

The Tango is Tasmanian



Photo: Cathy Hutchinson, 2008

Old Time and Set Dances of Tasmania - Our Forgotten Heritage

Compiled by David Wanless

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Foreword

Going to a dance was, and perhaps still is, an important part of community life - a group of people SHARING music, food, conversation, camaraderie as well as the dance itself.

This publication brings together the memories of the older people who attended the dances, the musicians who played, contemporary dancers and The National Library of Australia who collected and documented this material. Working together these 'lost dances' of Tasmania have been preserved as a wonderful resource to share with future generations.

I feel that much credit must be given to my mentor, the late John Meredith, probably Australia's foremost collector of folklore, who first recorded the music and dance of the Dawson family in 1985 at their Franklin home. John shared his enthusiasm for this unique music and dance, and others both from Tasmania and the mainland, followed in his footsteps. The National Library of Australia now has many hours of Tasmanian recordings and video.

Two words keep cropping up regarding these collected dances: 'unique' and 'lost'. Unique because they are very different in structure and presentation to many of the mainland dances and lost (well nearly) because they were recorded just in time.

Congratulations to David for this valuable resource.

Rob Willis
National Library of Australia,
Oral History and Folklore Collections

Introduction

I've been a folk dancer since my Mum ran a Scottish country dance group for children when I was about eight years old. From Scottish dancing I branched out into bush dancing and then at my first National Folk Festival in 1988, into balkan and English country dancing. Since then I've danced in many traditions at many festivals, public dances, parties etc. For a long time I thought that the bush dances I went to in my teens were the traditional Australian dances. Gradually, though, I became aware of an older tradition – the quadrilles, country dances and couples dances which were the social mainstay of 19th and early 20th Century Australia.

The folk dance scene in Hobart has been quite strong for years, and wonderful in many ways (providing great music, exercise, social interaction, healthy activity, humour and the joy of moving to music to thousands of people), but it has been largely a transplanted scene. We have many wonderful dances from Scottish, Irish, US and balkan backgrounds. However, it was only in 1998 with the arrival of Fred Pribac and his efforts in collecting Tasmanian traditional tunes that we were able to start putting on dances with any traditional Tasmanian (or even Australian) element. Thus was born the Buttongrass Ball, which continues annually to this day.

Since Fred's initial efforts I have become aware of more of the work of the collectors who have interviewed many older Tasmanians to learn of their lives, their music and their culture, and seen this enrich our folk scene. Then in 2004, Rob and Olya Willis and Peter Ellis, of whom I'd long been aware, but who I'd never met, came to Tasmania to collect some of the older Tasmanian

dances from older Tasmanians. They invited local dancers to come to the glorious old Palais Theatre in Franklin to try to reconstruct some of the older dances, under instruction from Edie and Paddy Dawson. We had a wonderful day with these two charming larrikins. They were very happy to see the dances they remembered from their younger days being danced again, and we had a lovely time with them, their music and the window into former days which the dances provided.

I hope that this booklet gives you some of the same pleasure that we had that day and have continued to have whenever we've worked on these dances and with those lovely older Tasmanians.

Folk traditions are constantly evolving, but I think it is very valuable to have an insight into their history. Sure you can have a great time dancing without knowing anything of the dances, but I think it adds significantly to the joy of dancing to know a bit about the people and places the dances have come from, and the culture which surrounded them.

This booklet covers only part of the Tasmanian tradition. We decided to limit it to dances long-known in Tasmania prior to about 1960, to catch the last vestiges of the Tasmanian dance scene before the folk revival. The scene has continued to evolve since then, with new dances and dancers coming in from many sources, and many new ones being born here in Tasmania. I hope that through this booklet the ongoing evolution of the dance scene here will be informed of some of the past, and that the dances contained here can continue to be danced. We are dancing them at some of our dances, especially the Buttongrass Ball each year.

Dance Reconstruction

The dance instructions here have been gathered from talking to older Tasmanians who remember dancing or playing for these dances in rural areas of Tasmania during the 1930s to 1960s. They have played the music for us, told us the history and context, told us how the dances were done and demonstrated the dances to us. Often they have not done the dances for many years, and in a few cases may have only observed them in the first place, rather than having danced them.

Betty Cameron and Leo Donohue are still dancing to this day. Paddy and Edie Dawson on the other hand, are in their 80s, and have not been dancing for many decades. Paddy and Edie are not physically able to dance all the steps these days (although they've done an amazing job – it's wonderful to see them dance a bit still).

Of necessity I have thus interpolated and interpreted what I've seen and been told. I have attempted to accurately record what we were shown and told, but this may still be different to what was originally danced all those decades ago. I have included some notes with individual dances about the reconstruction options we had.

The reconstruction of these dances has been a joint project with many contributors. Thanks to Rob, Peter Ellis, Cathy, Stuart, Julie and our Danceoholics friends and other dancers.

We have also chosen names for many of the dances, to differentiate them from other versions of the same dance, for many of them are versions of dances from elsewhere. So, for example, we have the Bothwell Schottische because that's how Betty said it was danced at Bothwell, the Appleshed Alberts because it was often done in apple sheds, and this has a nice alliterative ring to it, and the Huon Varsoviana because that was how Edie and Paddy said that the Varsoviana was done in the Huon valley.

Acknowledgements

I have many people to thank for helping make this booklet happen, many friends and many who have become friends through the music and dancing that have gone into the project.

Without Edie and Paddy Dawson, Betty and Angus Cameron and Leo and Hilda Donohue, who provided the dances and the music I would have had no material. They generously gave their time over and over again to various collectors, including myself, who asked many questions, made them wrack their brains and fussed over details which must sometimes have seemed quite odd. They gave us many wonderful afternoons or evenings of music, stories, supper, songs and dances.

This booklet would never have happened without the encouragement and guidance of Rob Willis. Thanks Rob. It took a long time, but it's finally here.

Peter Ellis and Olya Willis were also crucial parts of that first trip and subsequent information gathering.

Various other folk collectors who've worked in Tasmania over the years have also influenced this work in some way – John Meredith, Fred Pribac, Steve and Marjorie Gadd, Stuart Graham and Julie Edwards.

Stuart and Julie have provided me with most of the musical transcriptions, and Stuart helped with a lot of the early planning, and many good conversations. Via their band the VerandahCoots they will be helping me launch the book this weekend at the Cygnet Folk Festival, which has accepted the idea of a workshop to launch this book and thus given me the impetus to get it finished.

Fred, Stuart, Julie and Dave have also worked with us on presenting these dances to the public at Buttongrass Balls and other dances.

Many of our Danceoholics friends have served as willing guinea pigs helping in testing and reconstructing the dances.

My very patient partner, Cathy, has supported this project in so many ways, including putting up with me spending far too much time poring over videos and typing. She has also helped significantly with the music, the dance instructions and some of the writing.



Cathy and David learning the broom dance from Paddy and Edie, Franklin Palais Theatre, 2004. Photo: Olya Willis.

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 Cathy or myself know. If you'd like any further information, please ask.

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January 2009.

The Tradition Continues

I'm hoping to put some information about this dance booklet on the Folk Federation's web site, and then put any errata or additional information there.

Thanks to the efforts of Stuart and Julie, there are monthly Tassie Tunes sessions and occasional 'mini-squeezes' (get together with the Dawsons and other players of accordions, melodeons, concertinas, windjammers and even saws).

Mike Watts of Celtic Southern Cross is planning to host another National Windjam in the north of the state.

We have an annual Buttongrass Ball at which we dance some of the dances in this booklet, as well as other traditional Australian dances.

There are also many other types of folk dancing going on in Tasmania, from Balkan to Contra and Celtic. Many dances continue to be written here too, including compositions by Betty Cameron, Alison Jones, The Cockies, David Wanless, Krista Sands, Mike Silverwood, Jo Kelly, Dot Newman, Tony Northey, Stuart Graham and Barbara Greenstreet.

If you want to know how you can join in doing these dances in Tasmania today, have a look at www.folktas.org, or contact Cathy or myself as above. There's a lot of fun happening – come and join us!



BUTTONGRASS
BALL

SAT. 28th MARCH '09
7:30-11:30
WESLEY HALL, 58 Melville St, HOBART
(5 mins walk from city centre)

Live music by the **VerandahCoots**

Heritage attire admired. Frock up or show off that waistcoat.

Tickets at the door: \$14/ \$12/ \$10/ \$5 with a plate of supper.

All dances taught. No dancing experience or partner required.

Lively traditional music and heritage dances for everyone. Dances and music from 19th and early 20th Century Australia, dedicated to the natural and cultural heritage of Tasmania.

Proceeds to the Tasmanian National Parks Association.

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Couples Dances

Tassie Tango (also called Franklin Tango)

From Edie Dawson, Franklin, Tasmania.

Formation: Couples start in over-the-shoulder promenade hold facing around line of dance, as usual with men on inside and ladies on outside, man's right arm across the lady's shoulders.

Music: 8 bars. Waltz time (3/4). The Dawsons play 'My Bonnie Lies over the Ocean' or 'Peek-a-boo Waltz'

Bars	Summary/Call	Additional instructions
2	Left 2 3 swivel	Slide forward on left foot, close right foot behind left, slide left forward again and swivel sharply clockwise (as individuals) to face back against the line of dance. Man is now on the right of the lady with his left arm across her shoulders.
2	Right 2 3 swivel	Similarly, with other feet i.e., slide forward on right foot, close left foot behind left, slide right foot forward again and swivel sharply anti-clockwise to face forward along the line of dance. Man is now back on the left of the lady in original position.
4	Left, right, point and drop	Step forward on left, forward on right (past the left), point left foot forward to touch floor in front of right, tap left toe on floor behind right foot whilst bending right knee to drop slightly.
	Repeat many times	

Note: Make the two swivels sharp and neat (without wrenching your partner's arms from their sockets). This gives the dance its "tango" flavour.

Franklin Schottische/Paddy's Schottische

From Paddy Dawson, Franklin, Tasmania.

Formation: Couples around the line of dance, in ballroom hold, with men facing around line of dance, ladies facing back against line of dance.

Music: 8 bars of jig (6/8) or 4 bars of schottische (4/4). The Dawsons play 'Carry me back'. When playing this tune, they play it somewhere between a jig and a schottische, but closer to a jig. Hence the tune is written here in 6/8 time. The dance would also work well to schottische tunes (4/4).

Bars	Summary/Call	Additional instructions
2 (1)	Step in and in	2 side steps in, rocking. Not smooth, sliding, chassez steps; more actual sideways steps, with a bit of a rocking motion of the body. Make half of a 'V' by moving forward along the line of dance.
2 (1)	Step out and out	2 side steps out, rocking. Complete the 'V' by moving forward along the line of dance on the way out.
4 (2)	Polka, polka, polka, polka	Turn twice with 4 flat polka steps
	Repeat many times.	

Note: The bar counts are written for jig tunes, with schottische counts in brackets. To some, the schottische bars will each sound like two bars, as each bar has four dancing beats.

Carry Me Back

Paddy and Edie Dawson, Franklin, Tasmania

The musical notation for 'Carry Me Back' is written in G major (one sharp) and 6/8 time. It consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a G chord and ends with a D7 chord. The second staff begins with a G chord and ends with a G chord. The third staff begins with a C chord and ends with a C chord. The fourth staff begins with a G chord and ends with a G chord. The notation includes various chords (G, D7, C, Bm) and rhythmic patterns typical of a jig or schottische.

Waltz of Cotrillions

From Paddy Dawson, Franklin, Tasmania. Learnt at Grove House, 13/11/08.

Formation: Couples in waltz hold around the line of dance.

Music: 24 bars. Waltz (3/4). The Dawsons play 'Waltz of Cotrillions' – also known as 'The Man on the Flying Trapeze'

Bars	Summary/Call	Additional instructions
16	Circular waltz	Eight waltz turns (16 waltz steps) along line of dance
3	3 mazurka steps	Three mazurka steps with M's left foot, L's right foot, whilst moving forward along the line of dance. Down, hop, hop (on first hop, kick forward with M's left foot, L's right foot)
1	Half turn	Swap sides with partner with 3 steps, M turning backwards (pulling left shoulder back), to end still facing forward along LOD
3	Mazurka – 3 kicks	Three mazurka steps with M's right foot, L's left foot, whilst moving forward along the line of dance. Down, hop, hop (on first hop, kick forward with M's right foot, L's left foot)
1	Half turn	Swap sides with partner, M turning forwards (left shoulder forwards), ready to start again

Waltz of Cotrillions

Paddy & Edie Dawson, Franklin, Tasmania

Waltz

The musical notation consists of three staves of music in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first staff contains 16 bars of music, with chord symbols G, C, Am, D, C, and G above the notes. The second staff contains 3 bars of music, with chord symbols C, Am, D, G, and Fine above the notes. The third staff contains 5 bars of music, with chord symbols C, D, C, G, and D7 above the notes. The music is written in a treble clef and includes various note values and rests.

Paddy and Edie always play the tune this way, which means that the dancers will both start and finish with the waltz.

Background: (From audio recording 00:42:30 in STE-000_amplified_15dB.wav:)

Paddy: "Now you're learning some real oldies. Don't worry about that. You have a couple of real oldies."

David: "Absolutely. It's really good. It's lovely."

Paddy: "... never even 'eard of."

...

Paddy: "Back in them days. It was just about gone out when I first started dancing."

David: "The Waltz of Cotrillions had just about run out, had it?"

Paddy: "It was really gone because you didn't see it done anywhere"

David: "Ok. So where did you learn it then?"

Paddy: "In Dad's time. Dad used to talk about the Waltz of Cotrillions and that's where I got this from, then seeing it once more. It takes a while for things to come back to you. A lot of things have gone past."

David: "So where – you saw it danced at one of the halls?"

Paddy: "At a shed dance somewhere. I'm not sure whether it was Alf Phillips playing it or what, but it was back in them days when it ... Then it seemed to go out altogether"

David: "And your Dad knew it as well?"

Paddy: "He knew it as well in his young days. I suppose he'd be 30 or might even be more than that when I was born." "I'm crawling up, nearly into me 90s. ..." "Well, that was a long time ago." "Put their age when they was young people, nobbing around the dances. Put their age back, when they were young men, young men full of dancing and that, you know."

David: "We're talking about the very early 1900s."

Paddy: "We're scratching the book then." (laughs) "My, it's nice to see it done again."

Eddie: "I was just going to say the same thing. ... It's so nice to see you going around as two couples. You only see them now ... That's not dancing, that's ah ... just gymnastics."

Paddy: "The old time way of dancing – there was something in that, wasn't there? I could say there was something in it that if they only realised today, that old time dancing. You met so many different girls – nice girls." ...

Eddie: "It's grand that it's been kept going."

Eddie: ... "It's graceful."

Paddy: "... Seeing two couples get up for an old time waltz, it's really graceful. You can sit and watch."

Reconstruction notes:

When discussing this dance Paddy says, it's "a real old one", it "has a polka mazurka bit in the dance", it's a "two person dance".

"You can move along hall while kicking, at same speed as old time waltz"

"Keep moving same direction during kicks" (so have to turn, although Paddy didn't do this initially)

Paddy: "Work your way around, don't go back."

We weren't quite sure whether this meant the following: Don't have to turn suddenly at the end.

Work your way around during the kicks so you don't have to swap suddenly when changing feet to kick with.

The turns were put in despite Paddy not doing them when he demonstrated the dance to us, because he said we should keep moving forward along the line of dance. They're also consistent with other mazurkas. Paddy went backwards but he's not very agile at age 89, and gets dizzy easily. It's great that he dances at all.

Heel and Toe Schottische (also called the Highland Fling)

From Paddy Dawson, Franklin, Tasmania.

First learnt (by us) in the middle of a concert at the Franklin Palais Theatre, late 2004. Paddy just stopped playing and got up and showed it to us! This final version learnt at Grove House, 13/11/08. It is less physically demanding and more fun to dance than the earlier version.

Eddie said the dance was also called the Highland Fling.

Formation: Couples facing around the line of dance, side by side in a wide ballroom hold. (Man's R arm behind lady's back, lady's L hand on man's shoulder; other hands joined and out in front.)

Music: 16 bars. Schottische (4/4). The Dawsons played 'Heel and Toe Schottische' (they also call it the 'Highland Fling'), between a jig and a schottische rhythm. This tune is also known as 'Keel Row'.

Bars	Summary/Call	Additional instructions
4	Left heel and toe x 4	Both touch L heel on floor out in front, then tap L toe on floor near other foot; 4 times.
4	Right heel and toe x 4	Both touch R heel on floor out in front, then tap R toe on floor near other foot; 4 times.
8	Polka x 8	Four polka turns
	Repeat many times.	

Variant:

Paddy said that you could move forwards in the heel and toe part of the dance. This makes the dance more energetic.

Note:

The Dawsons occasionally sang words to this dance, akin to "She'll throw me in the pig tub, the pig tub, the pig tub / she'll throw me in the pig tub, behind the door / ... the swine tub ... /".

Alf Phillips' Varsoviana

From Paddy Dawson, Franklin, Tasmania. Learnt at Grove House, 13/11/08.

Formation: Couples around the line of dance, in ballroom hold, men with backs to centre.

Paddy and Edie explained that this is how the Varsoviana is done in the Huon valley (“in the Huon style”).

Music: 12 bars. Varsoviana (3/4). The Dawsons play ‘Alf Phillip's Varsoviana’, which they learnt from Alf Phillips, a musician who played for this dance in the Huon valley.

Bars	Summary/Call	Additional instructions
4	4 waltz steps	Two waltz turns
3	3 mazurka steps with left foot, travelling forward	Letting go outside hand, so standing more side by side with partner: Step, hop, hop – left foot down, hop on right foot closing it up behind the left foot and kicking the left foot out forwards, then hop again with the right foot
1	L, R, L	Waltz step on spot to change feet. Preferably kick out a bit on the R.
3	3 mazurka steps with right foot, travelling forward	Step, hop, hop – right foot down, hop on left foot closing it up behind the right and kicking the right foot out forwards, then hop again with the left foot
1	R, L, R	Waltz step on spot to change feet. Preferably kick out a bit on the L. Join outside hands again ready for the waltz.

Note: Some find it is easier to dance if the lady uses the opposite feet to the man, so starts with her right foot in the mazurka.

Related dances:

This dance has some similarities, in music and some steps, to the Waltz Mazurka described in ‘The Merry Country Dance’.

Alf Phillips Varsoviana

Paddy and Edie Dawson, Franklin, Tasmania

The musical notation consists of two staves in G major, 3/4 time. The first staff contains the melody with chords D7, G, C, G, D7, G, C, G. The second staff contains the accompaniment with chords G, Bm, D7, G, Bm, D7, G. The piece ends with a double bar line and the word 'Fine'.

Huon Varsoviana - "Put your little foot"

From Paddy Dawson, Franklin, Tasmania. He calls it a "Mazurka or Varsoviana".

Learnt at Grove House, 13/11/08.

Formation: Couples around the line of dance, in ballroom hold, men with backs to centre.

This dance appears to be a variant of the Varsoviana.

Music: 16 bars. Varsoviana (3/4). The Dawsons play 'Fly Away Little Dove' – similar to 'Eileen McCoys Varsoviana No 2'

Bars	Summary/Call	Additional instructions
4	Step, hop, hop Step, hop, hop Step, hop, hop and point	3 mazurka steps and a point forwards along LOD Step, hop, hop – front foot down, hop on rear foot closing it up behind the front foot and kicking the front foot out forwards, then hop again with the rear foot (After the point, you need to change weight onto the pointed foot. Don't do this too quickly or you'll lose the emphasis of the point.)
4	Step, hop, hop Step, hop, hop Step, hop, hop and point	3 mazurka steps and a point back against LOD Don't change hold but do look back the other way!
8	8 waltz steps	Four waltz turns

Words which Paddy sang:

(Mazurka section)

"Put your little foot, put your little foot, put your little foot, right out
Put your other foot, put your other foot, put your other foot, right out

(Waltz section)

Don't strain your ankle
Whatever you do
The next dance is waiting
For me and for you"

Reconstruction notes:

Paddy says it has a tap/kick in it. It's different from Alf Phillip's Varsoviana. Point on the "out" in the song.

Fly Away Little Dove

Paddy and Edie Dawson, Franklin, Tasmania

Varsoviana

The Tap

(Not filmed)

From Edie Dawson, Franklin, Tasmania.

Discussed at Grove House, 13/11/08.

Edie explained that this was any other couples dance but men could swap partners by tapping other men on the shoulder.

One Hop Polka

From Paddy Dawson, Franklin, Tasmania.

Learnt at Grove House, 13/11/08.

Formation: Couples around the line of dance, in ballroom hold, men with backs to centre.

This dance appears to be the standard three hop polka, or polka, described in 'Take Your Partners' and 'The Merry Country Dance'.

Music: Polka (2/4). The tune which the Dawsons play appears to be a medley of polkas.

One Hop Polka

Paddy and Edie Dawson, Franklin, Tasmania

Polka

The musical score for 'One Hop Polka' is written in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. It consists of six staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 2/4 time signature. The melody is composed of eighth and quarter notes. Chord markings are placed above the staff: G, C, G, D7, G. The second staff continues the melody with chord markings C, G, D7, G. The third staff has chord markings D7, G. The fourth staff has chord markings D7, G. The fifth staff has chord markings D7, G, D7, G. The sixth staff has chord markings D7, G, D7, G. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Three Hop Polka

From Edie and Paddy Dawson, Franklin, Tasmania.

Learnt at Grove House, 13/11/08.

Paddy said he never really had much to do with the Three Hop Polka, although he did demonstrate it to us a bit. Edie demonstrated a bit too.

According to Edie, it has a “lot more jump” than the One Hop Polka. Both feet are off the ground at the same time. It includes high kicks.

Formation: Couples holding two hands and facing each other.

Music: Polka (2/4). The Dawsons play ‘Flakey Trot’, which is similar to ‘Tell Me Ma’.

Bars	Summary/Call	Additional instructions
Last beat of previous bar	Hop	On the “and”, the fourth beat of the bar, hop on L foot, kicking R foot out diagonally forwards (beside your partner)
1	Down 2 3 Hop	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Step onto R foot2. Step onto L foot3. Step onto R foot4. Hop onto R foot, kicking L foot out diagonally forwards (beside your partner)
1	Down 2 3 Hop	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Step onto L foot2. Step onto R foot3. Step onto L foot4. Hop onto L foot, kicking R foot out diagonally forwards (beside your partner)

You can travel sideways, forwards, backwards or turn around, but generally keep moving along the line of dance.

Although Edie said “we used to jump a lot and kick high” we suspect she may not have meant kicking to waist level, although it is possible to go wild and silly with this dance, spinning rapidly and kicking almost to waist height. The author, who would of course never dance like this, wouldn’t recommend it on a crowded dance floor. Edie and Paddy seemed to appreciate it though.

Half-turn Schottische/Leo's Half-turn Schottische

From Leo Donohue, Kimberley, Tasmania.

Formation: Couples around the line of dance, in ballroom hold, with men facing around line of dance, ladies facing back against line of dance.

Summary: Very similar to the Franklin Schottische, but with a nice twist. Music is much harder to find though. Leo describes it as follows "If you don't listen to the music you're going to get out. You do an ordinary schottische twice. Then you do the steps of a schottische but you only turn once. It's quite easy. Just like falling out of bed."

Music: Schottische (4/4). Unusual phrasing: 4+4+3+3 bars for a total of 14 bars.

Bars	Summary/Call	Additional instructions
1	Slide in and in	Two smooth, sliding, chassez steps in. Make half of a 'V' by moving forward along the line of dance.
1	Slide out and out	Complete the 'V' by moving forward along the line of dance on the way out.
2	Waltz, waltz, waltz, waltz	Turn twice with four waltz steps
4	Repeat once	
2	Slide in and in Out and out	
1	Waltz, waltz	One waltz turn
3	Repeat	
	Repeat whole dance many times	

Note: To some, these bars will each sound like two bars, as each bar has four dancing beats.

The difference in style between the rocking for the Franklin Schottische and the sliding for the Half-turn Schottische, may be as much to do with the individual styles and physical abilities of Paddy and Leo, as much as true regional variations. We have not managed to track down any other dancers who know these dances, to compare.

Half Turn Schottische

Leo Donohue, Golden Valley, Tas

Schottische

It is also reasonable to finish with two G notes on the last time through to resolve the tune.

Bothwell Schottische

From Betty and Angus Cameron, Westbury, Tasmania

Betty said that she learnt this from a man in his 70s at a dance in Bothwell c. 1963. She had danced the Schottische before but this man taught her to do it properly, swapping sides.

Formation: Couples in ballroom hold, with the man facing along the LOD and the lady with her back to the line of dance. Partners should be slightly offset, so that their right hips are opposite each other's.

Music: 8 bars. Schottische (4/4).

Bars	Summary/Call	Additional instructions
2	Step, together, step, hop Step, together, step, hop	M backs W along LOD with 2 schottische steps. Partners should be slightly offset – R hip opposite to R hip, and should swap sides after the first schottische step to have L hip opposite to L hip. The hop is very understated - just a pause with a slight lift of the other foot.
2	Waltz, waltz, waltz, waltz	Two fast waltz turns
2	Step, together, step, hop Step, together, step, hop	Repeat the schottische
2	Waltz, waltz, waltz, waltz	Repeat the waltz
	Repeat many times	

Note: The Camerons are very neat dancers, taking small, smooth, almost sliding steps and never lifting their feet far from the floor.

Related dances:

Schottisches in 'Take Your Partners' and 'The Merry Country Dance'.

Camerons' Prince of Wales Schottische

From Betty and Angus Cameron, Westbury, Tasmania)

Formation: Couples in ballroom hold, side on to LOD – M facing out, L in.

Music: 12 bars. 'Prince of Wales Schottische' (4/4). The book 'River of Whisky' includes 'Seven Step Polka' and 'Bodmin Riding' as tunes used for this dance.

Bars	Summary/Call	Additional instructions
1	Side, together, side, together	Step, close, step, close to M's left, W's right
1	Walk, 2, 3, 4 (side, through, side, together)	Step sideways with leading foot, through with rear foot, sideways with leading foot, together.
2	and back	Repeat above steps back the other direction
2	Step, together, step, hop Step, together, step, hop	M backs W along LOD with 2 schottische steps. Partners should be slightly offset – R hip opposite to R hip, and should swap sides after the first schottische step to have L hip opposite to L hip. The Camerons dance a very understated hop - just a pause with a slight lift of the other foot.
2	Waltz, waltz, waltz, waltz	Two fast waltz turns
2	Step, together, step, hop Step, together, step, hop	Repeat the schottische
2	Waltz, waltz, waltz, waltz	Repeat the waltz
	Repeat many times	

Note: The Camerons are very neat dancers, taking small, smooth, almost sliding steps and never lifting their feet far from the floor.

Related dances:

Donohue's Prince of Wales Schottische below, and other Prince of Wales Schottisches in 'The Merry Country Dance'.

Donohues' Prince of Wales Schottische

From Leo and Hilda Donohue, Golden Valley, Tasmania)

Formation: Couples in ballroom hold, side on to LOD – M facing out, L in.

Music: 12 bars. 'Prince of Wales Schottische' (4/4).

Bars	Summary/Call	Additional instructions
1	Side, together, side, together	Two chassez steps to M's left, W's right
1	Slide, slide, slide, slide	Four galop (fast chassez) steps sideways (to M's left, W's right)
2	and back	Repeat above steps back the other direction
2	Step, together, step, hop Step, together, step, hop	M backs W along LOD with 2 schottische steps. Partners should be slightly offset – R hip opposite to R hip, and should swap sides after the first schottische step to have L hip opposite to L hip. The hop is very understated - just a pause with a slight lift of the other foot.
2	Waltz, waltz, waltz, waltz	Two fast waltz turns
2	Step, together, step, hop Step, together, step, hop	Repeat the schottische
2	Waltz, waltz, waltz, waltz	Repeat the waltz
	Repeat many times	

Notes:

This is the same as the Cameron's version except for the galops in bars 3-4 in place of the Cameron's side, through, side, close movement.

Like the Camerons, the Donohues are very neat dancers, taking small, smooth, almost sliding steps and never lifting their feet far from the floor.

The Donohues do not dance the schottische steps offset very much from each other, and so do not swap sides to nearly the same extent as do the Camerons.

Leo also finishes the dance with a nice stamp on the L foot at the end of the music (the last time through). He's a very neat but flamboyant dancer.

Leo never taught us or demonstrated to us this dance. The author merely observed that when Betty Cameron was teaching and demonstrating her schottische (the 'Bothwell Schottische' above), Leo and Hilda were not doing what she was saying, but rather were dancing the dance described here. See Liffey video DV04.

Related dances:

Camerons' Prince of Wales Schottische

Other Prince of Wales Schottisches in 'The Merry Country Dance'.

Polka Mazurka

From Betty Cameron, Westbury, Tasmania and Paddy Dawson, Franklin, Tasmania
(Recordings: DV02, 07:40 and DV04, 17:37 (Betty), DV03, c. 0:09:00 (Paddy))

Seen by Betty Cameron in c. 1959 at Bothwell dances and then learnt in Triabunna c. 1963

Formation: Couples in ballroom hold.

M starts with L foot, W with R.

Music: Polka Mazurka (3/4). The Dawsons play 'Polka Mazurka'. They also learnt 'Sally Sloane's' from Rob Willis. Note that what is called a 'Polka Mazurka' in Tasmania would often be called a 'Mazurka' elsewhere.

Bars	Summary/Call	Additional instructions for ladies	For men
1.1	Cock-your	Hop on L ft whilst kicking sideways with straight R leg	Hop on R ft whilst kicking sideways with straight L leg
1.2	leg	Step on R ft	Step on L ft
1.3	up	Step on L ft	Step on R ft
2.1	Cock-your	Hop on L ft whilst kicking sideways with straight R leg	Hop on R ft whilst kicking sideways with straight L leg
2.2	leg	Step on R ft	Step on L ft
2.3	up	Step on L ft	Step on R ft
3	1, 2, 3	Step on R ft, L ft, R ft	Step on L ft, R ft, L ft
	Repeat with opposite feet		
	Repeat many times		

Note: You dance around the line of dance, turning as a couple.

Notation: 1.1 means the first beat of bar 1, 1.2 means the second beat of bar 1 etc.

Words: "Kick-your leg out, kick-your leg out, 1, 2, 3, kick-your leg out, kick-your leg out, 1, 2, 3."
(Or "Cock-your leg up, cock-your leg up, 1, 2, 3, ...")

Note that "Kick-your" or "Cock-your" are run together as they take only one beat of the music.

The dance could also be called or taught as "kick, 2, 3, kick, 2, 3, change, 2, 3".

Polka Mazurka

Paddy and Edie Dawson, Franklin, Tasmania

The musical notation is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. It consists of four staves. The first two staves are the upper voice, and the last two are the lower voice. The melody is characterized by eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together. Chords G, D7, and D are indicated above the notes.

When Betty was introducing this dance to us at Liffey in 2004, she said:

“I first saw this up at Bothwell when we came out to Tasmania. We came to Bothwell in June 1958. For a year we just sat in the house - looking at each other, playing cards - and we eventually made some friends and we started going to the dances. It was up in Bothwell and up at The Steppes, if you all know where the Steppes is. I’m blown if I could pick up that dance. Because nobody actually took time to show you. You were just supposed to get up and do it as we did for all the rest of the dances. Then we moved to Triabunna after three and a half years. They were doing it down there. This chap got me up and he counted it out and away I went. If I can do it, you can all do it.”

Related dances:

Polka Mazurka which Angus Cameron knew from Scotland, which had fewer hops.

Tasmanian Maxina

From Betty and Angus Cameron, Westbury, Tasmania

Formation: Couples in over the shoulder promenade hold.

Betty and Angus learned this at Triabunna in c. 1963, although Angus had learnt a Maxina in Scotland. Betty wasn’t allowed to go the Saturday night dances in Scotland.

Music: 24 bars of slow 4/4 schottische or barn dance tunes (played at c. 28-32 bars per minute)

Suitable tunes: “Maxina”

Bars	Summary/Call	Additional instructions
2	Rock fwd, back Fwd back	Step fwd on L ft, kick R ft fwd Step back on R ft and cut with L ft (lift it across in front of R ft with slightly bent knee and toes pointing slightly down) Repeat
2	Fwd, 2, 3, kick Back, 2, 3, touch	Three steps fwd (L, R, L), kick R Three steps back (R, L, R), touch ball of L ft to floor behind.
2	Left and Right and Pivot, 2, 3, hitch	Slow step fwd with L ft Slow step fwd with R ft, crossing it over the L ft (a lock) Faster step fwd with L ft whilst pivoting (1/2 turn) cw on it to face the opposite direction (against the LOD) Step backwards (so continuing on along the LOD) with R ft Step back with L ft Hitch step back with R ft – bring it back next to the L ft but don’t put it down.
2	Right and Left and Pivot, 2, 3, touch	Slow step fwd on R ft Slow step fwd on L ft Faster step onto R ft whilst pivoting acw to face original direction Step bwds on L ft, R ft Touch bwd on L ft to close feet
1	Grapevine – fwd, pivot, back, close	Grapevine diagonally to the right: Step diagonally fwd with L ft Step fwd with R ft whilst pivoting on L ft

		to face the centre Step back with L ft away from the centre Step back with R ft to close next to L ft whilst pivoting on L ft to face fwds
3	Repeat grapevine x 3	
2	Fwd, point, behind Fwd	Step fwd on L ft Point R ft in front and touch ball to floor Touch toe of R ft on floor behind whilst bending L knee to dip slightly Step fwd on R ft
1	Point, behind	Point L ft in front and touch ball to floor Touch toe of L ft on floor behind and dip slightly
1	Slow and slow and	Step fwd on L ft Step fwd on R ft
2	Fwd, 2, 3, lift Back, 2, 3, touch	Step fwd on L, R, L, lift R Step back with R, L, R, touch L beside R
2	Slow and slow and Turn the lady under	Two slow steps fwd – L, R Turn lady cw under man’s raised R arm whilst taking two slow steps L (balancing away from partner), R (balancing towards partner and taking ballroom hold)
4	Waltz, waltz, waltz, waltz waltz, waltz, waltz, waltz	8 waltz steps (4 waltz turns) of gliding, circular chassez around LOD
	Repeat as required	

Notes:

As always, Betty and Angus danced this dance very neatly and smoothly, with feet close to the floor and kicks being gentle raisings of the feet.

Reconstruction notes:

In the original video of 2004, Betty used her outside (R ft) instead of her L ft to start the dance, and to start the last four bars before the final waltz, but I have clarified with her that the lady should definitely use the L ft in both cases. This avoids two difficult weight changes which she executed very neatly but which would be hard to teach.

In his article “Collecting in Tasmania”, Peter Ellis writes of seeing an unusual version of the Maxina in 1980 or 1981:

“We played for a ball in Hobart (Town Hall I think) and this was written up in the Mercury of the day with a photograph which to my regret I never procured. However it was at this ball I recall a very distinctive version of the Maxina. From memory it was the grapevine section that had a sort of dip and point of the toe (and I think Shirley commented this was like the original English version). As I was playing on the two occasions I saw this form of Maxina, I was not able to notate it.”

Then of the version documented above, he writes that it was “different to my recollections at Hobart 24 years ago.”

However, the section immediately after the grapevine does have a point of the toe which is not in the Victorian version, so perhaps this is what Peter and Shirley had noticed all those years ago.

Related dances:

There are many other versions of the Maxina. See, for example, ‘Take Your Partners’ and ‘The Merry Country Dance’. The first, Victorian, version in ‘The Merry Country Dance’, is very similar to the Bothwell version, but not the same. It has a longer waltz section and a different section after the grapevine.

Set Dances

Appleshed Alberts / Franklin Alberts

From Paddy Dawson, Franklin, southern Tasmania.

Note that Paddy just called this dance ‘The Alberts’.

Formation: 16 cpls in a square. 8 people on each side of square, standing opposite partners – two lines of 8 ladies (standard quadrille numbering 1s and 3s), facing partners, two lines of 8 gentlemen (2s and 3s). So ladies have backs to band or are on band’s right, gentlemen are facing band or are on band’s left.

It may be easiest when forming sets to form sets of 16 couples, four couples to a side, and then ask all the ladies in positions 2 and 4 to swap places with the gentlemen opposite them.

If done after a grand march, form into squares and then swap as above.

You can also do the dance with a smaller number of couples, but need to have someone to face. You may also need to adjust the length of swings, advance and retires etc. to match the music – essentially longer swings, shorter steps. There is no requirement to have the same number of tops as sides – in some apple sheds or small school halls there would have been much more room for sides than tops, so you might have only four people across the top and bottom, but eight on each side, for a total of 24 people (twelve couples) in a set. The dance also works well with 8 couples in total (four people to a side).

We have tried the dance with six couples to a side, but it begins to become unwieldy, not to mention boring awaiting your turn.

Note on “Mooching”:

Paddy was at great pains to tell us not to just walk in the advance and retire in the first two figures. You need to “mooch”, which as Paddy demonstrated it, meant swaggering along with higher steps than usual, bent knees and a bit of arm swinging.

Caveat: This appears to be only a partial dance and we’ve had a couple of variants of it as Paddy has recalled different fragments. It is tempting to attempt to standardise it by making the chain a grand chain of some sort, or to put partners next to each other, but we’ve decided to leave it as close to Paddy’s recollection as possible. As it stands, it is a relatively quick, quirky and good fun dance which can be hammed up and enjoyed in a rough and ready style. As Paddy says “It doesn’t matter if you’re not spot on ... – it’s still a get-together to the music.”

Figure 1: Tops Show Off

Music: 8 bar intro + 8 x 16 bars. Set tunes (4/4). The Dawsons play 'Dawsons' Fig 1' – similar to 'March from Rob Roy'. Possibly MacGregor's March.

Bars	Summary/Call	Additional instructions
(8)	Honour partner and set	Introduction
8	Top left diagonal advance, retire (twice if there's time in a smaller set)	Top left lady and bottom left man advance and retire (6 steps in plus a bow or curtsey in the middle, 6 steps out plus another bow or curtsey) "Mooch" rather than just walk. In a smaller set (e.g., 8 couples), advance and retire twice but with only four steps each way.
8	Swing	Same couple advance, swing with two hands and retire. Swing with open hands, right shoulder to right shoulder, left arm across own chest, M's hands palm upwards with fingers curled over lady's fingers, L's hands palm downwards with fingers curled over M's fingers.
16	Top right diagonal advance, retire, and Swing	Top right lady and bottom right man repeat
16	Second left diagonal	Second lady from left at top and second man from left at bottom repeat
16	Second right diagonal	Second lady from right at top, second man from right at bottom
16	Third left lady and opposite	Third top lady from left with man opposite her (her partner!)
16	Third right lady and opposite	
16	Fourth left lady and opposite	
16	Fourth right lady and opposite	

If there are only eight couples in total, i.e., 4 people per side, do two diagonals and then two straight advances.

Overall note: There is a lot of waiting in this figure. Each 'couple' should use their time in the spotlight to **show off their finery, style or enthusiasm** with flourishes or special (or just especially enthusiastic) swings. The other couples, including the sides, should all clap and otherwise show their appreciation. Remember that this is a rural dance not a high society one. Have fun! Swing hard (but safely).

The music stops briefly before ...

Figure 2: Sides Show Off

Music: 4 bar intro + 8 x 16 bars. 6/8 set tune. The Dawsons play 'Dawsons' Fig 2' – a variant of 'One Hundred Pipers'.

As for figure 1 except that the side couples dance.

The music stops briefly before ...

Figure 3: “Chain” (actually a circle)

Music: 4 bar intro + 32 bars. 6/8 set tune. The Dawsons play ‘Dawsons’ Fig 3’ – similar to ‘Get back to your Mother, you Red Headed Bugger’ (also known as Repaz)

Bars	Summary/Call	Additional instructions
(4)		Introduction – honour partner and set
32	Circle left all the way around to place	

The band should stop whenever the dancers reach home. The MC should clap his hands to tell the band to stop.

The music stops briefly before ...

Figure 4: Daisy Lines

Formation: Top and bottom lines (or side lines if the hall suits that better). All ladies in one line with backs to band, facing men in another line. Link elbows in the line.

Music: 4 bar intro + 56 bars + waltz the hall. Waltz (3/4). The Dawsons play ‘Daisy’, then ‘Dad’s Waltz’ for the waltz on.

Bars	Summary/Call	Additional instructions
(4)		Introduction – honour partner and set
8	Lines advance	Seven slow, high steps, knees bent and feet forward (not pointed). Imagine you’re wearing big boots. Honour your partner.
8	Retire	
8	Advance	Second time
8	Retire	
8	Advance	Third time
8	Retire	
8	Advance	
Until the end of the music	Take your opposite and waltz the hall	Waltz anticlockwise around the line of dance. If you were clever in positioning yourself in the line your opposite may even be (or not be!) your partner.

Note: called “Daisy” because that was the tune the Dawsons played for it and remembered it by.

Alternatives remembered by Paddy at various times:

- In figure 2, sides do only the swings, not the advance and retires.
- Instead of figure 3, do a free for all swing – Paddy was later sure that that was wrong and he’d been talked into it in the first place.
- Instead of or as well as the circle in the third “chain” figure, the men swing each woman twice and so on until they’re back home. He initially said to use a two-hand swing, but then thought perhaps a right arm one. This figure sounds convincing and like some form of grand chain but doesn’t work with the all men/all women lines, which Paddy did repeatedly mention.
- In figures 1 and 2, the next couple can start when the previous one is mooching out after the swing.
- In figures 1 and 2, instead of doing the diagonals, always mooch and swing with your partner directly opposite you.

Alternative Figure 3: Free-for-all Swing (Paddy was later sure that this was wrong)

Bars	Summary/Call	Additional instructions
(4)		Introduction – honour partner and set
32	Swing anyone you can grab	Two hand swing as above. Feel free to improvise – swing backwards, even change partners.

From original tapes (2003):

Paddy: “Up and back, up and back, and up and swing”

“Corner to corner”

Third figure: “I forget how it goes, but they all scramble up”

Paddy: “I’ve never been up in ‘em but I’ve seen ‘em done.”

Third figure: “all come in at same time – tops and sides.” “swing and chain” (although chain was first said by Rob)

Dawson's Alberts Fig 1

Paddy and Edie Dawson, Franklin, Tasmania

Musical notation for Dawson's Alberts Fig 1, 4/4 time signature, G major key signature. The notation consists of four staves of music with various chords (G, C, D, D7) indicated above the notes.

It may be easier for the musicians to repeat each eight bar phrase, although the Dawsons don't.

Dawson's Alberts Fig 2

Paddy and Edie Dawson, Franklin, Tasmania

Musical notation for Dawson's Alberts Fig 2, 6/8 time signature, G major key signature. The notation consists of four staves of music with various chords (G, C, D) indicated above the notes.

It may be easier for the musicians to repeat each eight bar phrase, although the Dawsons don't.

Dawsons Alberts Fig 3

Paddy and Edie Dawson, Franklin, Tasmania

Musical notation for Dawson's Alberts Fig 3, featuring two staves in 6/8 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first staff contains the melody with a repeat sign at the beginning. The second staff contains the accompaniment. Chords are indicated above the notes: D7, G, B, D7, G, D7, Am, C, Am, D7, F#, G, D7, G, D7.

Dawson's Alberts Fig 4:

Daisy

Traditional

waltz

Musical notation for Dawson's Alberts Fig 4, featuring four staves in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first staff contains the melody with a repeat sign at the end. The second staff contains the accompaniment. Chords are indicated above the notes: G, C, G, D7, G, A7, D, D7, G, Em, C, G, D7, G, D7, G, D7, G, D7, G.

Golden Valley Alberts

From Leo Donohue, Kimberley, Tasmania.

Formation: Rectangular set (full hall or possibly two sets to a hall). Couples on tops and sides. Lady on man's right, all facing in.

Works well with 2 or 3 couples per side. Possible with 4 couples per side but need to keep set tight or not worry about the musical phrasing. Beyond 4 couples, almost impossible to keep to musical phrasing as written below, so either ignore it or extend time for some moves. Some of the school or rural Tasmanian halls of the time only fit two or three couples per side anyway, and in bigger halls the dances were reportedly done in multiple sets.

By choice, we do it with two couples per side – eight couples in total. This seems to fit the music fairly nicely, making for a challenging but still neat dance in which it is possible to do all the figures nicely in time.

Rob Willis notes:

The Donohues who once resided at Golden Valley near Deloraine mentioned that the sets - Lancers and Alberts were done in one large square in the Golden Valley schoolhouse and in two large squares at the Red Hill Hall, which was larger. This configuration is used in the "Bellbrook Lances" collected in NSW.

Refer interviews with Charlie and Leo Donohue - Willis collection N.L.A.

Note on twirling: (from Peter Ellis's 'The Merry Country Dance', p. D7):

The style of dancing by Leo and Hilda was typical of their generation where all had most likely danced old time dancing from children. Both were neat, smooth and lively in their performance. One of the noticeable features was the frequent use of the slick courtesy arming movement of the man in leading his partner and presenting her to dance with another man whether corner or opposite. In this the lady is always turned (she twirls using pirouette steps) anticlockwise from a right hand to right hand hold lead by her partner. This is commenced by the man drawing his right hand clasped with hers towards himself; but letting go so that the lady completes the turn herself. Occasionally such as when turning ladies into centre the arming may continue overhead. It was explained by an elderly MC, Colin Silk at Lockwood South near Bendigo, as being a courtesy movement, "you present your lady to the other gentleman to dance with before you yourself swing corners". It is most commonly used in turning ladies to corners, but also to centre and in the Tasmanian version, to swing with the opposite man and in this case the ladies twirl past each other in very precise style. Although there is no description of this arming movement in any of the old dancing manuals that Shirley Andrews references, it is nevertheless an arming procedure that appears common between Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales from Tasmania to Goombungee in Queensland.

Notes for all figures:

When Leo taught this dance at Liffey in 2004 he cut across the musical phrasing a bit, especially whilst waiting for dancers who'd only just learnt this dance, so the author is slightly uncertain about the intended musical phrasing of some sections, especially figure 4.

Another reconstruction of this figure had the phrases with 8, 8, 4, 12 and 16x3 bars, with the 'Waltz with opposite' being 1½ times around the other couple. This was easier to dance, but a bit tedious – a lot of waiting for sides whilst tops were dancing and vice versa. The shorter version here is as consistent with Leo's version as the longer one, and more interesting for the sides whilst waiting for the tops, and vice versa. It makes it more likely that the whole dance can be repeated. Then you can do a waltz the hall at the end of the second (proper) time through the whole dance.

Figure 1: Right and Left Through, Swing, Gallop

Music: 2/4 set tune, 4 x 16 bars. c. 56-60 bars (120 beats) per minute. Leo plays 'Silver Bell'.

Bars	Summary/Call	Additional instructions
(8)		Introduction – salute (honour) partner
8	Tops R & L through	March across set, passing opposite by R. Sh.; change places with partner, M cutting corner (travelling less distance than partner) / Repeat to place
4	Swing	Swing partners, open two hand hold, with arms slightly across own chest
4	Gallop	Leo calls this figure "Promenade" Tops gallop across for four steps and back for four steps, ladies passing back to back both ways
16	Sides repeat	
32	Tops and then sides repeat	

Notes:

1. In a big set, it is not necessary to get all the way across in the R & L through.
2. Leo didn't have the second 32 bars for the tops and sides to repeat but I find that this makes the dance much more enjoyable. People benefit from having the opportunity to do the figure once they've worked it out the first time through. I wouldn't do this for a demonstration.
3. Leo thought that you should probably only salute partners, not corners at the start of the dance, but said that it had been a long time since he'd done the dance.
4. Leo sometimes started the swing early, cutting short the second half of the R & L through.
5. Eight bar gallops and, for some, eight bar swings, are more fun than four and four bar ones, so if historical accuracy is not your prime concern and you have longer music, feel free to dance it that way. We like it as above, though.

Figure 2: Turn Ladies, Top and Bottom Lines

Music: 2/4 set tune, 4 x 32 bars. c. 56-60 bars (120 beats) per minute. Leo plays a tune similar to 'My Love She's But a Lassie Yet' and 'Old Duncan Gray'.

Bars	Summary/Call	Additional instructions
(4)		Introduction
4	Tops lead up, bow and lead out	Lead up Rh in R, bob bow, turn about (don't swap places) and lead out, still Rh in R, turn about and face in again
4	Tops lead up and twirl the lady	Lead up - after two steps start to twirl the lady acw once, hands held high. Release hands; lady dances (with optional turn) acw around the other lady and dances out to meet her partner; while M retires and then advances slightly to meet his partner, then retires with her.
8	All swing	At end of swing, form top and bottom lines – sides separate to join the nearest top or bottom line (middle couple splits if odd number of couples)
8	Top and bottom lines advance and retire twice	
8	All swing	
32	Sides repeat	
64	Tops and then sides repeat	

Note: Leo didn't have the second 64 bars for the tops and sides to repeat but I find that this makes the dance much more enjoyable. People benefit from having the opportunity to do the figure once they've worked it out the first time through. I wouldn't do this for a demonstration.

Figure 3: Ladies across and swing opposite, Ladies Chain

Music: 6/8, 4 x 16 bars. c. 56-60 bars (120 beats) per minute throughout. Leo plays 'Daisy'.

Bars	Summary/Call	Additional instructions
(4)		Introduction
4	Tops lead up, twirl lady to opposite man	Lead up Rh in R, M twirls lady acw once to bring her in front of him. Release hands, lady twirls further $\frac{3}{4}$ of a turn to face opposite man. Note lady passes to left of opp. lady in middle not to right as in previous figure.
4	Swing opposites	Lady swings with opposite man
4	Ladies chain back	Ladies touch Rh as they cross back to their partner; give Rh to partner. M twirls lady acw under M's raised R arm, to face her corner
4	Swing corners	
(8)	Optional continued swing if big set	This shouldn't be needed for an 8 couple set.
16(/24)	Sides repeat	
32(/48)	Tops and then sides repeat	

Notes: Leo didn't have the second 32 bars for the tops and sides to repeat but I find that this makes the dance much more enjoyable. People benefit from having the opportunity to do the figure once they've worked it out the first time through. I wouldn't do this for a demonstration. It shouldn't be necessary to use the extra 8 bars for swinging in an eight couple set.

Figure 4: R & L through, Circle balance waltz

Music: Waltz (3/4), 4 x 40 bars + waltz the hall. c. 52-56 bars per minute throughout, although the waltz the hall could be slowed to c. 48-52 bars. E.g., Eileen McCoy's 'Spanish Waltz' then 'On Board Waltz', and then for waltzing the hall, 'Oh Where Oh Where Has My Wee Doggy Gone', followed by 'Gundy's Waltz'

Bars	Summary/Call	Additional instructions
(4)		Introduction
4	Tops waltz R & L through	As in figure 1, but with 4 waltz steps; M cut corners
4	and back, but not all the way	Return past the other couple but not all the way to places. Form circle of four people with opposite couple.
4	Circle balance	In circles of four, 4 small kicks/lifts across body (Man R, L, R, L; Lady L, R, L, R) with big matching arm swings
4	Waltz with opposite	Half way around other couple. Reform small circle, with lady on right (so facing partner)
8 x 3	Repeat circle balance and waltz, 3 times	
40	Sides repeat	
80	Tops and then sides repeat	I wouldn't do this for a demonstration.
'Til end	Waltz the hall	

Some people struggle to do the circle balance and especially the 'waltz with opposite' in time, but there is adequate time if the dancers are well taught. This may not be the best dance to do late at night when people's concentration spans are short.

Leo didn't have the second 80 bars for the tops and sides to repeat but I find that this makes the dance more enjoyable. People benefit from having the opportunity to repeat the figure.

Solo and Novelty Dances

The Broom Dance (original two person version)

From Edie Dawson, Franklin, Tasmania, who used to do it.

Note: This is more a party game than dance. It can become a competition between the band and the dancers, or between different pairs of dancers, to see who can keep going the longest without dropping the broom or running out of puff. It can make for a great competition or display, especially if there are some energetic teenagers in the hall, who need a chance to show off.

Formation: Two people holding a broom, or preferably just a broom handle between them. Ladies may tuck their skirts up.

Music: 6/8. Any lively jig. The Dawsons play "Pop Goes the Weasel". The band may well choose to speed the music up.

Bars	Summary/Call	Additional instructions
8	Over and over	Hold broom in hands nearest to the band, then lift nearer leg and pass broom under it, swapping it to hand away from the band. Edie says "with a bit of a skip." Repeat: passing broom under leg and to other hand.
	Keep going	Repeat ad nauseum until either the band or the dancers collapse.

Related dances:

Peter Ellis knows of another 'broom dance' but I don't know how similar it is. He writes:

Hi Rob and David,

just a quick one, the 'broom dance' is known at Nariel and taught to the younger Simpsons by Beat Klippel and Val Ordish. ... Ray would be the best contact if you want to see how it's done. As you have said, but you sort of need to see it. Pretty energetic.

Peter.

The Broom Dance (set version) – see below.

The Broom Dance (set version)

From Edie Dawson, Franklin, Tasmania. Elaborated by Steve and Marjorie Gadd, David Wanless and Cathy Hutchinson.

Note: This was originally a party game for couples (or pairs) but we have turned it into a set dance which is (reasonably) safe to do in public. See the original version for two people above.

Formation: Longways sets of approximately four couples, with the top couple holding a broom handle between them.

Music: 32 bars of 6/8 music, repeated many times. Any lively jig. The Dawsons play "Pop Goes the Weasel". The band may well choose to speed the music up.

Bars	Summary/Call	Additional instructions
14	Over and	Top couple, hold broom in hands nearest to the band, then lift nearer leg and pass broom under it, swapping it to the hand away from the band. Repeat: passing broom under leg and to other hand. Total of 14 passes.
2	Turn around and hold broom high	Top couple turn upwards (M acw, W cw) to face band and keep turning one and a quarter times, to finish face the band.
8	Under the broom and cast off	Other couples join nearer hand, dance up under the broom, cast off, lead up.
4	Tops down middle	Top couple pass broom to second couple, then join nearer hands and dance down under the broom to the bottom of the set. This is the progression.
4	Swing and wash the dishes	All swing. The new top couple get ready to start, but can do a few turns under the broom if they are ready. Be inventive (turn one way, then other way, wash the dishes etc.)
	New couple	Repeat with each couple in turn

It is best if the band can start off relatively slowly to give people a chance to get the hang of the broom. However, they should then speed up significantly once everyone's had one turn through, and again when everyone's had another turn through. This is not a serious dance. There should be laughter and a bit of mayhem. The author has seen many ways of handling the broom, including one inventive couple who put it down on the floor and hopped over it sword-dance style.

Frog Dance/Cobbler's Dance (Paddy Dawson's version)

From Paddy Dawson, Franklin, Tasmania

Formation: Solo (or people standing side by side in a line or circle) or couples (duos – could be two men). Can do solo first and then join into duos.

Music: The Dawsons have played a 6/8 tune, a bit like the 'Irish Washerwoman', for this dance.

Paddy's Frog Dance:

Duo version/part:

Hold: Grab hands in a finger to finger hold in a cup shape.

Position: Crouched down on your haunches, balancing on the balls of your feet. You never get out of a crouched position.

Bars	Summary/Call	Additional instructions
1	Kick	Kick forward with your right foot to brush the heel on the floor (almost as far forward as under your knee), whilst rocking to the left to support yourself on your left foot. Bring your right foot back onto the ball of the foot and transfer weight on to it.
	Kick	Repeat on opposite feet.
	Repeat many times	

Kick from the toe (ball of foot) to heel, on each foot alternately. Two kicks to a bar.

Do this on the spot for as long as you wish, then optionally rotate anticlockwise for 8 bars, then clockwise for 8 bars.

Kick to your heel but don't go out to the side. This is very strenuous. Steve describes it as much more compressed than the northern/eastern Tasmanian version – not like a Cossack dance where you kick right out to the front.

Steve recalls that Paddy suggested a little jump to stand up at the end. He said that he sometimes used to jump straight up and start doing his step dance.

Solo version/part: (Steve says this bit is the same in the north coast/east coast version)

Stand in a crouched position, turn first to left and then to right.

Start with one hand up (clenched fist in front of chin, elbow close to body) and one down by your side.

When turning, move hands down to sides in straight arm and then up with clenched fist (elbow close to body, fist in front of chin). Alternate arms as you alternate legs.

Sometimes people start solo, side by side, then two people link up.

Background:

Paddy Dawson taught this dance to Steve Gadd, when Paddy was in his eighties. It is similar to the Frog Dance/Cobbler's Dance which had previously been collected in Northern Tasmania.

Steve Gadd had three sources for it:

1. A VHS video from Rob Willis of Sandra Sturzaker (John Sturzaker's daughter) from Golden Valley, near Deloraine in northern Tasmania, describing and demonstrating it in 1994.

2. Angus Cameron told Steve that he'd seen it performed on the East coast when he was playing in a band there.
3. Steve showed Sandra and Angus's dance to Paddy and Paddy said that wasn't how you did it, and did a completely different one.

Paddy said he saw it danced on the north coast once when he used to work up there but he'd never seen the version with the sideways kicks in it, described by Sandra and Angus, although he liked it straight away.

Notes on the name:

Steve says that Paddy called it the Frog dance, and the people up north called it that as well. On the tape of Rob Willis's interview with the Dawsons in 2003 they said they didn't know the name the Frog Dance, but Steve said they'd called it that 10 years ago when he first spoke to them. There have been other occasions on which the Dawsons have forgotten things that they've previously told people. (Haven't we all?)

Note that since the Dawsons have been interviewed by and played music with several collectors over a couple of decades they may have also picked up alternative names from those collectors as they have picked up new tunes.

All we can say with certainty is that the dance has been called both the Cobbler's Dance and the Frog Dance in different parts of Tasmania.

Related dances:

Peter Ellis writes that it is similar to the Yandoit Frog Dance.

It is certainly related to the Sturzaker Frog/Cobbler's Dance described below.

See also Heather Clarke's comments in 'Comment on the Clog Dance and Broom Dances' below.

Frog Dance/Cobbler's Dance (Sturzaker version)

From Sandra and John Sturzaker, Golden Valley, Tasmania and Angus Cameron, Westbury, Tasmania.

Formation: Duos – could be two men

This dance is quite similar to that done by Paddy Dawson (above).

Duo version/part:

As described by Steve Gadd:

As with Paddy's version except that you do a full kick out to the side (throw your leg out) instead of swapping from heel to toe under the body. This is less strenuous but more dangerous.

The extended foot should be have its side flat out on the ground.

When Sandra did it she did the side kicks with a slightly bent leg but she said she wasn't able to do it properly because of her hips. Steve thinks she was trying for a full extension.

You have to keep enough in reserve to bounce to the other leg without standing up. It's very hard on the knees. Steve only recommends it to people who are very flexible.

Notes from Rob Willis:

The following two dances [Cobbler's Dance and Step or Clog Dance] were collected from Sandra Sturzaker b1958 who learnt them as a child from her grandfather and other older dancers. They were danced at "house parties" conducted by the Sturzaker and Nugent families. Sandra's father John, who played Accordion for the dances, recalls that they were handed down in the family.

Refer video - Rob Willis personal collection and audio in Willis collection N.L.A.

Couples Dance hands held across in "Monkey grip"

There was no set routine just impromptu dance moves consisting of the following:

a: Squat position - kick legs to the side and behind you so that the side of the foot hits the floor, alternating L&R

Couples separate and turn 360 degrees with above movement. Hands touch floor occasionally for balance.

Swing both legs to L&R together whilst holding partner as in "a" (this is VERY difficult)

Music: Tune played by John Sturzaker was "Skip to my Lou".

Paddy's Step Dance

From Paddy Dawson, Franklin, Tasmania

Formation: Solo

In 2004, Paddy Dawson, at age 85, could still dance a step dance. I have been unable to reconstruct the steps, but merely seeing Paddy dancing it was wonderful. If I'm still dancing that well at age 85 I'll be very happy.

If anyone else wishes to try to reconstruct the dance, the video of Paddy dancing it is referenced in the list of recordings at the end of this booklet.

Music: Edie Dawson plays 'Paddy's Stepping Hornpipe', which Peter Ellis knows as the 'Corridor Hornpipe'.

Steve Gadd's mother Jane Gadd learned how to do tap dancing when she was young, and he thinks that the dancing she learnt – shuffle, toe, heel - was more like Paddy's step dance than like American tap dancing.

This dance may be related to the dance that Sandra Sturzaker described in her interview with Rob Willis in 1994. See below.

See also Heather Clarke's comments in 'Comment on the Clog Dance and Broom Dances' below.



Julie and Paddy (waltzing – we have no photos of Paddy step dancing, although we do have video).
Photo: Cathy Hutchinson, 2008.

Step or Clog Dance (Sturzaker version)

From Sandra and John Sturzaker, Golden Valley, Tasmania

Formation: Solo, but people lined up in a row

Notes from Rob Willis:

[The following two dances] were collected from Sandra Sturzaker b1958 who learnt them as a child from her grandfather and other older dancers. They were danced at "house parties" conducted by the Sturzaker and Nugent families. Sandra's father John, who played Accordion for the dances, recalls that they were handed down in the family. Refer video - Rob Willis personal collection and audio in Willis collection N.L.A.

Again a random/impromptu dance done in lines or with partners. From the description I would imagine that someone would lead the movements.

Feet are at about 75 degrees to each other (bit like Charlie Chaplin)

Basic Step:

Heel - Sole foot movement - heel remains on floor whilst sole is put down.

(Waddling type movement)

Then alternate stamping of feet 123.

i.e. L Heel - Sole R Heel Sole - L R L stamp R Heel - Sole L Heel Sole - R L R stamp

With this basic step other movements are:

Advance - Retire - Circle - Sideways - All governed by "Leader"

Music Soldiers Joy - played slowly.

The Sturzakers commented that the sound of the Heels hitting the board floor was very rhythmical and impressive.

Notes from Steve Gadd:

Sandra remembered watching the dances when she was young.

When she demonstrated the dance she started with her heels. She had her toes off the ground, in a '10 to 2' position.

Note that this means that the Sturzaker dance goes heel-toe whereas Paddy's goes toe-heel.

Other Dances

Betty and Angus also demonstrated the Victory Waltz, a lovely waltz choreographed after the end of the First World War, and a dance they called the Seven Step Polka, which they introduced into the bush dance scene in northern Tasmania. They also demonstrated La Va, a version of the Varsoviana, with more hops, and very gracefully danced. They learned all of these dances in Scotland.

The steps for the Victory Waltz are described in "A River of Whisky". Their version of La Va appears to be similar to that described in "Scottish Country Dancing".

Leo Donohue remembers a man called Walter who was a great step dancer. He would sing whilst dancing solo step dances.

Betty Cameron also had a description of the 'Lancers' from Stan Willie of Wynyard in north west Tasmania. Stan used to perform it as a demonstration set in the 1980s. The figurework described was in fact much closer to the First Set than to the Lancers. There were similarities to the Victorian

First Set, but figure 5 was very different. It turned out that Stan had actually learnt this from Peter Ellis and the Wedderburn Oldtimers in Victoria in the 1980s, so it has not been included here. If we ever get around to producing a book of later dances, it may well be included there, as it was certainly a part of the dance scene in northern Tasmania. This is an interesting example of the folk process, by which traditions constantly change and exchange dances, and the origins of dances (and tunes) can be easily confused.

Peter writes:

... But then Betty clarified the picture, apparently Stan and perhaps several others came across to Victoria regularly to several balls at which the Wedderburn Oldtimers had played around Melbourne and perhaps further into the country, and it turned out he got the figures of the First Set from me. I vaguely remember this now and it probably started with the Oldtimers tour of Tassie in 1980. This was an enormous success, I recall the great popularity of the band when they played both twice in Hobart and more so at Launceston and Ulverston. We were also down near Franklin as well as Zeehan, Queenstown etc.

Think that's how the 'following' commenced, certainly Angus commented on the Launceston ball. Anyway, for Stan to get the First Set (the Lancers, Alberts and Waltz Cotillion were the normal dances the Oldtimers had on the programme) he must have been to a Woolshed Ball at Fitzroy or perhaps a special TSDAV function around 1983 such as at Bacchus Marsh. It was only in the folk scene or on the home ground around Wedderburn, St. Arnaud or Bendigo that we could revive the First Set. The version is mine in a sense that we tried to get it going from Shirley Andrews' first paper back book form of 'Take Your Partners', but it was the original Colonial version and didn't make sense to the country followers that knew it from years earlier.

I had MCs and dancers such as Ron McNally at St. Arnaud who could still call it and the Suttons at Fentons Creek who still danced it as well as Colin Silk at Lockwood South, the MacGregors in our dance club and a ballroom dance teacher Les Rankin, who knew it from his youth at Kamarooka. Between all, I 'extrapolated' between the variations to that which the 'Bendigo group' revived and took to Melbourne and also accepted by Shirley Andrews as the 'country Vic. version'. I should have mentioned Harry McQueen and Jack Heagney in the equation as well, they were the only two that knew it as a 6 figure dance, so figure 5 is based on their recollections.

According to Harry it was banned in the 1950s when in the basket figure there was an accident and a girl slid across the floor and into a window that went to floor level. She was seriously injured. Likewise for the same reason, the Lancers was banned in many ballrooms in Melbourne, we were challenged once for having it on the programme at Sunshine. I have our version typed up, it is also in the Merry Country Dance book and in Shirley and my '200 Dancing Years' should you want it. Stan if you meet him, or Betty might be able to confirm that's what they danced, or they may have 'adjusted it' of course. We got the 'backswing' in fig. 6 from Ron McNally. Ron sometimes used the backswing following the promenade in fig. 3 as well. I do have him calling it with young people dancing it filmed back about 1980 for the Centenary of the Shire of Kara Kara ball.

...

Catch you later, Peter.

Sources – Where Did We Find These Dances?

Paddy and Edie Dawson of Franklin



Paddy Dawson's 89th Birthday Party, 2008, Grove House, Huon Valley.

Pictured (from left): Cathy Hutchinson, Ray Doyle, Sue Dilley, Julie Edwards, Stuart Graham, Paddy Dawson, John Graham, Edie Dawson, Maureen Doyle, Colleen Graham, Chris, Hurford
Photo: David Wanless

Edie and Paddy Dawson are siblings from Franklin, Tasmania, from another era. Paddy was born in 1919 and Edie in 1925 and along with their sister Ivy and brothers George and Ted, they lived through some very lean times, with their parents who provided the best they could for their family.

Their Dad was a keen player, but didn't have a melodeon of his own until much later on. He used to whistle and sing songs passed down and learned on his travels. Their mother didn't actually sing, but apparently knew the words of many songs.

They tell a story of being so impressed, as children, with the playing of local musician Alf Phillips at the Apple Shed Dances, they made bellows of paper bags and hummed the tunes they had heard. When their Dad 'scratched up enough money' he bought the children a melodeon to share and it got a pretty good work out. Edie says that some poor beggar wouldn't get a chance before bedtime and it'd have to be put away.

Paddy once told me that they learned some tunes when they were children sitting out on the wood heap listening to a neighbour playing. They learned tunes from various sources - the local shopkeeper once sang 'Little Angeline' and they also picked up tunes from the wireless when they got one. With a keen ear and good memory for tunes, Edie and Paddy have a library of tunes played

around Franklin in the 1930's and 40's. The tune known as 'Dad's Waltz' which The Old Dad, as they call him, used to play first up, is a favourite with many local musicians today.

We first met Edie and Paddy at the Palais and came to their attention because we danced to their music and so, a lovely friendship began. One thing we learned was that they loved to see their tunes danced to. Paddy played and danced in the Apple Sheds around Franklin in those days, but Edie wasn't allowed to go and remembers learning the dances at home from Paddy and their mother. Some of these dances they have shared with us. Paddy once said, referring to reconstructing the dances, "It doesn't really matter if it's not 'spot on' with them... It's still a get together with the music..." Music is a very important part of Edie and Paddy's lives.

As their boxes squeeze out tunes of yesteryear - some well known standards and some almost forgotten - a zest for life, smiles and twinkling eyes breathe life and warmth into the music and to those privileged look through a small window into this aspect of living, local history - still in the making.

Some years ago, collectors both local and from interstate met Edie and Paddy and revived many memories of tunes unplayed for decades and still they keep remembering more.

As part of a local folk community, vibrant, strong and far from the mainstream culture, little gatherings happen and tunes are shared, often being recorded and transcribed. Friendships and a 'Tassie Tune' network have evolved through this sharing of music over a number of years and have brought joy to both Paddy and Edie and to all who have partaken.

To quote Paddy, 'I love coming to play the music; but the problem is that you have to go home at the end!'

All good things don't have to come to an end. They are often taken up by others and carried on to become traditions. The kind of pleasure shared here costs nothing but time and a smile. What is reaped is what has been sown and nurtured – the kind of wealth money can't buy.

-- Cathy Hutchinson

Betty and Angus Cameron of Westbury



Betty and Angus Cameron. Photo: Olya Willis, 2004.

Betty was born in 1934 in Highfield, Scotland. Her first dancing was when her old great uncle taught her to waltz. She started Scottish Country Dancing at school when 12 years old. This was in the days of Jimmy Shand on the radio. They did Scottish Country Dancing instead of gymnastics in the wintertime. At the Christmas Party for each of the classes at the end of the year they did Scottish Country Dancing as well as some old time dancing.

Betty wasn't allowed to go to Saturday night dances in Scotland but she still managed to meet her husband-to-be Angus at a dance. Angus is a fine fiddle and accordion player and has been extremely influential in the folk music scene in northern Tasmania. See the book 'River of Whisky' for more information about Angus and many of his tunes.

Betty and Angus arrived in Tasmania in 1958, as commemorated in Betty's dance the Scot-Tas Quadrille (published in 'River of Whisky'). Initially they didn't have much money and didn't know anyone. Betty said "It was about a year before we could afford to go out. For a year we just sat in the house - looking at each other, playing cards - and we eventually made some friends and we started going to the dances."

She's never done ballroom dancing. She and Angus went to old time dances when in Bothwell and later in Triabunna. When in Bothwell they went to "The Steppes" every Saturday night. There's a little church and post office at "The Steppes", in the bush just off the road on the lake highway just south of the Great Lake. They put covers over the pews and danced in the church. That's where Betty and Angus first learned the Australian old time dances such as the Prince of Wales Schottische and the Polka Mazurka, in 1959.

When they moved to Triabunna in 1963 they kept dancing, although there were fewer good dances there. That's where Betty finally learnt the Polka Mazurka.

She started teaching dances in 1984 when David Atkins took sick. He was one of the founders of the Bottom Pub Ceilidh Band. Jim Moir was the first caller, then David Kelly did the calling – he was an accordion player. Then when David Atkins took sick, David Kelly had to go back to playing the accordion. They visited David Atkins in hospital. He was very ill with leukaemia and he said to Betty “Well, you’ll have to take over the calling.” She didn’t want to, but she knew he was in a bad way so she said yes.

Betty called for the band until Angus injured himself working and gave up playing for a while in 1987. After that she only did bits of calling here and there, including at the Tamar Folk Festival.

She did a stint as the caller with the Tassie Tattie Howkers, a band including Angus, Beth Sowter, Mike Watts and Ian McLeod, which was put together to take the Tassie dances to the National Folk Festival in Canberra in 2005. They did a few spots after the festival, including the Burnie Show.

She has kept dancing solidly for all these years, almost every Saturday night. When Betty and Angus moved to Westbury there was a very strong dance scene, so for a while they were going dancing every Friday and Saturday. There was also a dance class every Tuesday in Westbury, which they attended to learn the dances. These classes were run by Alan Cruise and his wife. Alan also had dance classes at Rosevale each Wednesday and Sheffield each Thursday. These were New Vogue classes. New Vogue “really keeps one’s brain active because there are so many dances.” She said that there are something like 300 New Vogue dances.

Betty has never played music. She says it’s all in her feet.

She doesn’t do any calling any longer. The Tassie Tattie Howkers are no more. Angus is very busy playing with the Woodfields Orchestra. They play for Old Time and New Vogue dancing. They have about 30 or 40 bookings per year so they’re out nearly every weekend. They play at Sulphur Creek and Turners Beach. Betty goes every time.

They can’t seem to get any young people to the dances, except for one delightful young lad who’s been dancing with them since he was about 12, but who’s soon to go to Uni in Hobart.

“It’s such a shame that young folk don’t like the old time dancing any more. It’s too old hat for them. They just turn up the boom, boom music and shake themselves and let the dead lice fall off. (Chuckle.)”

When she started New Vogue dancing in Westbury they had anything from 130-180 people every Saturday night. They’re still doing well though. At Sulphur Creek they get an average of about 50-60 each fortnight. At Turners Beach Bowls Club every week they get a good turnout. Every couple of months they have a glorious smorgasbord – last time they had 93 people.

Betty isn’t dancing at the moment, as she recently tore a ligament. It’ll mend in the spring, but she’s not sure which spring. She misses the dancing, but she sells raffle tickets, does the supper and chats to people. She reckons she’s done so much dancing in her life that she’s worn her muscles out.

Leo Donohue of Kimberley and Golden Valley



John Sturzaker (left) & Leo Donohue (right). Photo: Hilda Donohue, 2004.

Leo Donohue was born in 1935. His father, Jim “Gundy” Donohue was well known as a great accordion player. He played accordion for 75 years, playing for many dances in Golden Valley, where the family lived, and surrounding areas.

Leo bought his first melodeon at 16 years of age. As well as accordions, violins were played in the family, and Leo also plays guitar.

As well as playing for dances, it was the custom for musicians in the Golden Valley to call the steps for the dances. Leo was able to call and demonstrate several dances for us. He and his wife Hilda are lovely dancers – lively, neat and smooth. Leo is a larrikin, always ready with a joke or a chuckle, hooting in the dances, and quite open to practical jokes. When, at the National Windjam, we needed someone to play the music for a clown puppet to mime to with his paper accordion, Leo was in like a shot.

Leo has produced a CD called ‘My Fathers Tunes’.

These days he lives in Kimberley, but he learnt his dancing in the Golden Valley.

Sadly, Hilda Donohue, wife of Leo, passed away in January 2009. We would like to acknowledge her contribution to this publication.

Peter Ellis writes:

Leo’s father ‘Gundy’ was a legend of an accordion player and had actually taught ‘Tassie Hill’ who moved to Swan Hill. An acquaintance of the Gay Charmers, Tassie was known locally as an exceptional player and also regularly attended dances at the Barham Club. I think it was through John Meredith and Rob interviewing Tassie for the National Library that the Donohues were then tracked down on the home ground. Leo and Hilda are very keen Country and Western singers (Leo plays guitar) and travel widely, also calling in to visit Olive Bice from time to time at Long Gully. He played a number of good dance tunes for us, namely Gundy’s Waltz, a Schottische, a Polka, a Polka Mazurka and the Half Turn Schottische. Rob had previously collected these, it was a matter of consolidation and the main task now was the dance steps. Well Leo and Hilda turned out to be very good dancers and were able to demonstrate the Polka Mazurka, Varsoviana, Military 2 step (which was

our Half Highland Schottische), Prince of Wales Schottische and the Half Turn Schottische. Leo walked through the various mentioned dances, which I notated. The real thrill however was that he could remember the Alberts where there were only one of two large square sets in the hall, usually two to four couples on each side depending on the crowd and the size or shape of the hall. He said it was danced this way around Ulverstone, Windmill Hill (near Launceston?) and Golden Valley, his home area. The figure work had similarities to our own, although there was also at least one difference; the promenade was the galop across and back. We arranged for the Donohues to come to the dance at Liffey the following night. Here we would be joined by the Camerons, some locals and also a contingency from Hobart to workshop all the Tasmanian versions of dances we had collected.



Leo and Hilda Donohue. Photo: Olya Willis, 2004.

May and Ron Soultter of Cygnet

I had a brief conversation with Ron and May Soultter of Cygnet, who started the Cygnet Museum. Ron danced in Fitzgerald in the 1930s and 1940s. As well as the waltz, the blues and the foxtrot, he remembers dancing the Alberts with 10 or 12 couples in a circle, possibly progressively. He also remembers dancing the Lancers.

May liked the waltz, foxtrot, barn dance and schottische. She did the big set Alberts. The MC started off with couples dances then continued into a big set – many couples in a fair-sized hall. They kept changing partners around the set until they got back to their original partner.

They also recommended speaking to John Dance, of Cygnet, a musician and ex-Telecom worker who would “know more than Ron”.

Background Information

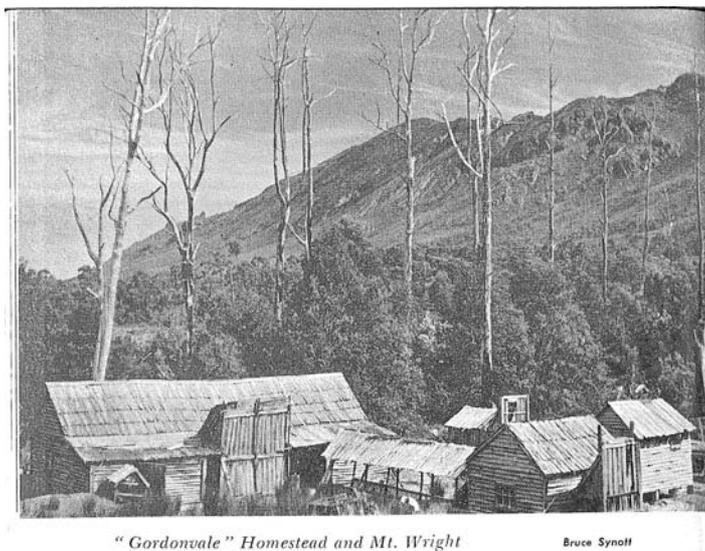
Dancing in the Vale of Rasselas

“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.”

(From the *Tasmanian Tramp*, No. 12, 1955, p. 8)

“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.”

(From the *Tasmanian Tramp*, No. 16, 1963, p. 24)



“Gordonvale” Homestead and Mt. Wright

Bruce Synnott

Collecting in Tasmania – an article by Peter Ellis, 2004

I previously toured Tassie in either 1980 or 1981, January thereof, with the Wedderburn Oldtimers. It was a wonderful trip, a bus tour staying at country pubs and the band playing for an hour or two each night for the followers and any locals who happened to be around at the time. The coach was filled with followers of the Oldtimers, mainly from around Wedderburn, St. Arnaud, Bendigo and perhaps a fraction further distant from the Mallee and Wimmera. Significantly Shirley Andrews also booked in on that tour. There are only a few things that particularly stick in my mind, a wonderful island of scenery and hospitality and the best of bacon and eggs you could ever have for breakfast. Port Arthur was particularly picturesque. We played for a ball in Hobart (Town Hall I think) and this was written up in the Mercury of the day with a photograph which to my regret I never procured. However it was at this ball I recall a very distinctive version of the Maxina. From memory it was the grapevine section that had a sort of dip and point of the toe (and I think Shirley commented this was like the original English version). As I was playing on the two occasions I saw this form of Maxina, I was not able to notate it. Curiously Shirley didn't either. Then further down the road there was a little country pub by the sea, somewhere out of Hobart, where we had a marvellous evening. Some bloke insisted because of my whistle playing that I should take up Melody Sax, but I never really cottoned on to what this was all about, perhaps the Mercury Cider had something to do with that. However there was another chap on a makeshift lagerphone and he was tremendous. It was a fairly simple design, a broomstick minus the head, a few bottle tops, and a car or bike headlight reflector with a small bell, something like a cow bell, but not as large. He could make the thing talk and in particular used the reflector and bell with glock effects as the old time drummer used to do on the skulls or frogmouths. There was another spot on the East Coast where tessellated pavements (volcanic hexagonal column tops) protruded into the sea, a little like a giant boat launching pad. The coach driver told us that when American tourists asked him what they were, he said they were building a road to New Zealand and that they believed him. On another section of the tour we called into Cradle Mountain National Park and I recall this to be a particularly beautiful and scenic area. We had another great night in a pub at Queenstown (where there was no vegetation because of sulphur dioxide emission from mining activities creating an eerie type of desert Lunar landscape) and the band played on and on that night and in particular Jack Condon revelled performing on the Stroviol. However the most amazing night of all was on the north side west of Launceston at Ulverstone. Here we played for a ball and some 700 attended with many more not being admitted because it was too crowded. Many cued outside till half time and still paid \$10 (a lot of money then) to then get in. I can remember children gathering in front of the stage and politely touching the instruments and us as if we were the Beatles. Despite all of this I can't remember whether we did any of the sets or the Varsoviana or Polka Mazurka. There were other events such as playing in the Cat and Fiddle Arcade in Hobart and Ian Johnston having his newly painted accordion box depicting a map of Australia, but Tassie was missing. In embarrassment we placed a spare accordion in front of the critical section of the box, but it must have been obvious to the Taswegians. At Launceston we toured a pioneer type marine village and the windjammers were firing off canon balls with extraordinary volley.

Recently Rob Willis had told me that Paddy Dawson at Franklin in the Huon Valley out of Hobart had recalled a version of the Alberts from his youth where in the apple sheds they held dances. Like the Bellbrook Lancers of NSW, it was generally all in; one large set around the four walls of the dance area. Paddy could also demonstrate a step dance and the Cobblers dance (frog dance); but was now 85 years old. I said to Rob we had to get down there whether the National Library could back the tour or not. It was of extreme importance for if anything happened to Paddy, all might be lost forever. The Dawsons, two brothers and two sisters had lived together all their lives, never married, and played squeezeboxes (button accordions) which are more generally known in Tasmania by the English term of Melodeon, or as 'Windjammers'. John Meredith stumbled on the Dawsons around 1985 and recorded numerous dance tunes and songs. Rob and Olya Willis on

Merro's advice visited the Dawsons a couple of years later and recorded further traditional material. Only Paddy and sister Edie are now alive.

So Rob arranged the tour and on Sunday July 4th Mary drove me down to Tullamarine to catch a Jetstar plane to Hobart. I had really forgotten we were in the middle of winter and what to expect, but on returning it was colder in Bendigo than the week before in Tassie. I had a window seat and soon after takeoff we were above the clouds that just looked like tuffs of mashed potato below. I recall Trevor Holt telling me when the Oldtimers first flew to Tassie, Daisy who'd never been to Melbourne much less Bendigo twice in her life wanted to be dropped out on the clouds to paint them and to be picked up on the way back. Then the clouds dissipated and back to reality I could see Bass Strait clearly below and then as we crossed over land I suddenly realised I was looking at wonderful snow clad ranges. The flight was an hour in all and Rob and Olya greeted me at Hobart Airport. They had hired a Volkswagen which was European though right hand drive, the indicators were on the left of the wheel and the windscreen washer and wipers on the right. Consequently for a short time when turning right Rob found himself cleaning the windscreen. We decided we should give the car a German name starting with W. Olya thought Wilhelmina was appropriate, but I pointed out this was more typically Dutch. A brain vacuum was shared by all for a few moments then I suggested Wolfgangia in the absence of any other possibilities. Well we knew Wolfgang was a male German Christian name, we just couldn't find anything else female. So Wolfgangia it was which was shortened affectionately to Wolfie. I didn't find Tassie cold. Crisp and revitalising yes and I loved it. Hobart by the sea was just wonderful lovely old sandstone buildings from the nineteenth century and backed by Mt Wellington almost entirely snow clad. We actually had snowflakes falling on a couple occasions and particularly driving home one night. Wolfie every now and again would let out a ding, and then we noticed each time the dash said it was 4°C outside. We assumed this was a warning that there might be black ice on the roads. A very smart Germanic car was our Wolfie. Three nights were spent in a comfortable Budget motel in Hobart and each morning we visited either 'Banjos' or another café for bacon and egg breakfast and hot chocolate and marshmallows. It was just decadent.

On the Sunday night after arriving we stumbled on Murphy's Irish Pub. I quickly changed to Mercury Cider on tap and introduced this Tasmanian icon to Olya who was agreeably impressed. There was an Irish session in progress and I was really taken in. This is unusual for me as the Irish sessions at the National and other folk festivals turn me off. However this music was played with feeling and at a very steady tempo, not fast and in fact very danceable as well as listenable. There was not a squeezebox to be seen, but flutes and tin whistles, a fiddle and mandolin, guitar, bodhran, Uilleann pipes and spoons, bones and washboard.

Rob made contact with Stuart Graham who was a local musician also keenly interested in the dancing and our attempts to collect Tasmanian versions and have them revived. We also met up with Fred Pribach formerly of the Harvest Moon Band and an expert banjo player among other instruments. So off to a café for an impressive cheap Thai meal and then back to Fred's for a jam session.

Next day (Monday) we headed down to Franklin to check out the hall and to meet the Dawsons. Paddy and Edie obliged us with some tunes including important ones relating to the Varsoviana and Polka Mazurka, Step Dancing and set tunes for the Alberts. Paddy demonstrated his step dance, which I recognised as similar to that of Maureen Hazelwood's (of Warrnambool) Grandfather's 'Irish Shuffle' and in which I was able to participate. But the surprise was Paddy's description of the Alberts, which he last saw in his youth 60 years earlier. Placing matchsticks around in a square he described as best as possible the figure work. The intriguing thing apart from the fact it could incorporate any number of people in a large square or rectangle, as long as there were even numbers of men to woman, was that you were not in couples. It was most easily described with four men in first place facing four women in second, then the same on the sides, men in 3rd place, and woman in 4th. We snuck home late afternoon, calling in briefly to watch a Morris Dance workshop lead by Stuart and in this I found quite fascinating. However with the big day of dance of workshopping commencing in the morning, we headed home to bed early. Paddy's instructions became clearer the following day when we were joined by dancers from Hobart and all assembled in the Franklin Palais. What a surprise this was, a marvellous early 20th C hall with

balcony and picture theatre type lights, supper rooms and lounge, library etc. Anyway figure one of Paddy's Alberts was a little like the Haymaker. The first man on the far left of the top line met on the diagonal the 1st lady from bottom place on the left of her line. They advanced and curtsied/bowed and retired and then re-advanced and then swung in the centre. This was repeated on the diagonal by the man and opposite lady from the right hand side of the respective top and bottom line. Next, the centre right opposites near the middle of the line repeated the figure followed in turn by the remaining persons on the left of middle. At this point Paddy said the MC clapped his hands for the music to stop, end of figure 1. Paddy played McGregor's March for figure one. Then he said the MC announced figure 2 (Paddy now playing a tune similar to a cross between The Muckin o' Geordie's Byre & 100 Pipers) and the sides now danced that which tops had danced as figure one. Then for figure three (only about 32 bars of a set tune required) the dancers converged on one another towards the middle of the square for a free for all swing with who-ever they could grab. At the end of the music the dancers then totally re-aligned into top and bottom lines, men at the top facing the woman. The music struck up with Daisy in waltz time and the people in the lines linked arms and with toes pointed out stepping slowly raising knees advanced and retired three times. This concluded the Alberts, but Paddy then decided it seemed a bit funny ending so abruptly and played a Schottische and we all Schottisched (similar to our Plain Schottische) around the dance area. On reconstructing the dance further, although the Schottische provided a change in music, we decided it was better to stay with Daisy and advance a 4th time and waltz the hall with the opposite lady to finish.

There were a couple of other surprises. Whilst Edie had never been allowed to go to dances a friend and her mother had taught her dancing at home. Edie was temporarily in a walking frame but managed to demonstrate the Tassie version of the Polka Mazurka which had a different emphasis that I didn't really master. Also she and Paddy had what they called the Tango, but it was a simple sequence dance in waltz time. We finally managed with Edie's urging to perfect the last section of the dance but I'll need to pour over Rob's video work to see if we can reconstruct the full sequence. Both the Polka Mazurka and the Tango were fascinating versions of dances and we spent quite a bit of time workshopping them over and over in the Palais. Another highlight was Paddy's step dancing which he was only too happy to demonstrate and Steve Gadd who had been collecting tunes from Paddy was able to demonstrate the Cobbler's Dance with Stuart Graham learning on the run. Paddy at the age of 83 had demonstrated this novelty to Steve only two years earlier. It is similar to the Yandoit Frog Dance except the men are in pairs holding hands and on their haunches while performing Cossack style kicks in unison.

That night in Stuart's little timber home on the slopes of Mt Wellington I had knocked up an Asian type stir-fry with chicken, vegetables and cashews. We all shared in selecting the ingredients including red capsicum, mushrooms, beans and garlic at the Franklin supermarket and then raided Stuart's pantry for condiments such as light soy sauce, sweet chilli sauce and green ginger wine. On my suggestion we bought a small cask each of red and white to make up our varying grades of Rosé. Actually quite a bit of the white wine was used in steaming the vegetables, as I didn't have chicken stock and cornflour to make a sauce to keep them moist and tasty. It nevertheless turned out a wonderful dish.

The next day Rob and Olya in Wolfie and Stuart and I in his Ute were to travel north to near Launceston. One of the reasons for this was to try and locate the Alberts danced in a big square in the manner of the Bellbrook Lancers. Rob talked about Leo Donohue who was a marvellous button accordion player but who had also mentioned knowing this version of the Alberts. Unfortunately Rob had not been able to make contact with Leo who was not answering the phone. As we were leaving our Hobart motel who should come out of the room next door, but Leo and Hilda Donohue. Best bit of coincidence and excitement for the trip. Arrangements were made to catch up with the Donohue's the next day in Ulverstone.

On reaching the northern end of the Island we booked into and shared a very comfortable cabin at a little place called Hadspen. Now it was Ollie's turn and she put together a great beef and veggie stew. We had made contact with Ronnie and Di Summers who only lived round the corner at Hadspen. It was a great afternoon sessioning and listening to Ronnie's songs and dance tunes from Cape Barren Island. Ronnie and Di had been to the National Folk Festival a few years earlier as

guests and promoting their new CD 'Born On Ol' Cape Barren', The Island Coes. Ronnie and Di were Aboriginal and until then at least as far as us mainlanders were concerned there was little knowledge that any indigenous Tasmanians had survived after being pushed across to islands such as Cape Barren. The myth about Truganini being the last of the Tasmanians was just another of those cover ups of the Tasmanian Government of the day. At any rate the islanders had learnt lots of songs from way back in the days of visiting whalers. They also held their own dances with things like the large single square around the hall of Alberts and Lancers and various waltzes, schottisches, varsovianas, polka mazurkas, step dances and so on. Musicians of the day, most notably the Brown brothers had carried on the tradition with guitars, fiddles and squeezebox. Then in the 1950's the Government removed the islanders from Cape Barren and the Brown brothers then performed their songs and dance music all over Tasmania at hotels and dances. They could step dance as well. Ronnie and his community have kept the tradition alive and the CD was just one of the steps in promoting this to the rest of the country. Emu Creek recently recorded one of their dance tunes for a set on the imminent CD 'The Merry Country Dance'. This was 'The Black Cat Piddled In The White Cat's Eye'. A great set tune; the 2nd section is obviously linked with the Winster Galop. There is also a terrific step dance tune, 'The Old Tap Dance' which is linked with an English clog tune from Yarmouth. After tea we were joined again by Ronnie and Di for another session and they brought some mutton-bird for us to try for supper. It was very oily and fishy smelling, but didn't taste as such and was in fact very tasty, something like duck I guess.

Next day we travelled about an hour and a half to Ulverstone to interview the Donohue's. Leo's father 'Gundy' was a legend of an accordion player and had actually taught 'Tassie Hill' who moved to Swan Hill. An acquaintance of the Gay Charmers, Tassie was known locally as an exceptional player and also regularly attended dances at the Barham Club. I think it was through John Meredith and Rob interviewing Tassie for the National Library that the Donohues were then tracked down on the home ground. Leo and Hilda are very keen Country and Western singers (Leo plays guitar) and travel widely, also calling in to visit Olive Bice from time to time at Long Gully. He played a number of good dance tunes for us, namely Gundy's Waltz, a Schottische, a Polka, a Polka Mazurka and the Half Turn Schottische. Rob had previously collected these, it was a matter of consolidation and the main task now was the dance steps. Well Leo and Hilda turned out to be very good dancers and were able to demonstrate the Polka Mazurka, Varsoviana, Military 2 step (which was our Half Highland Schottische), Prince of Wales Schottische and the Half Turn Schottische. Leo walked through the various mentioned dances, which I notated. The real thrill however was that he could remember the Alberts where there were only one of two large square sets in the hall, usually two to four couples on each side depending on the crowd and the size or shape of the hall. He said it was danced this way around Ulverstone, Windmill Hill (near Launceston?) and Golden Valley, his home area. The figure work had similarities to our own, although there was also at least one difference; the promenade was the galop across and back. We arranged for the Donohues to come to the dance at Liffey the following night. Here we would be joined by the Camerons, some locals and also a contingency from Hobart to workshop all the Tasmanian versions of dances we had collected.

After this (by now mid afternoon) we visited the Camerons, Angus and Betty, originally from Scotland. Wayne and Coralie had met them some years earlier while in Tassie and they also managed a visit to the National Folk Festival where Betty taught the Victory Waltz and her 'Scots-Tas' Quadrille. A highlight for me on this trip was that Betty could teach me the Tasmanian Polka Mazurka which I didn't really master at Franklin. She said it took her four years to catch on herself. Rob filmed Angus and Betty demonstrating the Victory Waltz, Maxina (different to my recollections at Hobart 24 years ago), Schottische, Prince of Wales Schottische and Polka Mazurka. When the interview formalities were over we settled down to a music session with Angus and then a wonderful smorgasbord meal that Betty had assembled and with red wine to wash it down.

We also recorded two elderly squeezebox players; they call button accordions 'melodeons' or windjammers in Tassie. It was interesting that the Harry McQueen generation has long since past, except rare players handing on their father's tunes like Leo Donohue where set tunes, schottisches, varsovianas and polka mazurkas were still in the repertoire; this next generation were playing only foxtrots and waltzes. Ashley had one tune 'Wild Eyed Monkey', which I connected

with 'Down By The Caribbean' and several others he had learnt at dances in Hobart and Launceston.

My final day was a trip to Liffey and the dance workshop that night in the Liffey School Hall. We arrived in Liffey in the afternoon and had time to visit and walk into the Liffey Falls. I can't describe how beautiful the area was but will attempt as best I can. We passed the valley where Bob Brown lives. It was a simple old fashioned home probably 80 years or more in age, white weatherboard and with some ornate decorative trim around the eaves. It was nestled on a green grass flat with a tree lined river snaking by in the foreground and back-dropped behind a tall tree-clad mountain escarpment rose sharply to the sky. On reaching Liffey Falls parking area we walked down a winding track through a canopy of native beech and tree ferns to arrive at several cascades of falls which just held you in awe.

We drove back into the nearest town, Bracknell, for a sumptuous counter meal, I had duck in a rich mushroom sauce. Stuart, Rob and Ollie had chicken cooked with camembert and avocado. Then back to the hall for the evening's dance. We successfully work-shopped all the dances collected and also filmed Angus and Betty dancing 'La Va'. La Va is an English and Scottish abbreviation for La Varsoviana, and although similar to our Varsoviana is more stylish with neat little hops leading into the turn around and stop section and very graceful mazurka kicks in the second section. Leo Donohue was able to lead and call his 'Golden Valley Alberts', we could just fit in double sides, the hall not being large enough for a full single square with doubles all round. I particularly noted the 'arming' movements for the courtesy sections where ladies are turned to corners or turned into the centre. Same basically as Colin Silk demonstrated to us all those years ago. The Golden Valley Alberts, like the Bellbrook Lancers, has potential for taking on in the folk scene and possibly even at Spring Gully. Another thing that caught my eye, the Camerons and Donohues used the English style of waltzing as in South Australia, five steps and a sixth pivot turn on both feet. Something we Victorians can't handle. Also workshopped at the Liffey Dance was Betty's 'Scots-Tas Quadrille'. This was a great little dance in the Scottish style with appropriate travelling step and pas de basque setting. The opening section represented Betty and Angus travelling half way round the world to settle in Tasmania. Other figurework depicted gum nuts with clover type weaving around the set and three in one setting and turning around one partner at a time. (I'll describe this better when I type up Betty's full description). Betty also had a description of the 'Lancers' from Stan Willer of NW Tasmania. They performed it as a demonstration set in the 1980s. However the figurework described was in fact the First Set. There were similarities to ours, but figure 5 was very different. Betty was a little suspicious of the origin as she said Stan regularly flew to the mainland to attend dances run by the Wedderburn Oldtimers all those years ago. However it was the Lancers, not the First Set that appeared regularly on their programs; the First Set only to be found at Fenton's Creek just out of Wedderburn or at the National Folk Festival Ball in 1986.

Leo Donohue had said he thought the Waltz Cotillion was the First Set in waltz time, but the latter is the Waltz Quadrille. We also workshopped this based on Stan Willer's First Set, converting to waltz time. This worked well but would have required fine-tuning re the timing. It is rather a small world with the informant regularly travelling to the mainland to Wedderburn Oldtimer dances. Also Angus and Betty were at the Launceston ball when I played with the Oldtimers in 1980.

The Liffey evening finished with a typical country supper absolutely laid on. Next morning I had to be up at 'sparrows fart' to make the Launceston airport in time and the hour flight back to Melbourne. All in all, a wonderful and successful collecting trip. Mary met me at the airport and we dined in Woodend for lunch, just to ease me back into reality and back to work Monday.

(Previously published as "The Forgotten Dances of Tasmania" in *Trad & Now*, Spring 2004.)

Comment on the Clog Dance and Broom Dances

Heather Clarke gave the following interesting comments to Rob Willis. Thanks, Heather. Rob gave me permission to include them here.

Sent: Tuesday, December 21, 2004
Subject: Paddy Dawson's step dance

Dear Rob,

Thank you for the video of Paddy Dawson's step dance. He uses a very distinctive shuffle: a flat foot which employs the heel as much as the toe. This is the type of shuffle used in clog dances from the east Lancashire area of England and also some places in Ireland as battering steps in set dances. Most step dances use a shuffle off the toe and this is why it is so distinctive. From his general presentation I would guess that he learnt in the English clog dance tradition; certainly the first tune he danced to, in his home, is a popular clog dance tune (I don't know its name). Does he give any sense of having forgotten any of the dance? A few times he looked as though he was launching into something more intricate than shuffles but doesn't bring it off. I would expect a little more variety and a more prominent break. He does a grand job for someone his age all the same.

This is especially interesting as the only other bloke I have seen as an Australian step dancer, Phil Leggett in Melbourne, also danced a clog dance which he learnt from his mother, a waltz, but not with the toe/heel/toe shuffle. Within both the Irish & Highland dancing traditions in Australia, a clog waltz was part of the repertoire until about 25 years ago. Perhaps Australian stepdances were based on the English tradition – I seem to recall Shirley talking about clog dancers being around when she started collecting but she thought it was such a male dominated culture she did not want to be involved in it. I had rather imagined there would be a strong Irish influence, but perhaps not. Clog dancing in England came to the fore with the industrial revolution, when people came together to work in the cotton weaving factories. The rhythms of the mills were taken up by the dancers in their clogs. By the 1840s every village had a champion clog dancer and it remained popular until about 1900. Clogs were the utilitarian footwear (a wooden sole with leather upper) of the day – one of the convicts in the First Fleet was listed as a clogmaker.

I was also surprised and pleased to see the Broom dance. Again, was there any indication that they were struggling to remember it? It is a fairly common dance theme – I've seen it in Cornwall, Ireland and the Isle of Man but always with more steps and a break. It seems a shadow of what it might have been. It would be of interest to find which nationalities settled the area and if the Dawsons could describe how they learnt the dances.

Has Margaret Winnett seen the recording? I know she would find it interesting.

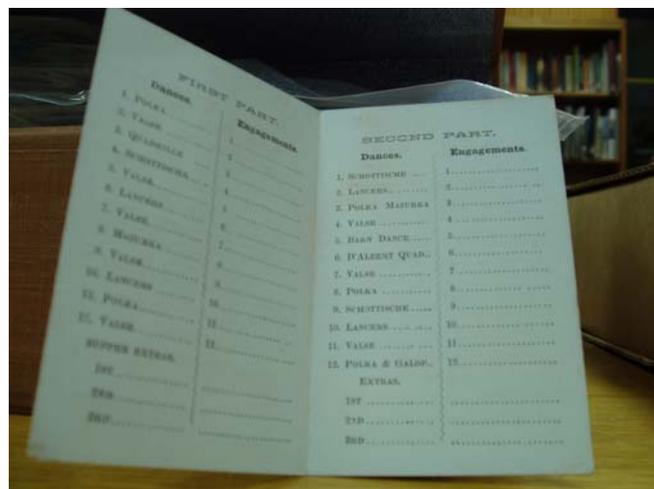
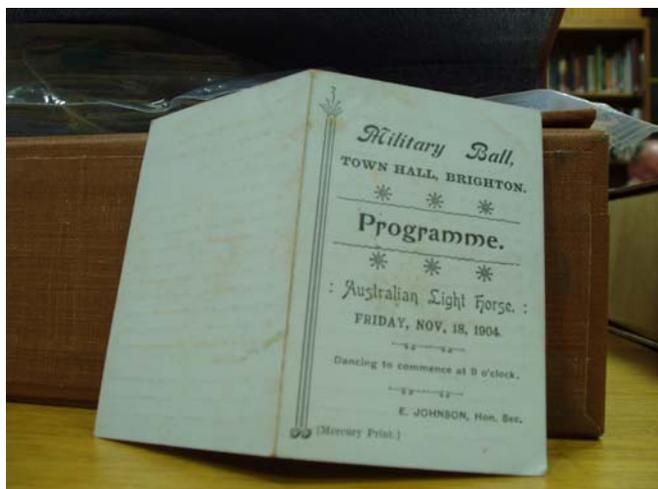
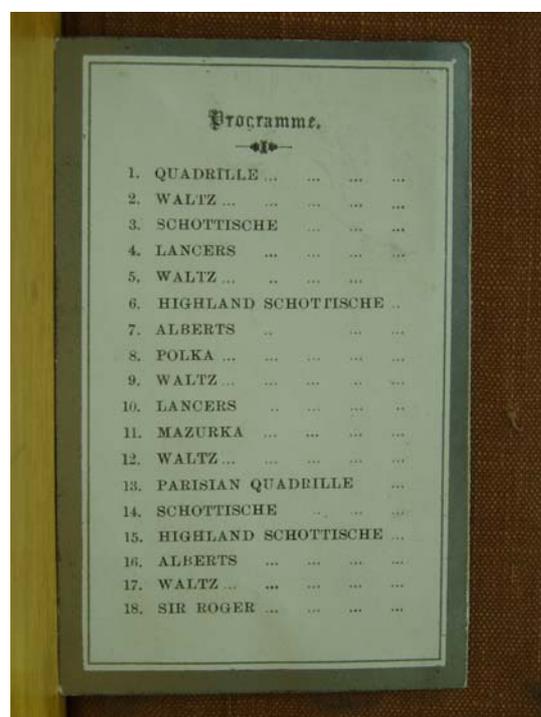
Regards, Heather

Ball Programmes

The ephemera collection at the Allport Library and Museum of Fine Arts in Hobart contains a fascinating collection of old ball programmes from the mid-1800s until c. 1920, from many locations in Tasmania. The author has photocopies and digital photos of many of these. They list at least the following dances:

Waltz, Foxtrot, Jazz, Two-step, Lancers, Quadrille, Schottische, Highland Schottische, Alberts / D. Albert Quadrille, Polka, Mazurka, Parisian Quadrille, Sir Roger, Barn Dance, Royal Irish Q., Waltz Cot., Washington Post, UFS Quadrille (probably the First Set), Polka Mazurka, Polka and Galop, Imperials, Quickstep, Pride of Erin and One-step as well as various dances with engineering names, from University Engineering faculty balls, e.g., Stop Clock Blues, Recalescence Old Time Waltz, Big End Blues, Lubrication Waltz and the Latent Heat Fox Trot.

The following dance cards show some of the dances which were present in the fashionable balls of the late 19th and early 20th Centuries in Tasmania, but which had dropped off the programmes by c. 1910. Many of these dances survived much longer in the rural areas such as the Huon and Golden Valleys. With the passage of time they also changed.



Dance Video and Audio Recordings Index

DV04: Liffey, July 2004, "Tas Dance, No Index" (Willis)

Title: Traditional Dances of Tasmania

Paddy's/Franklin Schottische, 0:00:00

(Leo's) Half-turn Schottische, 0:02:25

Bothwell Schottische, 0:05:02

Franklin/Appleshed Alberts, 0:07:04

Prince of Wales Schottische (Camerons' and Donohues' versions), 0:11:13

Scot-Tas Quadrille, 0:12:15

Polka Mazurka (related to Alf Phillip's Varsoviana), 0:17:37

Golden Valley Alberts, 0:22:29

0:22:29 First figure taught and danced

0:26:09 Second figure taught and danced

0:29:09 Third figure taught and danced

0:33:40 Fourth figure taught and danced

La Va, 0:37:42

First Set from Stan Willie/Betty Cameron, 0:39:14

First figure

Second figure

Third figure

0:54:19 Fourth figure

1:00:03 Fifth figure

1:03:05 Sixth figure

First Set, waltzed, Golden Valley, 1:08:08

End, 1:27:06

DV03: Full Dance At Franklin, Willis Collection NLA, July 04

No titles

(Ripped as FranklinDanceDawsonsDV03_July2004.avi, but this freezes at about 0:46:45, before the final version of the Tassie Tango)

0:00:00, Peter Ellis playing accordion

0:00:27, Paddy and Edie Dawson playing accordion in the Palais Theatre, Franklin

0:01:05, 'Waltz Mazurka', danced by Peter Ellis and Susan

0:05:50, **Schottische (Paddy's/Franklin)**

0:09:00, **Polka Mazurka** (Cock your leg up)

09:47, Paddy demonstrating

0:12:17, **Paddy's step dance** (tune: "Corridor Hornpipe")

0:15:43, Paddy demonstrating again

0:17:50, **Frog Dance** snippet (Steve and Stuart)

0:18:05, **Alberts** ("Franklin"/"Appleshed")

0:28:12, figures 1, 2, 3 danced but figures 1 and 2 run together

0:32:00, whole dance danced, but ending with Franklin Schottische rather than later reconstruction of waltzing the hall

0:37:51, **Frog Dance** (2 people)

0:38:27, **Broom Dance**

0:41:41, Old Huon Tango/Old Tassie Tango/Franklin Tango

0:48:47, **Old Tassie Tango** - real version ("David trying to dance" – Marcel's comment)

0:51:32, Chatting

0:52:00, Palais theatre front view

0:52:13, End

VCD01: The Dawsons of Franklin, Rob Willis Collection

Title: The Dawsons of Franklin

(Ripped as DawsonsOfFranklinVCD01_July2004.avi, but note that the audio gets out of synch by a second or so by the end of it!)

0:00:00, Paddy Dawson playing accordion at home

0:02:31, Paddy Dawson's step dance (and dog)

0:02:55, Edie Dawson playing accordion at home

0:04:05, Edie and Paddy playing at Palais

0:04:43, "**Waltz Mazurka**" at Palais, with Paddy and Eddie playing, Peter and Susan dancing

0:05:25, **Paddy's Stepdance** (at Palais)

0:06:52, "**Appleshed Alberts**" (at Palais) (once through whole set but with schottische ending)

0:12:35, **Broom Dance** from Edie (at Palais)

0:13:25, **Edie's 'Tango'**

0:15:13, The End

DV02: Cameron Dances, Westbury July 04, Willis Collection NLA

No titles.

All dances performed by Betty and Angus Cameron on their balcony.

0:00:00, Maxina? Bothwell

0:01:24, **Bothwell Schottische** (lady changing sides) + other Schottische (straight)

0:03:30, Prince of Wales Schottische (with lady changing sides)

0:04:33, Seven Step Polka, (nice!), introduced to northern Tas. folk/bush dancers by Betty

0:07:25, Angus playing fiddle for Polka Mazurka

0:07:40, Polka Mazurka, "Cock your leg up" tune

0:09:40, Victory Waltz

0:11:22, End

(0:52:11 end)

(0:52:20 – Betty learned Maxina at Bothwell)

First 52 mins is Franklin, then Camerons at home.

(ends 1:03:45)

Liffey DVD, new copy: (Willis)

Tasmanian Polka-Mazurka, 0:30:47

- seen by Betty Cameron in c. 1959 at Bothwell dances and then learnt in Triabunna c. 1963

GVA: 1 couple on tops, 2 couples on sides – fits old Liffey school hall nicely

0:36:18, GVA fig 1 taught

0:40:30, GVA fig 1 danced

- 4 bars (8 steps) across, 4 back, 4 bars swing, 4 bars gallop
- tight timing to get across in 4 bars but Leo cuts across music
- swing on return can start from wrong side, which helps get back in time with music

0:42:58, GVA fig 2 danced

- 4 bars: 2 bars (4 steps) in, 2 bars out
- 4 bars: 2 bars in, turn lady around opp. lady, retire (gent. retires first then dances in to meet lady as she comes out)
- 8 bar swing and form top and bottom lines
- 8 bars: adv and retire twice (4 steps each way)
- 8 bars: swing

- 0:47:40, GVA fig 3 danced
- 4 bars: 4 steps in, 4 steps to twirl lady past to opp. man
 - 4 bars: swing
 - 4 bars: ladies chain back and twirl to corner
 - 4 bars: swing corner
 - 8 bars extra if big set: keep swinging
- 0:48:44, GVA fig 4 taught
- 0:50:00, GVA fig 4 danced
- 4 bars across, 4 bars back, 4 bars kicks, c. 8 bars waltz (but timing all over the place)

Paddy and Edie at Julie's house (Grove House), 13/11/08, video files, David Wanless:

Note that for some of these dances later study of Paddy and Edie's dancing and words has shown that Cathy, Stuart, Julie and David's videod attempts at these dances might not have been the best reconstructions, particularly with the kicks in several dances, which we now think should be mazurka steps instead.

MVI_2207.AVI:

0:00:00, Huon Varsoviana (4 waltz, 4 kicks L, 4 kicks R) – Alf Phillip's version, in Huon style (Varsoviana done the Huon way)

- Paddy and Cathy

0:03:40ish, David and Cathy walk through

0:04:50, David and Cathy dance (not same as later reconstruction)

Tune same as that on DV03 at c. 0:01:00 for Waltz Mazurka

Check whether dance is same as Peter's Waltz Mazurka (which I think he said he got from Paddy) – no, it's not, but it's quite similar (and uses the same tune)

MVI_2211.AVI:

0:00:00, Huon Varsoviana (again)

0:06:30, Paddy and Cathy again (to get the timing of the kicks)

MVI_2212.AVI: Polka Mazurka

MVI_2213.AVI: Polka Mazurka (again)

MVI_2214.AVI: Waltz of Cotrillions

MVI_2215.AVI: Waltz of Cotrillions

MVI_2216.AVI: Waltz of Cotrillions

MVI_2217.AVI: Varsovienna – Put your little foot ...

Also includes Alf Phillips' Varsoviana, to the same tune

MVI_2218.AVI: Franklin Alberts

0:00:00, Franklin Alberts, fig 1

Ladies up the top end ("supposed to be gentlemen" down here)

Mooch up and back

Couples straight across (not diagonally)

In and out twice? then swing

0:02:25, Mooching

MVI_2219.AVI: Franklin Alberts – Chain and Daisy

0:00:00 Chain (big circle back to place)

0:00:40 Daisy

MVI_2220.AVI: Franklin Alberts – Fig 1 & 2

MVI_2221.AVI: Heel and Toe Schottische

0:02:35 – best version from Paddy

MVI_2222.AVI: Heel and Toe Schottische

MVI_2223.AVI: Broom Dance

MVI_2224.AVI: One Hop Polka

MVI_2225.AVI: Three Hop Polka

MVI_2226_Swing_or_Charlestone_snippet(Julie_and_Stuart).AVI

Paddy and Edie at Julie's house, 13/11/08, audio files:

STE-000.wav / STE-000_amplified_15dB.wav

0:00:00, Varsoviana (Huon style/open hold)

0:20:00, prob. Polka Mazurka

0:25:50, Polka Mazurka tune

0:29:33, Polka Mazurka finishes

0:29:49, already Waltz of Cotrillions

0:31:15, Waltz of Cotrillions tune (Flying Trapeze?)

0:32:45, Waltz of Cotrillions formation

0:33:15-c. 0:34:45, Waltz of Cotrillions tune and demo (matching MVI_2214.AVI)

0:36:15-c. 0:40:10, Waltz of Cotrillions tune (long)

0:40:10 – end (0:47:30), discussion – Paddy saw it danced once after having learned it from his father. Wonderful to see it revived. Old time dancing vs modern gymnastics.

STE-001.wav

0:00:00, Waltz of Cotrillions ctd. (matching MVI_2215.AVI)

0:00:30-0:02:30, Waltz of Cotrillions tune

0:08:00, Waltz of Cotrillions ctd. (matching MVI_2216.AVI)

0:11:00, Varsoviana (to “Fly Away Little Dove” tune?)

0:13:13, song

0:15:55, Varsoviana tune (matches MVI_2217_Varsoviana.AVI)

0:19:39, finishes

0:20:00 (chatter)

0:22:23, Franklin Alberts - chain

STE-002.wav

Chat over afternoon tea – Alf Phillips, walking tracks, ...

STE-003.wav

0:00:00, Chat

0:01:00, “Soapy Jack” Jack Thorpe, MC; Edie's one and only trip to the sheds

0:04:40, Heel and Toe Schottische

0:07:10, Heel and Toe Schottische tune (matches MVI_2221.AVI)

c. 0:08:00, instructions from Paddy re. left foot then right foot

0:09:23, tune continues (still covered by MVI_2221.AVI)

0:11:10, tune finishes, end of MVI_2221.AVI

0:11:30, further instructions, tune continues

0:12:03, instruction to move along whilst doing heel and toe

0:13:30, tune finishes

0:14:25 – 0:15:17, H & T Schottische tune again (matches MVI_2222.AVI)

0:16:00, Broom Dance

0:18:32-0:19:12, Broom Dance tune (“Pop goes the Weasel”)

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- Seal, Graham & Willis, Rob, *Verandah Music* (Curtin University Books, 2003)
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- Tasmanian Tramp, No. 12* (Hobart Walking Club, 1955)
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- Willis, Rob and Olya, video recording of Sandra Sturzaker demonstrating the Frog Dance (National Library of Australia)
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Personal communication with Paddy and Edie Dawson, Betty Cameron, Leo Donohue, May and Ron Soultter, Steve Gadd, Rob Willis, Peter Ellis and Stuart Graham.

For those interested in tunes collected (and/or composed) in Tasmania, there are various sources, including the following.

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- Dawson, Paddy and Edie, *Apple Shed Dance Days – Traditional Music from the Huon Valley* (Real Island Roots 2, 2004) (CD)
- Pribac, Fred & Graham, Stuart, *Tasmanian Dance Tunes, A Cygnet Folk Festival Workshop*, 2000
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- Gadd, Steve and Marjorie, *Tasmanian Heritage Apple Shed Tune Book*, c. 2002.
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- Donohue, Leo, *My Fathers Tunes*, c. 2006 (CD)

Web sites for other related information:

- National Library of Australia: nla.gov.au
- Folk Federation of Tasmania: www.folktas.org