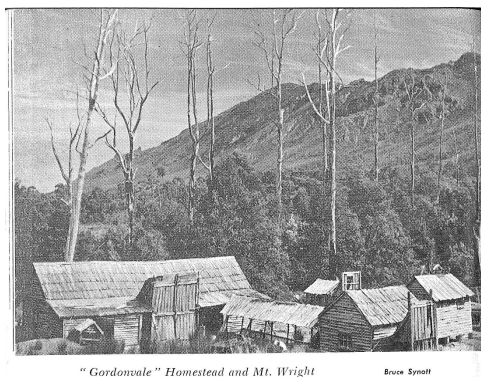
Dancing in the Vale of Rasselas

Historical records of bushwalkers dancing, albeit further south than Lake St Clair.

“In 1936 Club members went to Adamsfield with Ernie Bond. After spending seven years on the field, he had built himself a homestead in the bush called “Gordonvale”, situated in the Rasselas Valley, north of Adamsfield. After being welcomed by the “Mayor” the party enjoyed Quadrilles and Royal Alberts in the local dance hall.”

Source: Tasmanian Tramp (Hobart Walking Club), No. 12, 1955, p8

“Older members of the Club, who were in the first party to visit Ernie at “Gordonvale” at Easter, 1935, recall that the women in that party were the first to visit “Gordonvale”. A photograph taken at that time shows only the main house completed. Then at Christmas, 1935, Ernie walked with another Club party over the Thumbs to Adamsfield, where they were welcomed by the “Mayor” and the Vigilance Committee, who arranged a dance in the “boozier”. Many of the old-timers present contributed to an impromptu concert, so making the occasion a memorable one for the walkers.”



Source: Tasmanian Tramp, No. 16, 1963, p24

The Major had built a modest abode in the valley called “Mount Kate House” and it was from there that as a child I was lucky to have holidays that allowed me to have as my own back garden a national park to explore, wonder at and enjoy.



Mount Kate House

It was during one of these childhood sojourns that for whatever reason the family was invited up to the Waldheim car park one evening where a visiting group began to dance to the music of a lone bagpiper. I was too young to remember much about the night apart from the thrill of being amongst people for whom dancing was a passion. The next morning the piper stood on the hill below Waldheim and with the dawn mist swirling around him he saluted the day with a haunting tune.

Ten or so years later it may have been this memorable experience that compelled me to join in a workshop on Morris Dancing at the Longford Folk Festival and later join with others to begin the Longford Morris Dancers.

Whenever I do get the chance to return, inevitably childhood memories come flooding back with the clarity of a replayed video. I have only walked the Overland track once but this trip also holds countless joys! This book will appeal to both lovers of dancing and of places wild.

Liz Harris (text and photos)

Introduction

I had long wanted to walk the Overland Track, so when Pauline and Rob invited us to go, we said yes and then tried to work out how to fit it in to our hectic lives.

So it was that in December 2007, Pauline, Rob, Cathy and I set out for six days of walking through the world famous and beautiful Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. It was everything that we had hoped for – stunning mountains, ancient forests, glorious sunsets, beautiful buttongrass moorlands, enchanting lakes and waterfalls, gorgeous views and excellent company.

Tasmania is blessed with magnificent wild country and it is vitally important that it be preserved and celebrated. I hope that this booklet and these dances help evoke some of the magic of the Overland Track and remind all who read it or dance the dances of the beauty of these special places, their ability to inspire, empower and restore people who visit or simply appreciate them, and their need in turn for us to care for them.

This booklet is dedicated to all those who have worked over many years to protect Tasmania's wilderness, either by campaigning for its protection or by looking after it practically, or both.

David Wanless, Hobart, March 2010

If we can revise our attitudes towards the land under our feet; if we can accept a role of steward and depart from the role of conqueror; if we can accept the view that man and nature are inseparable parts of the unified whole – then Tasmania can be a shining beacon in a dull, uniform and largely artificial world.

– Photographer Olegas Truchanas, 1972

fun once you get it going. The Am^{maj7} chord is an Am with a G# – an unusual chord for old-time music, I admit – but one that seems to work in this tune.



We found the end of the track too



This tune is the only tune written specifically for the suite of dances and with the Narcissus Valley Square dance in mind. The style is old-time and I had in mind the classic tune “Benton’s Dream” that was running through our minds during parts of the Overland Track bushwalk – particularly the sung B part of Benton’s that goes with the words “I wish to the Lord I had never been born, or died when I was young”. Since

the dance is a square and is usually done just four times through, the one tune works pretty well. This tune is a bit tricky with the syncopation in the B part and can be a bugger to get the bowing sorted out on the fiddle, but is good



Narcissus Valley B&B (buttongrass and boardwalk)

Acknowledgements

I have various people to thank for helping make this booklet happen.

Thanks to Rob and Pauline who invited us to walk the Overland Track with them, for although we had been meaning to do so for many years, we might never have got around to it. Rob also provided all the music and notes on the music. Pauline provided most of the photo captions and selected most of the photos. Rob, Pauline and Cathy provided much input to the whole project.

Thanks to Christo and Tim for teaching me to take up these sorts of opportunities (such as walking the Overland Track) when they arise. To paraphrase Tim, if you get a chance to do something special, just say yes. You may never get that opportunity again.

Thanks to Cathy for all her encouragement in everything I do, for sharing my love of the bush and of nature, for her fantastic logistical help and for her company on the track.

Thanks to Mum and Dad for developing in their children a love of nature, bushwalking and dancing.

Thanks to all our Danceoholics friends for being the guinea pigs on whom we tested and refined these dances. Thanks also to Rob and Pauline’s dancing friends in Canberra for the same.

So, many people have contributed enormously to this booklet, but the mistakes are all mine. The final stages of this project have been extremely rushed. I would like to have tidied things up more, but c’est la vie.

If I’ve forgotten anyone in the rush to get this to the printer, please accept my apologies and thanks.

If you do find any corrections or additional information, please let me know. If you'd like any further information, please ask.

David Wanless
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Bowling Green, Narcissus Valley
L-R: Rob, Cathy, Pauline, David

Track Notes:

Narcissus Valley is the final stage of the Overland Track walk in Tasmania. It is mostly through dry sclerophyll forest but opens out into some gorgeous buttongrass plains. Ringing the valley are a series of peaks; the Minotaur, Mt Gould and Mt Olympus amongst others. At the end of the track is beautiful Lake St Clair, Australia's deepest lake, in which it is traditional to go for a swim, despite its ambient temperature of 8 degrees Celsius or so. This dance was really a collaborative effort between Rob and Dave, written mostly in the bus on the way back to Hobart. As a result we had two final versions – one in Hobart and one in Canberra, neither of which completely worked. The version here has kept the main feel of the dance while giving people time to get around those stars. The wavy ring balances are reminiscent of the mountains around Narcissus valley while the dip and dive at the end is allegorical for the swim in Lake St Clair and is suitably nippy to remind one of how cold the water is.

Music: 32 bar American reel at 120 beats/minute
Suggested Tune: Narcissus Valley Hoedown



Narcissus Valley: Narcissus (Hut) -> Windy Ridge <-

Narcissus Valley Square

By Robert Mahony/David Wanless, 15/12/2007

Difficulty: Easy +

Formation: 4 couple square

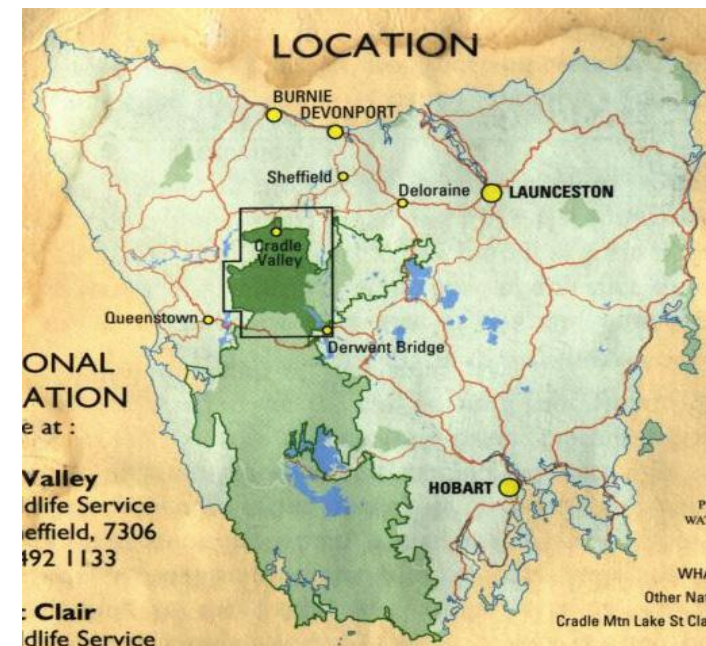
Steps: Swingy walk

Bars	Call	Details
4 (A1)	Men Rh star	Men Rh star $\frac{3}{4}$ into wavy circle with partner in right hand
4	Balance and turn	Balance the circle and Rory O'More turn ² with partner to end holding partner with L hand (all end in place)
4 (A2)	Ladies Rh star	Ladies Rh star once around into wavy circle with partner in R hand
4	Balance and turn	Balance the circle and Rory O'More turn with partner, end holding partner's L hand
4 (B1)	Partner Lh allemande	Partner Lh allemande $1\frac{1}{2}$
4	Swing the next	Swing the next (men in original place, ladies progress anti-clockwise)
8 (B2)	Dip and dive	Tops turn right and start under, sides left and over. Continue around the set until back to place (four arches.) If the men turn ladies under (clockwise) to finish the last dip and dive then the ladies can use the same motion to help the men into the RH star to start again.

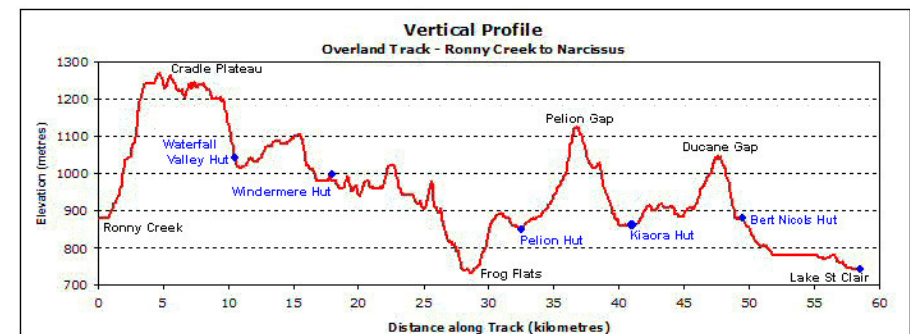
Hints:

1. Men are in the same place each time through the dance.
2. Rory O'More turn: pull past in front of partner turning over own Rsh.

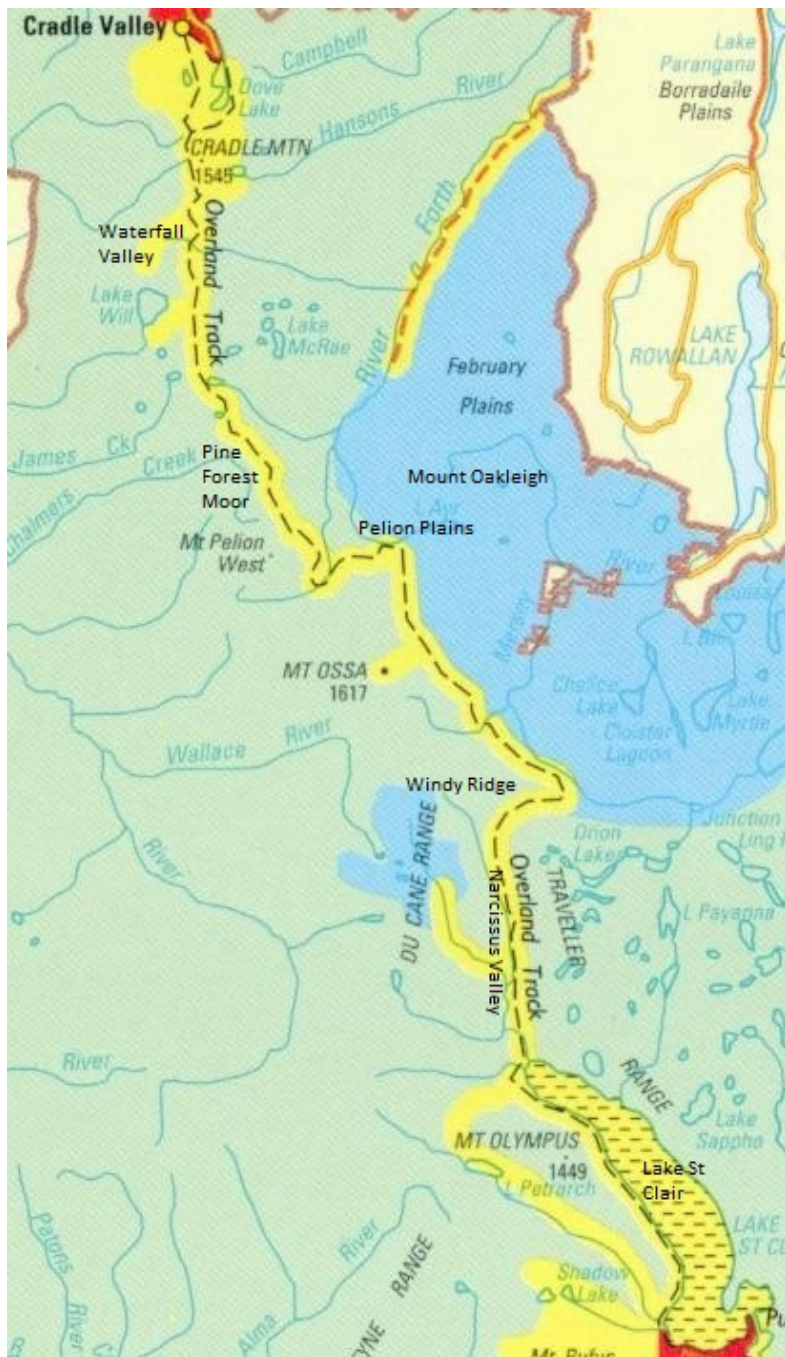
Where is the Overland Track?



Source: Cradle Mountain Lake St Clair National Park Map and Notes, Tasmap 2001



Source: <http://www.parks.tas.gov.au/index.aspx?base=7827#3>



Source: Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area Management Plan 1999, Parks and Wildlife Service (labels added)

120bpm **Seersucker Hornpipe** Rob Mahony

A G C D G C D G D

G C D G C D ¹G ²G

B G D/F# C/E D

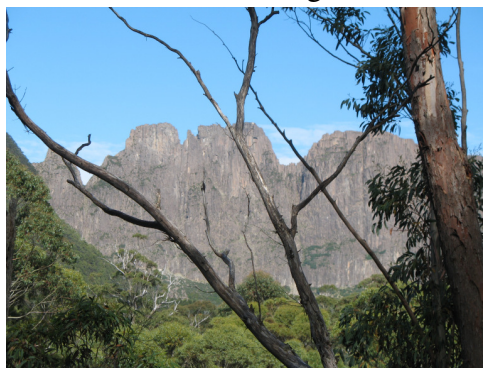
Am/C G/B C D ¹G ²G



Cooking on the camping platform, out of range of leeches

120bpm **Solstice Shuffle** Rob Mahony

The first of these tunes I wrote for Margaret Gilks and Bob Anderson for their wedding on the winter solstice, 2008. Margaret is an accordion player and I deliberately wrote a tune that was a little more accordion friendly than my normal style. The Seersucker Hornpipe is in the style of a New England hornpipe with a moving harmony line. For the bass players out there, the B part is written to get a descending line that is fun to play.



Mt Geryon from Narcissus Valley

Suggested Route

“The Overland Track travels a distance of 65 kilometres through the heart of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. While easier access, improved track conditions and modern outdoor equipment have all made the trip far easier than it has been, the walk still demands a fair degree of preparation and physical fitness, and will take around five nights and six days.”

Source: <http://www.parks.tas.gov.au/index.aspx?base=7827>

The Overland Track Suite traverses eight dances of various different dance traditions. Dancing all the dances in one workshop should take around two hours, and demands a moderate level of fitness and alertness. However, with adequate calling/instruction and a good sense of humour most dancers should be able to enjoy all of these dances. As with challenging walks it is a good idea to work up to the most challenging dances.

Many find that the first day of the Overland Track is the hardest, both because they're not used to their packs and the walking but because there is more climbing on the first day than on most others unless one does a side trip (e.g., up Mt Ossa.) Similarly, the first dance presented here is the hardest.

A suggested order for dancing these dances if you wish to make a satisfying programme from them is as follows.

Narcissus Valley Square, Cradle Mountain Contra, Mt Ossa Reel, Waterfall Valley Cascade, Pelion Waltz, Mt Oakleigh Dash, Pine Forest Moor, Windy Ridge

However, unlike the walk itself, you may dance them in any order you see fit.

Workshop Description

National Folk Festival, Canberra, April 2010

Tasmanian dance caller David Wanless and Canberra musician and caller Rob Mahony and their danceoholic partners Cathy and Pauline walked and occasionally danced on the Overland Track in late 2007. Out of that came a suite of new dances, each evoking one part of this world famous and beautiful highland walk through the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area.

Celebrate the unique wilderness of Tasmania with these original dances - contras, a square, a set, a waltz and a triplet. No partner, dancing experience, walking boots or waterproofs required. Live music by Rob Mahony and friends.



Mt Oakleigh across Pelion Plain

Hints:

1. This dance needs a spare set length at the end of the hall for the cast and weave manoeuvre.
2. The only tricky part is counting the 6 beats in between moves in the B part – it crosses the musical phrases, but everything comes together again for the advance to place. Note that it takes 12 beats for a couple to weave to the bottom of the set (4 beats for each place), so the 2s will start before the 1s are finished, etc. Starting after six beats is hard for many dancers used to starting after eight. It's easier if the caller can call 'Cast 1 2 3 4 5 2s 1 2 3 4 5 3s 1 2 3 4 5' or similar.

Track Notes:

Windy Ridge is the ridge that leads down from Du Cane Gap to Windy Ridge Hut. The ridge itself is not awesome to look at, but it is forested with a beautiful dry sclerophyll forest in which the wind rustles day in and day out. In the dance, the cast and weave move is meant to evoke the wind blowing through the trees around the camp site at the hut. I wrote this dance during the walk down Windy Ridge, mulling away over do-si-dos and turns, and trying to figure out exactly how many beats it takes to weave past three couples, while the wind rustled in the trees and the four of us tramped along. Since the whole dance had to fit in my memory and stay there for the rest of the day, it is refreshingly straightforward – that is apart from having to count to six three times! I mean how hard is that really?

Music: 32 bar American reel at 120 beats/minute

Suggested Tunes: Solstice Shuffle, Seersucker Hornpipe

Windy Ridge

By Robert Mahony 15/12/2007

Difficulty: Easy +

Formation: 4 couple proper longwise set

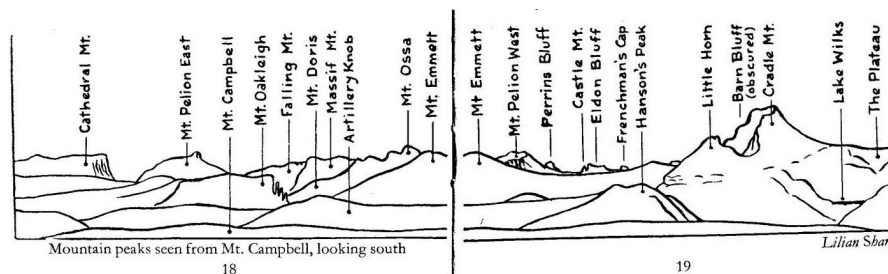
Steps: Swingy walk

Bars	Call	Details
4 (A1)	Do-si-do	Partner do-si-do
4	Rh turn	Partner right hand allemande
4 (A2)	Lh turn	Partner left hand allemande
4	Two hand turn	Partner two hand turn
12 (B1) (B2)	Cast and weave ²	Cast and weave: 1s cast out around 2s, inside 3s, outside 4s and join the bottom of the set. [wait 6 beats] 2s cast around 3s, inside 4s, outside the 1s in their new place and join the bottom of the set. [wait 6 beats] 3s cast and weave ending at the bottom of the set. [wait for 6 beats] The 4s do not cast. They are the new 1s.
4	Back to place	Advance to place. (All couples walk up the hall and reform in lines.)

Biographical Information

Rob Mahony comes from a family of folk musicians in Canberra and has been an integral part of the dance scene since he started sessioning in the mid eighties. He has played in Melaleuca, The Velcro Sporrins, The Porch Band, Strathmannan, Contratemp, and Kitty and the Bobcats, and dances with the ScanDance display group as well as turning up at bushdances wherever. He co-organises the Canberra Contra Club, leading the musicians and calling (and writing) the occasional contra dance and tune himself. He has been a keen walker all his life and has walked in the Brindabella range, the Budawangs, Kosciuszko National Park, the Victorian Alps, Nadgee Nature Reserve, southern and central Tasmania, South Island New Zealand, the West MacDonnell ranges in Central Australia, and the Purnululu (Bungle Bungle) National Park in the Kimberley. If he has walked elsewhere he can't remember. Rob is also a keen cycle tourist and has toured in Britain, France and Spain with Pauline. In his day job Rob is an academic at the Australian National University.

Rob is perhaps best remembered on the overland track for setting out with his old and much loved blue Gortex jacket that was found to be about as waterproof as a sieve early on in the first day of the walk. Luckily David had brought an emergency poncho and the Gortex jacket did preserve the poncho from being ripped to shreds by the native flora.



Source: Tasmanian Tramp No. 10, 1951

Pauline Allingham went to her first bushdance at the ANU refectory in 1977 (aged minus 10), fell in love with the subtle interplay of lagerphone and electric guitar, paid no heed to dancing on lino-covered cement and turned into a folkie almost instantly. With the passing of time her musical taste has matured (and her joints have stiffened) as she has dabbled in folk dance from Scandinavia, USA, England, Scotland, Ireland, Finland, France and Tasmania. She can play pretty well anything, from CD's to LP's including cassettes, but her first love is dancing.

Pauline took up being sporty late in life and did not go for a serious bushwalk until ~~eeereed~~ convinced by Rob to give it a go. Prior training consisted mainly of cycling around Europe collecting 'and then this total stranger fed me/housed me/got me drunk' stories. Her worst moment on the Overland Track was finding a leech on her leg IN THE CAMP KITCHEN at Cradle Mountain Campground before even starting the walk.

Cathy Hutchinson writes:

"I have vivid memories of a summer visit to Tasmania when I was thirteen. After months of planning and preparing food, clothing and gear my father arrived by light plane and my mother, younger brother, Andrew and I had come over on the Australian Trader with the Morris 1100 (which went everywhere a 4WD could).

"I learned much about Tasmania's 'four seasons in a day' weather and discovered the beauty of walking amongst mountains, the yuck of mud along the Lake St Clair foreshore, the frustration of walking across buttongrass plains (is it better to leap from buttongrass clump to buttongrass clump or to plunge through the mud between?) and the value of the last morsel of food at the end of a day's walk. I was totally enchanted by the myrtle forests with low light, tangled roots underfoot and the closed canopy high above the massive trunks of the myrtles. I learned not to stop walking in extreme conditions when we were caught in a serious blizzard on the top of Mt Rufus on the

120 bpm **Durras Dive** Rob Mahony

The musical score for 'Durras Dive' is written for guitar. It begins with a tempo marking of 120 bpm and the title 'Durras Dive' by Rob Mahony. The score is divided into two systems, 'A' and 'B'. System 'A' consists of two staves of music. System 'B' also consists of two staves. Chord symbols are placed above the notes: Am, C, G, C, G, Am, C, Gsus4, Am, C6, Bb6, C6, C9, C6, Bb6, Am, Gsus4, Am, G, Am.



120bpm **Missing Person Section** Rob Mahony

These two tunes are in the style of MUC. The first tune was written in '97 when I was in France. The second tune was written on the drive across the Hay plains to the 1994 National Folk Festival in Adelaide – it's a long way there and back across the Hay plains. Durras is a holiday spot on the NSW south-east coast where there is a rather old and shabby shack that holds many dear memories. This one takes a bit of work to get the phrasing to work (and get the bow going smoothly on the fiddle) in the A part. The chords were written for the electric guitar by Kevin Bradley and give a nice jazzy feel to the tune.



Cushion plant garden
on Mt Ossa

longest day of the year. Andrew was soaked to the skin and severely hypothermic and I can only be thankful that our parents insisted that we keep walking and that we had the good fortune to be staying in the assistant ranger's house when we returned. Later on, there was an insistent knocking at the back door and I met the biggest possum I ever had seen which demanded food as a toll for staying there.

"Embarking on the Overland Track many years later with Rob, Pauline and David, it was wonderful to be so remote from roads and civilisation – to just rely on each other and our careful planning and to enjoy being in such varied landscapes and moods of nature."

Cathy plays fiddle with the Hobart Old Time String Band and the Tasmanian Heritage Fiddle Ensemble and helps with organising many folk events in Tasmania.

David "Odd socks" Wanless is a danceoholic from Hobart, Tasmania and dance caller for many Tasmanian bands. He has called dances from Mawson station in Antarctica to the National Folk Festival in Canberra. He calls dances from many traditions including Irish, Scottish, Contra, English, Renaissance, traditional and contemporary Australian, Balkan, and his own compositions.

David grew up (if he ever grew up) bushwalking with his father in the Brindabellas near Canberra and the Snowy Mountains, and since moving to Tasmania in 1992 has done many day walks there as well as the South Coast Track, the Walls of Jerusalem and the Overland Track. There is so much more beautiful country to walk in though. In 2009 Cathy and David walked the Abel Tasman Track and parts of the Routeburn, Caples and Greenstone tracks in New Zealand.

David's day job is doing IT and database work for environmental organisations.

He's a dance missionary and a long-term advocate for wilderness.

His favourite occupations on the Overland Track seemed to others to be rustling plastic bags and trying to get into his inner sheet without turning on the torch – it is amazing how many times one needs to turn an inner sheet around before one finds the hole to put one's feet into.

Cathy and David run the Folk Federation of Tasmania's monthly folk dance series and Danceoholics Unanimous.



Hooray! We found the start. (There's a story there.)

Track Notes:

Mt Ossa is the tallest mountain in Tasmania (a fact known only since the 1950s.) It is a central point in the Overland Track walk, rising over Pelion Gap above the plains below, and is at least two days normal walking from any entry point to the Cradle Mountain/Lake St Clair National Park. The mountain is renowned for being clouded over. I know of one walker who has tried climbing Ossa three times and never got the view, but we had a perfect day on the mountain with almost no wind. In the two stars, if you raise your hands then you make the pyramidal shape of Mt Ossa, however, the dance is more enjoyable if you do normal stars and just think suitably pointy thoughts. I wrote this dance in the bus on the way back to Hobart – it was clear even then that the suite needed some “easier” dances. It has been workshopped several times since then but retains the two stars that were the original idea in the dance.

Music: 32 bar contra at 120 beats/minute

Suggested Tunes: Missing Person Section, Durras Dive

Picnic on top of the world, by Cathy Hutchinson

My favourite moment was sitting together on what felt like the top of the world on a rock above a steep drop atop Mt Ossa. Overlooking the whole of Tasmania in all directions, eating lunch and basking in the warm sunshine, wondering how many days of the year one could expect perfect conditions. Next moment, Pauline's flat bread was picked up in the breeze and it disappeared over the edge of the steep side of our rock. Since all our food was counted out, we were discussing sharing up what was left when the flat bread suddenly reappeared in the updraft next to us, within arm's reach. Of course, we just reached out and caught it and continued on with lunch, quite pleased with the sense of humour in the natural world!

Mt Ossa Reel

By Robert Mahony, 15/12/2007 **Difficulty:** Easy +

Formation: Duple improper longways set

Steps: Swingy walk

Bars	Call	Details
8 (A1)	Balance and swing	Balance and swing neighbour
4 (A2)	Rh star	Right hand star
4	Ladies chain	Ladies chain across
4 (B1)	Rights and lefts	Right and left through across
4	Lh star	Left hand star
2 (B2)	Men swap left hand	Men change places passing left hand then face along side lines. Ladies turn over left shoulder to face back along the side lines. 1s are now facing up, 2s down.
2	Box the gnat and pull by	Change place with neighbour along side lines, gent turning the lady under right hands. Then pull by, back to where you came from, but keep moving in progressed direction.
4	Do-si-do	Do-si-do the next neighbour Rsh



Top of Mt Ossa, top of Tasmania.

Glossary

MUC	Modern Universal Contra tune
1s	1 st couple – couple closest to the band in a longwise set, or facing acw around the line of dance in a circle. Also called actives in a contra dance.
2s	2 nd couple – couple further from the band than the 1s. In a contra set they are also called inactives.
acw	Anti-clockwise
allemande	Turn holding hands in a hand-shake hold (in a contra dance)
cpl	Couple
cw	Clockwise
down	Away from the band
ft	Foot
gypsy	Walk acw (if R sh or unspecified) around partner keeping eyes all the way around (so don't turn back on partner)
h	Hand
hey	Reel
L	Left
nbr	Neighbour – person next to you who is not your partner
ptnr	Partner
R	Right
sh	Shoulder
up	Towards the band
Wsh	Waist shoulder [hold]



Snout down and vacuuming – this echidna's hit paydirt.

Musical Notes

The music in this book is a compilation of tunes written over the last 20 years. Most of the music I have written over these years is influenced by American or Scottish traditions, although recently I have been influenced by some Scandinavian music. The most common style I write in is Modern Universal Contra or MUC style. This is a very broad range of music that goes with modern contra dances where there are no real active or inactive couples and all the moves are smooth and flowing. The music needs to be harmonically interesting, with constantly moving chord variations, moving bass lines, and chord inversions and variations that lighten the music for the dancers and give them that “dance trance” feeling. The melodies are written to fit around the moving harmonic line and you should feel free to improvise and make variations whenever you feel the urge.

There are some tunes in the book done in a more old-time style with simpler chords and a more strongly syncopated melodic structure, as well as some Scottish style reels with a more upright feel. These tunes don’t tend to yield to improvisation so easily but it is still possible to work out variations and harmonies.

The tunes were all written as melodies (I am a fiddle player mostly) with chord progressions worked out afterwards. The very nature of Contra music, however, has a strong harmonic structure that is present in the way the melody evolves and the chords are an important part of the tunes. Having said this, I am still primarily a melody player, and although I have gone over the chord progressions with friends they are not as tried and tested as the melodies. You should feel free to make substitutions or variations if you think you find something that sounds better. I am not that worried about the details of a melody either, so if you find it works better with a few changes, then don’t let the fact that it’s written down stop you playing it however you want. I rarely play any tune the same twice in a row anyway.

Robert Mahony.

See also Rob’s notes on individual tunes – Ed.

130-140bpm

Candlelight Waltz

Rob Mahony

The musical score for 'Candlelight Waltz' is written in 3/4 time and consists of 16 measures across 8 staves. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score includes chord progressions and first/second endings. The chords are: Am, G, Am, G, Am, G, Dm, A, Dm, Dm7, Dm, C, Dm, C, Dm, C, F, Am, F, A, Gm, D, Gm, Gm7, Gm, D, Gm, Gm, F, Gm, F, Gm, Bb, Dm, Bb, D, Cm, G, Cm, Cm7, Cm, G, Cm, Cm7/Bb.

130-140bpm **Nick and Penny's Waltz** Rob Mahony

A F B \flat F C

¹ F B \flat B \flat C F

² F B \flat C F

B Bm A Bm F \sharp m

G Bm A7 Bm

G D A7 Bm

G F \sharp m Bm A Bm

The first of these waltzes was written in '95 for Nick and Penny in honour of their engagement. The second waltz was written in 2007 and is very influenced by the recordings of Scandinavian waltzes that we use in the ScanDance group. This tune is basically the same three times through with suitable key changes to make it interesting. By preference, I finish it at the end of the second B part.

The Dances

Summary of the dances

Dance	Formation	Difficulty
Cradle Mountain Contra	Contra, duple improper longwise set	Hard
Waterfall Valley Cascade	4 couple square	Intermediate
Pine Forest Moor	Three facing three around the room	Medium
Mt Oakleigh Dash	Contra, duple improper longwise set	Medium
Pelion Waltz	Sicilian circle or duple improper longwise set	Medium
Mt Ossa Reel	Contra, duple improper longwise set	Easy +
Windy Ridge	4 couple proper longwise set	Easy +
Narcissus Valley Square	4 couple square	Easy +



First dance practice session!

Cradle Mountain Contra

By Cathy Hutchinson, Tasmania, January 2010. **Difficulty:** Hard

Formation: Duple improper longwise for as many as will. Long sets are much better for this dance as the end effects are challenging.

Steps: Contra – swiny walking

Bars	Call	Details
8 (A1)	Hey on sides	1s face down, 2s face up. Rsh reel of 4 as though commencing in the centre of the reel, going across if reach top or bottom of set, and even up or down other side if necessary. End where started. This may be more easily understood as: pass neighbour Rsh; Lsh gypsy next so heading back the way you came; pass original neighbour Rsh; Lsh gypsy next to finish where you started. Couples at the end without neighbours to dance with start passing Rsh across the set with partner, then Lsh gypsy along the side, come back across Rsh and dance Lsh gypsy along own side. ¹
4 (A2)	Allemande R	Allemande below – turn neighbour 1¼ by Rh. Couples at the end without neighbours to dance with turn partner rather than neighbour, and turn 1½ times to change places. ¹
4	Balance the wave, and again	Keep Rh with nbr. Centres (the two ladies) join Lh to make a wavy line across the set; balance fwd and back twice. Don't go back too far the second time.
8 (B1)	Hey across	Reel of four - Rsh to neighbour to start. 1s finish facing down below 2s to progress. ²
4 (B2)	1s down middle and back	1s hold Lh and march down the middle for 3 steps, about face and march back up. This is only half the length of a common 'down the hall' so dancers need to be alert and the caller should call 'and back' at the appropriate time.
4	Lh star	Lh star within your minor set.
	Repeat from beginning	Cpls reaching end keep dancing straight across into the opening reel and only change places during the next allemande, then rest until next time through. ¹

Hints:

1. Rob wrote the dance as a longwise set but for variety it can be nice as a sicilian circle, in which case 'across the set' means in or out of the circle. It is important to emphasise which direction people are facing after the petronellas.
2. The progression comes in the star promenade and there is still a rights and lefts that is done in the new minor set. This can cause some confusion and is best emphasised when teaching the dance.

Track Notes:

Pelion Plain lies right in the middle of the Overland Track in Tasmania. It is the cross roads of the central Tasmanian wilderness with access to the Overland Track and also to the Walls of Jerusalem. The plain is stately in amongst all the mountains and there is certainly space on the buttongrass plain for the giants of the dreamland to dance a waltz. This was the first dance written for the Overland Track suite, scribbled in notes on scraps of paper in the fading evening light in the hut and then workshopped for the first time on the wooden platform at Pelion Gap. The dance has been workshopped several times since then, but the basic feel of the ladies chains across and then up and down and the two part star progression was original.

Music: 32 bar waltz at 130-140 beats/minute

Suggested Tunes: Nick and Penny's Waltz; Candlelight Waltz



Pelion Gap, where we first tested the Pelion Waltz

Pelion Waltz

By Robert Mahony, 15/12/2007

Difficulty: Medium

Formation: Sicilian circle or duple improper longways set

Steps: Waltz

Bars	Call	Details
4 (A1)	Balance circle and petronella	Balance circle, petronella left. Finish next to ptr facing across the set. ¹
4	Ladies chain across	Ladies chain across the set. Finish facing ptr across the set.
4 (A2)	Balance circle and petronella	Balance circle, petronella left. Finish facing ptr along the set. ¹
4	Ladies chain longways	Ladies chain along the set. ¹ Finish next to ptr facing back along the set.
4 (B1)	Lh star	Men keep Lh at end
4	Allemande and ladies progress	Men left allemande once while ladies right allemande once with ladies from the next minor set. End with couples side by side.
4 (B2)	Star promenade to progress ²	Couples join in waist shoulder hold, ladies keep right hands and couples wheel around for four waltz steps to end facing along the set. ¹ End facing the opposite direction to your normal progression direction and in the next minor set. [Adventurous couples can let go after one waltz step and twirl as a couple to place. However, this should only be done once couples are clear where they must end.]
4	Half rights and lefts ²	Half right and left through

Hints:

1. Challenging 'end effects': The first two figures are trickier for people near or at either end of the set. Also, couples reaching the end of the set don't swap places with their partners immediately, nor have a full turn out of the dance.
2. There's no need to cut this reel short but it is necessary for the two ladies, who finish passing Lsh in the centre, to be on time or the active lady will struggle to be ready to dance down the centre.

Track Notes:

On the Overland Track, it was wonderful to be so remote from roads and civilisation – to just rely on each other and our careful planning and to enjoy being in such varied landscapes and moods of nature. The temptation to climb Cradle Mountain was great. The day was wet, cold and as we climbed, we watched distant, deep, dark clouds closing in on us. Our attempt was foiled as we were enveloped in snow and sleet and the wind whipped us.

The hey represents the four walkers weaving their way single file across the buttongrass and up the hills, the allemande represents weaving past tarns, trees and rocks and the balance symbolises gazing (and even leaning) out from Marion's Lookout above Dove Lake. After that, another hey represents tramping single file in the rain across the Cradle Plateau to seek respite in Kitchen Hut. The fifth figure represents the (attempted) ascent and rapid descent of Cradle Mountain (beaten back by incoming horizontal snow). This is shorter than the usual down the middle, but that's because we only got part way up the mountain. The final star stands for the snow flakes which raced past us and which later blanketed the hills.

Music: 32 bar contra tunes at 116-120 beats/minute

Suggested Tunes: Adelaide Bop, Bonaparte lost in Ainslie

116bpm **Adelaide Bop** Rob Mahony

A G C6 C9 D9 G6 G \flat 6 D7

G C6 C9 D9 G G \flat 6 ¹ D G ² D G

B G G6 C9 D9 D9 C \sharp 9 D9

G G6 C9 D9 G G \flat 6 ¹ D9 G ² D9 G

These tunes are classic MUC tunes. They can go pretty fast 120+bpm but are best taken a bit slower for this dance. Adelaide Bop was written on the mandolin during the drive back to Canberra from the '94 National Folk Festival. Bonaparte was written a year or two earlier after I was inspired into playing New England style fiddle by Rodney Miller when he visited Australia for the '90 National Folk Festival in Canberra. The name plays on the names of the classic tunes 'Bonaparte crossing the Rhine', 'Bonaparte's Retreat' and 'Bonaparte crossing the Rocky Mountains' from the old-time tradition. Ainslie is a suburb in Canberra with many winding streets and a reputation that visitors drive in with confidence and emerge an hour later completely disoriented having never found what they were looking for. The chord progressions are written by my friend Kevin Bradley for the electric guitar and give the tunes a nice jazzy feel.

112bpm **The Road to Jamberoo Pass** Rob Mahony

A F \sharp m Bm F \sharp m E C \sharp m E

F \sharp m Bm F \sharp m E C \sharp m E F \sharp m

F \sharp m Bm F \sharp m E C \sharp m E

F \sharp m Bm E A Bm D A

B A ³ E

A ³ E Bm A G \sharp ¹ F \sharp m ² F \sharp m

The second tune is written for the road to Bob and Sheila McInnes' home at the top of Jamberoo Pass. The B part was written in May 2006 and was too good to leave hanging, however, it took until February 2009 before I managed to work up an A part that fits. In the chords, the G \sharp ^o is a G sharp diminished chord.



Dolerite columns, Mount Oakleigh

112bpm **The Last Reel of Major Francois Otenin** Rob Mahony

Sheet music for "The Last Reel of Major Francois Otenin" in G major, 2/4 time. The piece consists of two main sections, A and B.

Section A: Measures 1-8. Chords: A, D, A, D, E. Includes a triplet of eighth notes in measure 5.

Section B: Measures 9-16. Chords: E, A, D, B7, E, A, B, E7, E, A, D, B7, E, A. Includes first and second endings.

These tunes are a pair of Scottish style reels. The first tune was written in '97-'98 during a two year post I held in the University of Compiegne, France. Major Francois Otenin was killed defending Compiegne against the Prussian advance of the 1870's. All the paintings from the town hall show him valiantly defending the walls of the château, however, the plaque to his passing was just opposite our apartment in the tortuous one-way ruelles of the cheap end of town. I have always suspected he was actually running away when the Prussians finally caught up, but this explanation was strenuously opposed by my French colleagues.

116bpm **Bonaparte Lost in Ainslie** Rob Mahony

Sheet music for "Bonaparte Lost in Ainslie" in G minor, 2/4 time. The piece consists of two main sections, A and B.

Section A: Measures 1-8. Chords: Gm, C9, D9, Gm, F9, F#9. Includes first and second endings.

Section B: Measures 9-16. Chords: Gm, C9, D9, Gm, C9, D9, Gm, Gm, C9, D9, Gm, C9, D9, Gm, F. Includes first and second endings.



Cradle Mountain and Dove Lake

Waterfall Valley Cascade

By Pauline Allingham, Canberra, Jan 2010 **Difficulty:** Intermediate

Formation: Square **Steps:** Walking step

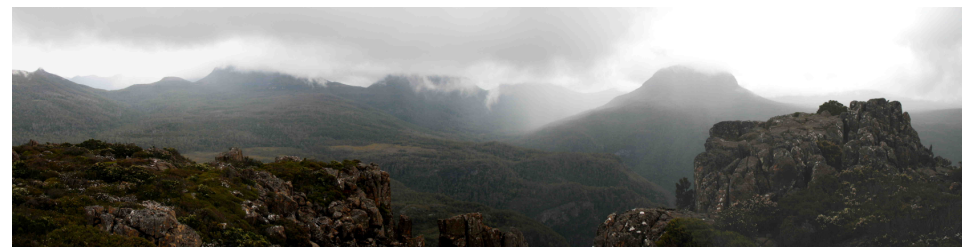
Bars	Call	Details
4 (A1)	Men Rh star	and Lh twirl ptnr under to lead lady into
4	Ladies Lh star	
4 (A2)	Star promenade	Ladies collect partners and star promenade $\frac{3}{4}$ (Wsh hold). (This is your new progressed position)
4	Side ladies chain; tops swing	New side ladies chain and advance two steps to close into side lines while new tops swing and end facing into the set along the side lines. The set should end in side lines in improper formation.
40 (B1) (B2) (A1) (A2) (B1)	Crossover Cascade ²	Top couple R allemande once, L allemande on the side, Rh cross, L allemande on the side, etc., to bottom of set. Finish with a L allemande with fourth cpl, and full R allemande with partner to return to improper position below fourth cpl. Second cpl wait 8 bars [16 beats], until 1s are with third couple, and then begin the same pattern. Third couple follow as above. Fourth couple follow as above. All couples wait for fourth couple to reach the bottom. [Note that the set is now displaced by a set length down the hall] [4 bars] Walk back up to place holding nearer hands with ptnr.
8 (B2)	Swing to place	Swing to progressed place (where you were after the star promenade) in square. [Long swing] ³

Track Notes:

One of the highlights of the Overland Track for me came on our third day. Although we arrived at Pelion Hut too late for our mooted trip up Mt Oakleigh, Rob and I looked at each over lunch and decided to go for it anyway. It was one of the fastest bush walks I've ever done – exhausting, exhilarating, challenging and with a glorious view from the top. The dance was written on the bus on the way back from the Overland Track. The gallop represents Rob and me dashing off to climb Mt Oakleigh whilst Cathy and Pauline 'guard the bunks' in New Pelion Hut. The hey evokes the constant weaving and rock and log hopping over mud holes, whilst trying not to widen the track. The mud was deep in places. The arches stand for the rush up and down the ridges. The star symbolises the glorious panoramic views which surrounded us on the top.

Music: Jigs are good because their bounce evokes the log hopping quite well. Don't use really fast tunes as the hey becomes hard. Speed 112 bpm.

Suggested Tunes: Last Reel of Major Francois Otenin,
Road to Jamberoo



View from Mt Oakleigh

Mt Oakleigh Dash / Of Mud and Mountains

By David Wanless, Tasmania, Dec 2007 **Difficulty:** Medium

Formation: Duple improper longways for as many as will

Steps: Scottish travelling steps or contra-style swingy walking steps (depending on the music chosen)

Bars	Call	Details
8 (A1)	1s gallop down and back	Finish between 2s
8 (A2)	Hey across	Reel of 4: 1s give Rsh to start. Cut the reel slightly short to finish with the 1s below (progressed), holding nearer hands with neighbour.
2 (B1)	Arch across	“Ladies” side over (2 nd M under)
2	California twirl	Change places with neighbour with lady turning acw under man’s Rh and man walking around behind lady, to face back across the set
2	Arch back	“Ladies” side over (i.e., the other couple)
2	California twirl	To face back across the set
4 (B2)	R h star	Rh star once around
4	Swing partner	Be sure to finish on correct side



Dashing
Mount
Oakleigh
summiteers

Hints:

1. Keep your square set very tight or the first three figures will take too long.
2. The Crossover Cascade is a new figure specifically written for this dance:
 - Don’t mention Strip the Willow – it confuses people as they try to do Rh turns in the middle rather than crossing Rh.
 - Each couple takes 12 bars to finish their part of the Crossover Cascade, so the whole cascade takes 36 bars plus the final four bars to walk back to the top.
 - Couples on the side need to be ready to turn again very soon after turning in the cascade. Don’t step up much after turning each time on the side.
 - At the end of the Crossover Cascade the set will be in reverse improper formation.
3. For the swing the side ladies will have to move across the set to their partners.

Track Notes:

The evening we walked into Waterfall Valley we had a full on summer storm; cold, wet and very windy. It was a relief to get to the hut, even though the hut was as full of people as it could possibly manage. The next morning there were still the occasional showers but the the weather had improved enough to do the side trip to see the first of the waterfalls and there was snow on the hills. The stars represent getting organised in Waterfall Valley hut in the morning, sorting out gear, packing lunch, etc. Then collect your partners and set out on the walk, dropping your packs above the waterfall, and making your way down through the scrub. The Crossover Cascade, which was created for this dance, is the waterfall, while the final swing shows the good spirits of the group as the weather improved towards evening and we decided to camp out.

Music: 64 bar American reels at 112-116 beats/minute

Play an even number of times if playing 32 bar tunes.

Suggested Tunes: Old Canberra Inn, Bobcats Reel

112bpm **Old Canberra Inn** Rob Mahony

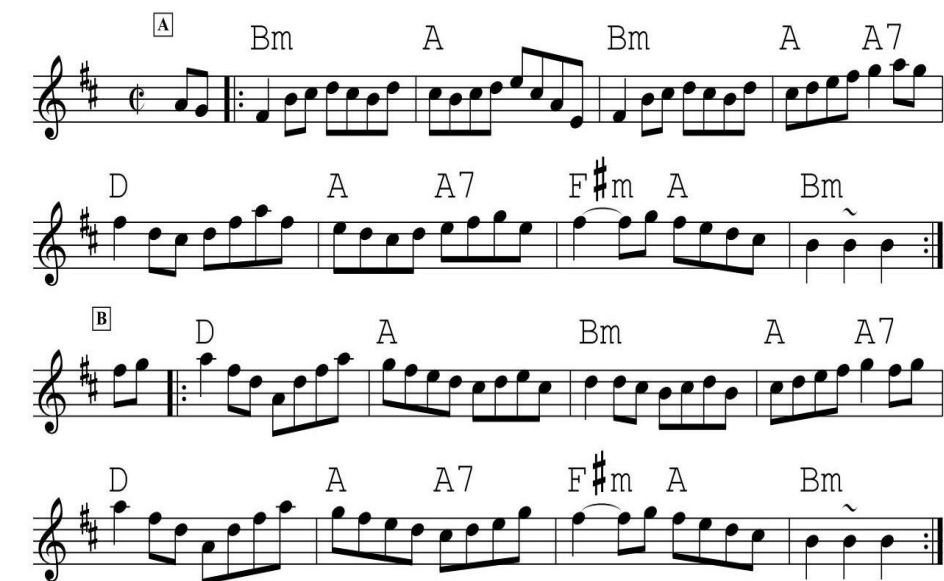


Old Canberra Inn and The Bobcat Reel are old-time style reels written in 2005 and inspired by the old time music sessions at the old Canberra Inn. The bracketed (G) chord in the A part of Old Canberra Inn can be skipped if you want to get a more old-time drone sound. Indeed, you could pretty much play a D chord through the whole tune, although I like the A major feel in the B part.

The second tune is in A Mixolydian, a classic key for old-time tunes, and is named after my band Kitty and the Bobcats.



116bpm **Albany Reel** Rob Mahony



Crossing Pine Forest Moor

116bpm **Procrastination Reel** Rob Mahony

A G C D F C D

G C D F C D G

B C G Am G C G D

C G Am Em C G D G

C G Am G C G D

G C D F C D G

These two tunes are both in a style similar to that of New England Hornpipes. A characteristic of this music is to have a very active harmonic progression in the music that gives the tunes a sort of rolling never ending feel while not being as jazzy or syncopated as the more modern MUC style. The first tune was written in 2003 when I was meant to be marking exams – a recurring theme in my tune writing. The second tune was written in 2005 and uses a key change to brighten and lift the B part for the dancers. Albany is a town in the far south west of Australia that I visited with my parents as a child. There was an aeolian wind harp on a promontory nearby that I still remember all these years later, whose memory inspired this tune.

112bpm **The Bobcats Reel** Rob Mahony

A A G

A A D E A

B A G

A D E A



Pine Forest Moor

By David Wanless, Tasmania, 2008

Difficulty: Medium

Formation: Trios (lines of three) facing trios, arranged like spokes of a wheel around a circle.

Steps: Swingy walking steps in a contra style, although would work with various other alternatives, e.g., skip change of step.

Bars	Call	Details
4 (A1)	Rsh arch	Rsh do-si-do arch with line facing acw holding hands high to make arches
4	Lsh arch	Lsh do-si-do arch with line facing cw making arches
8 (A2)	Contra corners	Centres pass each other Rh, turn their first corners ³ Lh, turn each other Rh, turn their second corners Lh and return to place
8 (B1)	Crossing heys	Ends do full heys for 3 in their own lines. Centres face Rh end person and pass Lsh to start, loop around that person's spot then cross into the other line, giving Lsh to loop around the end person and then cross back to their own line. Their path is an ellipse.
6 (B2)	Circle R	In groups of 6, once around (12 steps)
2	Pass through	4 steps, pass by Lsh, with ends using hands from end of circle to pull through

Hints:

1. The contra corners and hey figures are easier if the two lines of three are relatively close together.
2. If your set can't manage the arches, at least do the do-si-dos. If you wish to simplify the dance, feel free to have the acw line continue to make the arch for the Lsh do-si-do, or to drop the arches entirely.

3. One's first corner is the person on the right hand end of the opposite line when one is facing the opposite line; second corner is the person on the left hand end.

Track Notes:

This dance was inspired by the beauty of Pine Forest Moor – the gnarled pencil pines, the canopy of sheltering trees, the moody sunset across the buttongrass, silhouetting the four ranges of mountains to the west, the view of Mt Oakleigh, the mist rising from the forest below the cliffs, the tarns from which we drew our drinking water and a beautiful mossy track. The arches in A1 represent the canopy of ti-tree, gum, pine, laurel and a great grove of tall pandani.

Music: 32 bar US contra-style tunes suitable for swingy walking. Also works well to Scottish or Irish reels or jigs.

Speed: 116-120 beats/minute

Suggested Tunes: Procrastination Reel in G, Albany Reel



Evening light over Pine Forest Moor