

Free and Open Dancing for All

A Contra Dance Supplemental

Containing several unsolicited opinions and
approximately 50 new-ish contra dances

By Isaac Banner



Acknowledgements

I have a great many people to be thankful for in the dance and calling communities, but listing them all would be a book in its own right. My own family and my dance community have always supported me and had my back, and I will treasure them forever. I'd like to give additional thanks to:

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And, of course, a special thanks to Bob Isaacs, for providing me the inspiration and motivation to publish this collection of dances, whether he knows it or not.

“Social dances, simple routines, and other uncopyrightable movements are not ‘choreographic works’ under Section 102(a)(4) of the Copyright Act. As such, they cannot be registered, even if they contain a substantial amount of original, creative expression ... Examples of social dance include the following:

- Ballroom dances.
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 - Line dances.
- Square dances.
- Swing dances.
- Break dances.

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Given the express language in the House and Senate Reports concerning the meaning of the term ‘choreographic works’ and given the absence of any limitation on the public performance right with respect to dance, the Office has concluded that social dances do not constitute copyrightable subject matter under Section 102(a)(4) of the Copyright Act.”

– Chapter 800, section 805.5, *Compendium of U.S. Copyright Office Practices, Third Edition*

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To be honest, I never really expected anyone to take me or this book seriously, but CDSS just *gave me* a pair of ISBNs ...still no catalog card number though—Library of Congress, HMU

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Introduction

This book in your hands is free. Not “free with a donation” or “sold at-cost” or “buy one, get one free”¹—*free-free*. I personally believe that the secret to keeping any intergenerational folk tradition smoothly and reliably intergenerational is to focus on remaining open and inclusive. If we want to raise up the next cohort of callers, organizers, musicians, and dancers, adding barriers to entry does just the opposite. Printing one copy of this book costs me about \$3. I’m happily at a point in my life where choosing to spend \$3 isn’t a decision to give up something else—comforts, clothes, food, etc.—but the reality is that there *are* members of our community weighing similar decisions every day. If making this book free means even one more dancer can think about becoming a caller, the expense is worth it.

For similar reasons, this book uses entirely gender-free role terms in its dance choreography. If someone’s response to a dancer asking to feel more included in the dance community is to push back because bird names make them feel silly, I envy how little prejudice they’ve faced in their community spaces up till now.

¹ My editor has pointed out that technically you *could* take two copies, so we’ll say that this is still open to interpretation.

Speaking of building long, lasting folk communities, it's thanks to the Country Dance & Song Society (CDSS) that this printing now comes with its own ISBN, making me an *irrefutably* legitimate published author. You can visit their website at <https://www.cdss.org> for more information on their work and the programs they offer.

This book is split up into a few sections. I know that the reason someone is likely to pick this book up is the promise of new choreography, so I've tried to devote most of the publication to that end. In the interest of serving more than just my own ego, I've also included some brief notes on teaching a beginners' lesson focused on building a safe and inclusive dance space.

Before the dances themselves, you'll find a short glossary of some less-common dance figures and their definitions. If there are any other figures appearing in this book that require clarification, my personal contact information is available on the inside rear cover and I do occasionally, eventually, respond to email.

Finally, I've compiled an index of dances at the tail-end of the book, if you'd like to look dances up by a particular figure, along with links to a few handy resources for established, aspiring, or *emerging*² callers.

² A sticky category, especially if your community has an impish sense of humor. It took me several years to finally ditch the label.

The Workshop

I tell dancers there are five ‘C’s to contra dancing. It’s more for my sake than theirs, to keep me on track and to remember everything I’m supposed to cover in a 30 minute intro workshop. They don’t all start with C, but it’s a small joke that helps to break the ice. They are:

1. Comfort—you should always feel safe and that your boundaries are respected, no exceptions.
2. Counting—everything takes the same amount of time, every time, one step per beat. If you can count to 8, great. 16? Even better.
3. Circles—something like 80% of all contra dance figures involve walking in a circle around a person or a shared point on the floor.
4. Connection—this is where we talk about shared weight and how it can be either a push or a pull in different contexts. I talk to the dancers about their partner, how to find one respectfully, and how to ask for their partner’s role preference.
5. Keep having fun—social dance is a recreational activity, not a competition. Mistakes happen, just take a breath and keep dancing.

I take a moment here to get a verbal promise from the dancers on numbers 1 and 5—their only commitment to me is to enjoy the evening and make sure they feel safe, comfortable, and in-control of their personal space. As a caller, this should also be your number one priority. Everything else will come to the dancers with practice.

Beyond basic introductions, a beginners' workshop is really as unique to any given caller as a thumbprint. You walk through basic figures—dosido, allemande, circle, balance, swing, long lines, stars—and work in concepts about directions, actives (1s) / inactives (2s), and progression. I usually end with courtesy turns, then right-hand chains and a right & left through.

Some callers find time for more complicated figures, like heys, waves, etc., but most nights we're lucky to have 25 minutes for a lesson, let alone 20. Trust that they will pick up the rest as they go.

I end with two important requests, to set dancers up for the best possible potential contra dance experience:

1. Dance the first dance. Dance the second and the third, too, if you can. The program gets more tricky as the night goes on, and the lesson very quickly becomes a fading distant memory. Strike while the iron is hot.
2. If you came with someone else, you're welcome to dance with that person the whole night, *but* — I encourage dancing with others first, so that they can get their C-legs (their contra legs) under them. I promise them that the best way to become a good dancer is to dance with other good dancers (they'll almost never listen to you but they'll be okay, I promise).

Glossary

In the interest of saving space in the following section, there are a few moves and abbreviations used for which I've left out complete details. If you find that any are absent below or if you have questions about a particular dance, feel free to reach out and I'll be happy to expand.

(Box) Circulate — From long waves, dancers who are facing in walk straight across to form new long waves. Dancers who are facing out turn over their right or left shoulder to face in, taking the place of the dancer who just crossed the set.

Mirror mad robin — With all facing across, the couple above dances down through the couple below, while the couple below dances up around them. Continue with the other couple dancing down between, returning to their original positions. Similar in feel to a mirror hey, as in Grimstock (Playford, 1651).

N, P, and Sh — Neighbor, partner, and shadow, respectively (except when it's shoulder—see below).

Pass the ocean — All dancers begin to pass through straight across, with (usually) the robins catching left hands to pivot left $\frac{1}{4}$ and the larks crossing the set to offer right hands to the robin they started with on the other side, forming short waves.

Revolving door — As couples, optionally in an open swing hold, dancers pass by the right across the set. Robins catch right hands, drop larks off across the set, and allemande back to their original side.

Roll away (w/ half sashay) — This one may seem like an odd duck in the lineup, but I'd like to be clear about "roller" vs "rollee." The dances below use the format "[ROLE] roll away [DANCER] [DIR]", which means the specified ROLE *does* the rolling and DANCER is the one *being* rolled. I specify across/along, but not "R»L," e.g., since direction is contextual.

Square through n — Dancers pull by alternating hands n times around their hands four or into the next.

R or L Sh. round, meltdown swing — Dancers turn by the specified shoulder with optional eye contact, often swirling down into a swing. I shouldn't have to include this one here, in 2024, but here we are.

Swing through — From short waves, the outside pairs on each side of the wave allemande halfway, then inside dancers alle. halfway (may end with dancers forming new waves across).

Trade the wave — From short waves, dancers step forward and turn to face across. All pass through across by the right shoulder and retake hands in short waves, with the opposite role on the outside.

Dances

I'm personally of the opinion that there are two supercategories of contra dance choreography—dances which are *discovered*, and those which are *written*. Contra dance is just another kind of combinatorics problem, and mathematical truths exist whether we unearth them or not. Once we define figures for balances, chains, circles, dosidos, stars, and swings, then *The Baby Rose*³ (Kaynor, 1989), for example, is just waiting to be found and given a name. That's not to say it doesn't take effort to do so—it's a far rarer skill to be able to separate the good dances from the bad than it is to find a dance that “works”—but maybe, at the end of the day, we could all be a little less stressed over the byline on a card and all be a little happier for it.

Every caller has their own opinion on what makes a dance sequence unique, rather than a variation on another, existing dance. I've had callers insist that any dance must be at least 50% distinct in order to be a “new dance.” If that's true, then every dance with both neighbor and partner balance & swings must have no other moves in common, setting the bar perhaps a bit too high. In my opinion, a dance just has to be “different enough”, but good luck holding me to a consistent standard there.

³ Balance, swing, circle, dosido, balance, swing, chain, star

Most of the dances in this book were discovered, but I'd like to think at least a few wouldn't have happened if I hadn't dragged them into creation myself. You may decide on your own how many of them are unique and, if it makes you happy, update the count of dances on the front cover of this book appropriately to match.⁴

I've never settled on a satisfying method for sorting dance cards and unfortunately collating a book of dances is no different. I'm happy to say that, unlike a box of calling cards, I can alphabetize the contents of a book and weasel out of making a real decision. For the caller in need, I've also included an index at the end of this book for lookup based on figures and other more opinionated categories, like difficulty and feel.

⁴ For a small fee, I will even do it for you.

4-Body Problem

Dup. Minor, Becket

A1

- (8) Revolving door, robins alle. right to N
- (8) Neighbor swing

A2

- (8) Right & left through
- (8) Star left 4 places to next

B1

- (4) New robins ricochet left to right, larks slide left
- (6) Mad robin CW, larks in front
- (6) Circle left $\frac{3}{4}$

B2

- (16) Partner meltdown swing

99999

Dup. Minor, Improper

A1

- Neighbor 1 balance right hands, pull by along (6)
- Neighbor 2 pull by left (2)
- Neighbor 3 balance right, square through 2 (8)

A2

- Neighbor 3 pull by right, neighbor 2 pull by left (4)
- Neighbor 1 swing (12)

B1

- Circle left $\frac{3}{4}$, partner swing (16)

B2

- Robins chain to N (8)
- Partner balance right, square through 2 (8)

Aiming for Phoenix

Dup. Minor, Becket CCW

A1

- (10) Circle left $\frac{3}{4}$, partner cali. twirl to next
- (6) Circle left $\frac{1}{2}$, larks gate N $\frac{1}{4}$ to put robins
back-to-back in the center

A2

- (8) Neighbor pass right, half hey (larks pass left)
- (8) Neighbor swing

B1

- (8) Rings balance, petronella
- (8) Rings balance, larks roll away P along

B2

- (8) Larks pass left, half hey
- (8) Partner swing

Analemma

Dup. Minor, Becket CCW

A1

- Revolving door, robins alle. right to N (8)
- Neighbor swing (8)

A2

- Larks pass left, half hey (8)
- Larks left-hand chain to P (8)

B1

- Circle left $\frac{3}{4}$, pass through along (8)
- Robins alle. left once around while larks orbit $\frac{1}{2}$ (8)

B2

- Partner balance & swing (16)

Back to Back

Dup. Minor, Improper

A1

- (16) Neighbor balance & swing

A2

- (8) Neighbor promenade across
(8) Rings balance, petronella right

B1

- (16) Partner balance & swing

B2

- (8) Rings balance, petronella right
(8) Rings balance, partner cali. twirl to next

Variation on *Back to Front* by Luke Donforth, swapping the robins' allemande for another standalone petronella to match the one in his A1.

De-becketized, which *also* brings it pretty close to *Brain Dead Balance*, *also* by Luke, who based *Back to Front* on *A-1 Reel* by Chris Weiler *and* clearly had a similar idea to mine because he wrote *Double Balanced Brain* as well, which is more symmetrical than any of the other dances (but without a petronella left, the *coward*⁵).

Also curiously close to *HCF* by Aahz Maruch, published absolutely nowhere except the Shared Weight email list approximately 6 years before *Double Balanced Brain*.⁷

⁵ Hi Luke, love you buddy.⁶

⁶ (*I've never actually met Luke Donforth.*)

⁷ Nothing is novel, the dances have always existed, etc. etc. etc.

Bar Crawl

Dup. Minor, Improper

A1

- (8) Neighbor alle. right 1½ to long waves (larks in)
- (8) Long waves balance, circulate (larks cross)

A2

- (16) Partner balance & swing

B1

- (8) Long lines forward & back
- (8) Robins chain to N

B2

- (8) Partner balance right, square through 2

No transcription errors here, this dance is really 4 bars short. Over time, the dance “drifts” through the tune, with moves shifting earlier each time through (or dropping down to the end—the first time through, for example, the B2 ends with the A1 neighbor allemande). This means that after playing through the tune seven times, you’ll have danced the dance *eight*. Wreaks havoc on any callers or musicians in the audience⁸.

For other fun with non-standard phrasing, see *Steppy Downs Road*, further along in this section.

⁸ I’m *lots* of fun at parties.

Binary Stars

Dup. Minor, Improper

A1 *Starts in short waves, N in right hand*

(4) Short waves balance right & left

(4) Slide right, larks slide 2 places to catch left hands

(8) Hands-across star left 4 places, robins behind P

A2

(8) Stars balance, robins slide left to trade

(8) Hands-across star right 3-4 places to next

B1

(6) New larks alle. left $\frac{3}{4}$, robins slide right to P

(10) Partner swing

B2

(8) Circle left $\frac{3}{4}$

(8) Neighbors dosido $1\frac{1}{4}$ to short waves

Birds from Urbana

Dup. Minor, Becket

A1

Circle left $\frac{3}{4}$ (8)

Zig out left past one couple, zag right to next (6)

New larks alle. left $\frac{1}{2}$ to N (2)

A2

Neighbor meltdown swing (16)

B1

Mad robin CW, larks in front (8)

Circle left $\frac{3}{4}$ (8)

B2

Partner meltdown swing (16)

Bison Socks

Dup. Minor, Becket CCW

A1

- (8) Robins alle. right $1\frac{1}{2}$
- (8) Neighbor swing

A2

- (8) Long lines forward & back
- (8) Right & left through

B1

- (8) Star left 4 places to next
- (4) New neighbor box the gnat
- (4) Larks pull by left to P

B2

- (16) Partner meltdown swing

Blue and Green Candles

Dup. Minor, Becket

A1

- Robins pull by right, N alle. left $\frac{3}{4}$ to long waves (8)
- Waves balance, circulate w/ next N (robins cross) (8)

A2

- Long waves balance, circulate (larks cross) (8)
- Neighbor swing (8)

B1

- Long lines forward & back (8)
- Mad robin CW, larks in front (8)

B2

- Larks pass left to start half hey (6)
- Robins ricochet, partner swing (10)

Bobbin' Robin

Dup. Minor, Becket

A1

- (8) Circle left $\frac{3}{4}$, pass through to next
- (8) Neighbor balance right hands, box the gnat

A2

- (8) Star right 4 places
- (8) Mad robin CW, larks in front

B1

- (8) Larks pass left, half hey
- (8) Mad robin CW, larks in front

B2

- (6) Larks pass left to start half hey
- (10) Robins ricochet, partner swing

Box Lemniscate

Dup. Minor, Becket

A1

- Revolving door, robins alle. right to N (8)
- Neighbor swing (8)

A2

- Pass the ocean (no balance) (4)
- Neighbor alle. right $1\frac{1}{4}$ to long waves & balance (12)

B1

- Larks pass left, half hey to long waves (8)
- Long waves balance, circulate (larks cross) (8)

B2

- Partner balance & swing (14)
- Slide left to next (2)

Bubbly Beginnings

Dup. Minor, Improper

A1

(16) Neighbor balance & swing

A2

(8) Long lines forward & back

(8) Larks alle. left 1½

B1

(16) Partner balance & swing

B2

(8) Right & left through

(8) Robins dosido 1½ to next

Dreaming of Michael

Dup. Minor, Becket

A1

Revolving door, robins alle. right to N (8)

Neighbor swing, end facing down (8)

A2

Lines of 4 go down the hall (8)

Turn alone, return & bend to a ring (8)

B1

Mirror mad robin, 2s in front (8)

Rings balance, petronella right (8)

B2

Partner balance & swing (14)

Slide left to next (2)

Elsa's Quarter-Life Crisis

Dup. Minor, Becket

A1

- (8) Larks alle. left $1\frac{1}{2}$
- (8) Neighbor swing

A2

- (8) Pass the ocean, waves balance forward & back
- (8) Trade the wave, N alle. left $\frac{1}{4}$ to long waves

B1

- (8) Long waves balance, circulate (robins cross)
- (8) Long waves balance, circulate (larks cross)

B2

- (8) Long waves balance, circulate (robins cross)
- (8) Partner swing

Fake Chicken

Dup. Minor, Improper

A1

- Neighbor balance & swing (14)
- Slide left to shadows (2)

A2

- Circle left $\frac{3}{4}$ (8)
- Square through 3 (Sh. right, N left, Sh. right) (8)

B1

- Partner balance & swing (16)

B2

- Robins chain to N (8)
- Robins pass right, half hey (8)

First of November

Dup. Minor, Improper

A1

- (8) Long lines forward & back
- (8) Neighbor swing

A2

- (8) Larks alle. left 1½
- (8) Partner dosido

B1

- (16) Partner balance & swing

B2

- (8) Robins chain to N
- (8) Right & left through

Flow and Glide

Dup. Minor, Improper

A1

- Neighbor box the gnat, larks pull by left to P (6)
- Partner swing (10)

A2

- Revolving door, robins alle. right & slide L past N (8)
- Neighbor pass right to prev., left sh. round once (8)

B1

- Robins half hey w/ current neighbors, pass left (8)
- Neighbor swing (8)

B2

- Robins chain to P (8)
- Star left 3 places, neighbor pull by left to next (8)

For David

Dup. Minor, Becket CCW

A1

- (6) Circle left $\frac{3}{4}$
- (4) Partners take right hands, square through 2
- (6) Next neighbor alle. right once to orig. N

A2

- (16) Current neighbor balance & swing

B1

- (8) Long lines forward & back
- (8) Larks alle. left $\frac{3}{4}$, next larks alle. right $\frac{3}{4}$

B2 *(Robins slide right to follow partners)*

- (16) Partner balance & swing

Franny's Fabulous Folklife

Dup. Minor, Becket

A1

- Larks step into long wave, balance left & right (8)
- Larks alle. left $\frac{3}{4}$ with next larks, robins slide left (4)
- Partner alle. right $\frac{3}{4}$ to long waves, larks face in (4)

A2

- Long waves balance, circulate (larks cross) (8)
- Long waves balance forward & back (4)
- Circulate, robins catch right and scoop up P (4)

B1

- Partner star promenade across, butterfly whirl (8)
- Larks left sh. round once to P (8)

B2

- Partner meltdown swing (16)

Golden Hands

Dup. Minor, Improper

A1

- (8) Mad robin CW, robins in front
- (8) Robins left-hand chain to P

A2

- (8) Robins pass left, half hey
- (8) Partner swing

B1

- (8) Larks pass left, half hey
- (8) Circle left once around

B2

- (8) Robins right-hand chain to N
- (8) Mad robin CCW to next, robins in front

Grab Bag

Dup. Minor, Improper

A1

- Long lines forward & back (8)
- Neighbor swing (8)

A2

- Robins full hey, pass right (16)

B1

- Robins pass right sh. across to P (2)
- Partner meltdown swing (14)

B2

- Circle left $\frac{3}{4}$ (8)
- Same neighbor swing (8)

Higgs Boson

Dup. Minor, Improper

A1 *Starts in long waves, robins face in*

(8) Long waves balance, circulate (robins cross)

(8) Long waves balance, circulate (larks cross)

A2

(16) Neighbor balance & swing

B1

(8) Circle left $\frac{3}{4}$

(8) Partner swing

B2

(8) Pass the ocean, waves balance forward & back

(4) Robins alle. left $\frac{1}{2}$, pass through along to next

(4) New neighbor alle. right $\frac{3}{4}$ to long waves

I have a particularly bad habit of stealing dances that are almost perfect and “fixing” them to suit my liking. I usually try to include attribution back to the original in the title of the dance, to be clear that I’m merely standing on someone else’s shoulders.

This particular dance is based on *Furthermore* by Scott Higgs. I loved Scott’s original progression but the original sliding waves (a la Rory O’More) didn’t have the *oomph* I was looking for—a balance right & left didn’t kick like a forward & back. Ironically, for a dance to which I contributed fundamentally very little, this is one of my most-requested compositions.

I Drove to Portland for Tacos (It's true!)

Dup. Minor, Improper

A1

(16) Neighbor dosido & swing

A2

(8) Robins alle. right $1\frac{1}{2}$ to P

(8) Partner swing

B1

(8) Long lines forward & back, robins roll P along

(8) Circle left $\frac{3}{4}$

B2

(8) Right & left through

(8) Star left 4 places to next

Katy's on Time

Dup Minor, Improper

Starts in lines of 4, 1s in the center **A1**

Lines of 4 go down the hall (8)

Turn as couples w/ neighbor, return (8)

A2

Bend the line, 1s half fig. 8 down between 2s (12)

while 2s alle. left $1\frac{1}{2}$ (start as 1s clear the center)

Neighbor box the gnat (4)

(Pull by to half hey, robins ricochet on the side) **B1**

N pull by RH, 2s pass L, larks pass R & robins rico. (6)

Robin 2 & lark 1 pass left across, partner swing (10)

B2

Circle left $\frac{3}{4}$ (8)

Rings balance, 2s shoot 1s down between (8)

Keep Left at the Frock

Dup. Minor, Improper

A1

- (16) Neighbor meltdown swing

A2

- (8) Mad robin CW, larks in front
- (8) Half poussette CW, robins backing up

B1

- (4) Robins pass left to start half hey
- (4) Larks catch left and alle. left $\frac{3}{4}$ to P
- (8) Partner swing

B2

- (8) Larks left-hand chain to N
- (8) Larks half hey to next, pass left

Greg Frock first got me thinking about working with left-hand chains a few years ago. His position, that a left-hand chain simply flows *better* out of a swing, is one that immediately took up space rent-free in my brain. Abigail Golden and Qwill Duvall later pointed out to me that there's no reason they should only be for the larks, which was the inspiration for *Golden Hands*.

For this particular dance, I wanted to really lean into that flow that Greg loves so much. The whole dance feels like one continuous line from figure to figure.

One catch—this is not the time for dancers to rush their mad robins or poussettes. Take your time.

Last Hey

Dup. Minor, Becket

A1

- (8) Circle left $\frac{3}{4}$
- (8) Rings balance, pass through to next

A2

- (8) New robins alle. left $1\frac{1}{2}$ to short waves
- (4) Short waves balance forward & back
- (4) Partner alle. right $\frac{3}{4}$

B1

- (16) Robins full hey, pass left

B2

- (16) Partner balance & swing

Liam Left Me for London

Dup. Minor, Becket

A1

- Robins chain to N (8)
- Same robins right sh. round once to next N (8)

A2

- New neighbor balance & swing (16)

B1

- Larks pass left, half hey to long waves (8)
- Long waves balance, circulate (larks cross) (8)

B2

- Long waves balance, circulate & robins ricochet (8)
- Partner swing (8)

L.E.D. (Light-Emitting Dancers)

Dup. Minor, Becket

A1

(8) Robins dosido 1½ to trade

(8) Star right 4 places

A2

(8) Full-set promenade CW, robins outside

(8) Robins cast off one place to swing new N

B1

(8) Full-set promenade CCW back to P

(8) Larks alle. left once while robins orbit ½ to P

B2

(16) Partner balance & swing

A few years ago I had the pleasure of meeting Lewis Hou⁹ and experiencing Science Ceilidh¹⁰ for the first time. They've formulated a delightfully clear and witty intersection between science education and the Scottish folk tradition, offering programming and resources to support educators in their community.

This dance was written in the spirit of their program, intended to teach dancers how electricity is generated, transported, and finally transformed into visible light. As far as I know, it's the only "Science Contra."

⁹ <https://www.lewishou.com/>

¹⁰ <https://www.scienceceilidh.com/>

I've run workshops based on their content at a number of weekends and folk festivals over the past few years, quietly slipping this dance into the program. A dance is always taught twice—once with the figures, and then once more to illustrate the lesson behind the dance.

A1

Robins dosido 1½ to trade

A diode is made from materials called semiconductors, with opposing electrical charges—positive and negative (P and N for short, how convenient!). Electrons along the boundary are exchanged, forming a depletion zone.

Star right 4 places

Fluctuations in a magnetic field create electric current, the direction of which follows the “right hand rule.”

A2

Full set promenade, robins cast off

When electricity is sent along a wire, the electron pushed in at one end isn't the one that leaves the other. Instead, electrons ‘nudge’ each other one by one along.

B1

Larks alle. left...

When a current is applied in the correct direction, electrons are boosted out of the depletion zone and begin flowing freely again across the P-N boundary.

B2

...while robins orbit, Partner balance & swing

As boosted electrons move across the diode, they jump from higher to lower energy orbitals. As electrons drop into lower orbits, excess energy is released as photons.

New Year, Same Old Charlie

Dup. Minor, Improper, 2x progression

A1

(16) Neighbor balance & swing, end facing down

A2

(8) Lines of 4 go down the hall

(8) Turn alone, return, 1s cast down to new rings

B1

(8) Rings balance, petronella right

(8) Partner swing

B2

(8) Rings balance, petronella right

(8) Rings balance, partner cali. twirl to next

Not My Second Rodeo

Dup. Minor, Improper

A1

Neighbor balance & swing (16)

A2

Larks pass left, half hey (8)

Larks alle. left $1\frac{1}{2}$ (8)

B1

Partner meltdown swing (16)

B2

Circle left $\frac{3}{4}$, pass through to next (8)

New neighbor dosido (8)

Once More With Feeling

Dup. Minor, Improper

A1

(8) Neighbor balance right, box the gnat

(8) Larks alle. left $1\frac{1}{2}$ to P

A2

(16) Partner balance & swing

B1

(8) Circle left $\frac{3}{4}$

(8) Neighbor swing

B2

(8) Rings balance, petronella right

(8) Rings balance, petronella right to next

Odd One Out

Three-facing-three

In lines of three, I.D. dancers 1, 2, and 3 from the left **A1**

2s + 3s rings balance, petronella right (8)

while 1s balance inside hand, star through

Other rings balance, petronella right (8)

while outside pair balance & star through

A2

Rings of six circle left 4 places (8)

P+P+N swing, end with Ns in the middle (8)

B1

Lines of 3 advance & return (8)

Middle dancers alle. left $1\frac{1}{2}$ to partners (8)

B2

Partners balance & swing (16)

Red Beard's Redder Beard¹¹

Dup. Minor, Becket

A1

- (8) Robins alle. right 1½ while larks cast off to prev.
- (8) Previous neighbor swing

A2

- (8) Long lines forward & back
- (8) Neighbor j-hook promenade across (loop left)

B1

- (8) Pass the ocean, waves balance forward & back
- (2) Pass through along
- (6) Mad robin CW, robins in front

B2

- (2) Robins pass left sh. across
- (12) Partner meltdown swing
- (2) Slide left to next

Have dancers identify their opposite-role dancer on the right diagonal before starting. A1 has the larks cast off to that dancer for the swing. Every other time through, it will be their neighbor from the previous mad robin.

The pass through in the B1 is just undoing the reverse-progression in the A section. The only real progression is the slide left in the B2.

¹¹ Based on *Red Beard Reel* by Bob Isaacs, now redder and even more beard-y.

Robin Shall Restore Amends

Dup. Minor, Improper

A1

- (8) Rings balance, pet. right to long waves (larks out)
- (8) Long waves balance, circulate w/ shadows
(robins cross to N, larks loop right to follow Sh)

A2

- (8) Long waves balance, circulate (larks cross)
- (8) Long waves balance, shadow pull by right to P

B1

- (16) Partner balance & swing *(optional long swing)*

B2

- (8) Circle left $\frac{3}{4}$
- (8) Rings balance, pass through to next

Rory O'Most

Dup. Minor, Improper, 2x progression

Starts in long waves, larks face out **A1**

Long waves balance right & left, slide right (8)

Long waves balance left & right, slide left (8)

A2

Long waves balance right & left, slide right (8)

Next neighbor swing (8)

B1

Larks alle. left $1\frac{1}{2}$ to P (8)

Partner swing (8)

B2

Robins chain to N (8)

Robins pass right, half hey to long waves (8)

Steppy Downs Road

Written for Steppy Downs Road by Sam Sweeney

Dup. Minor, Improper, 3:2

A1

(12) Larks $\frac{3}{4}$ hey, pass right (LR, PL, RR, NL, LR)

A2

(12) Partner balance & swing

B1

(6) Trad. right & left through (w/o hands)

(6) Trad. right & left through

B2

(6) Circle left $\frac{3}{4}$

(6) Half poussette CW, larks backing up

The Set Monster

Dup. Minor, Becket, 3x progression, mmmmm cookies!

A1

Rings balance, petronella right (8)

Neighbor 1 swing (8)

A2

Robins chain to P (8)

Robins balance right hands, pull by to next (6)

Neighbor 2 pull by left (2)

B1

Neighbor 3 balance, square through 2 & face out (8)

Long lines "forward" & back, N4 star through (8)

B2

Rings balance, petronella right (8)

Partner swing (8)

Stars in the Wildfire

Dup. Minor, Improper

A1

- (8) Star right 4 places, N alle. right $\frac{1}{4}$ to short wave
- (8) Short waves balance, swing through

A2

- (8) Partner balance right hands, box the gnat
- (8) Partner pull by & larks pass left, half hey

B1

- (16) Partner balance & swing

B2

- (8) Robins chain to N
- (8) Star left 4 places to next

The Sturgeon General

Dup. Minor, Improper

A1

- Neighbor balance & swing (16)

A2

- Rings balance, pass the ocean (8)
- Short waves balance right & left (4)
- Slide right, larks slide 2 places to catch left hands (4)

B1

- Larks alle. left once to P (6)
- Partner swing (10)

B2

- Circle left $\frac{3}{4}$ (8)
- Pass through along, new neighbor dosido (8)

The Sun Never Sets on Puget Sound

Dup. Minor, Becket

(Except When It Does, Sometimes)

A1

- (8) Larks pass left, half hey to long waves
- (6) Long waves balance, circulate (larks cross)
- (2) Neighbor alle. right $\frac{1}{4}$ to short waves

A2

- (8) Short waves balance, pass through to next
- (8) New N pass right, half hey (larks left in ctr.)

B1

- (16) Neighbor balance & swing

B2

- (8) Larks alle. left $1\frac{1}{2}$ to P
- (8) Partner swing

Swappportunities Abound

Dup. Minor, Becket

A1

- Long lines forward & back (8)
- Circle left $\frac{3}{4}$ (8)

A2

- Half poussette CW, larks backing up (8)
- Neighbor swing (8)

B1

- Mad robin CW to next, larks in front (8)
- New rings balance, petronella right (8)

B2

- Rings balance, larks roll away N across (8)
- Partner swing (8)

Tangled Yarns

Dup. Minor, Becket CCW

A1

- (8) Long lines forward & back
- (8) Star left 4 places

A2

- (8) Robins chain on right diagonal to N
- (8) Robins chain across to Sh

B1

- (8) Neighbor balance right, square through 2 to P
- (8) Partner balance right along, square through 2

B2

- (16) Partner balance & swing

I take nearly zero credit for this one, except that there were two dances I liked and they fit together nicely. Perfect for nights you want to start out dancing *Ellen's Yarns* by Rick Mohr and end up dancing *Square Through to You* by Bob Isaacs.

I'd joke that, given the dance is at most 50% of another dance, it therefore meets the strictest criteria for uniqueness (see page 7), but it's actually a fairly close match to both *Becket Brigade* by Don Lennartson and *The Glass Goddess* by David Glick which themselves are **flips papers** **exactly the same dance.**

Nothing is novel or original, we didn't write the dances, they've always existed, credit is meaningless.

Three Klicks North

Dup. Minor, Becket

A1

- (8) Larks pass left, half hey
- (6) Circle left $\frac{3}{4}$
- (2) Partner cali. twirl to next

A2

- (4) Circle left $\frac{1}{2}$
- (12) Neighbor swing

B1

- (8) Long lines forward & back
- (8) Mad robin CW, larks in front

B2

- (16) Larks pass left, partner meltdown swing

Trip to Richmond Centre Mall

Dup. Minor, Improper

A1

- Robins step into long wave, balance left & right (8)
- Robins alle. left $\frac{3}{4}$ to short waves w/ previous N (4)
- Waves balance forward & back (4)

A2

- Pass through along, current neighbor swing (16)

B1

- Larks alle. $1\frac{1}{2}$ to P (8)
- Partner swing (8)

B2

- Robins chain to N (8)
- Robins pass right, half hey (8)

The Tugboat

Dup. Minor, Becket

A1

- (8) Long lines forward & back, larks roll P along
- (8) Long lines forward & back, robins roll P along

A2

- (8) Robins chain to N
- (8) Robins pass right, half hey

B1

- (4) Neighbor pull by left to next
- (12) New neighbor meltdown swing

B2

- (4) Give & take, robins draw partner across
- (12) Partner swing

Umbra and Penumbra

Dup. Minor, Improper

A1

- Robins ricochet left to right, larks slide left (4)
- Neighbor swing (12)

A2

- Circle left $\frac{3}{4}$, zig out left with N past one couple (8)
- Zag right to shadow, alle. left once to P (8)

B1

- Partner meltdown swing (16)

B2

- Robins chain to N (8)
- Star left 4 places to next (8)

Van is My Middle Name

Dup. Minor, Improper

A1 *Starts in lines of 4, 1s in the center*

(8) Lines of 4 go down the hall

(8) Turn as couples w/ neighbor, return

A2

(8) Bend the line, pass through across

(8) Neighbor swing

B1

(6) Larks pass left to start half hey

(10) Robins ricochet, partner swing

B2

(8) Rings balance, petronella right

(8) Rings balance, 1s mirror pass through

The Weekend Warrior

Dup. Minor, Improper

A1

Neighbor balance & swing (16)

A2

Circle left $\frac{3}{4}$ (8)

Partner swing (8)

B1

Robins chain to N (8)

Robins pass right to start half hey (4)

Larks catch right and alle. right $\frac{3}{4}$ to short wave (4)

B2

Short waves balance, trade the wave (8)

Short waves balance, pass through to next (8)

EEEEEE

Dup. Minor, Becket

A1

- (8) Long lines forward & back
- (8) Robins chain along left diagonal

A2

- (8) Robins chain to -1st shadows
- (8) Star left 4 places

B1

- (6) Partners balance right hands, pull by along
- (2) 1st shadows pull by left
- (8) 2nd shadows balance right hands, box the gnat

B2

- (2) 2nd shadows pull by right along
- (2) 1st shadows pull by left
- (12) Partner swing

This dance has three shadows, one behind your partner (-1, in the chain) and two beyond your partner (1 and 2, in the right & left grand). Rather than try to identify them all before walking the dance, make a point of calling them out the first time they're encountered in the walkthrough.

Please don't ask me how to pronounce the title.

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Additional Resources

The Caller's Box

<https://www.ibiblio.org/contradance/thecallersbox/>

More dances than anyone could (or should) ever call in one lifetime, searchable by title, author, figures, etc.

Note: Chris does still use gendered role terms along with a few other less standard terms for some dance figures.

CDSS Resource Portal

<https://www.cdss.org/resources/resource-portal/>

Great free collection of dances and other calling resources.

Contra URL Shortener (CURLS)

<https://www.contra.dance/>

Shameless self-plug, but if you ever need a shortlink to contra dance events or content, CURLS is a free self-serve url shortener (<https://contra.dance/seattle>, e.g.)

ContraDB

<https://www.contradb.com/>

In many respects a subset of the collection available on The Caller's Box, I mention this here as well since it has more robust search functionality, allows you to arrange dance programs, and is open-source. You can also customize terms for roles and figures, with an account.

Shared Weight

<https://www.sharedweight.net/lists/contracallers/>

Web-1.0-style email distribution group for dance callers and those interested in calling. Free to join! Full of useful information! Delightfully easy to accidentally hit sore spots or start arguments without warning!

Isaac Banner has been calling and writing dances in The Pacific Northwest since 2016. Originally from Saratoga Springs, NY, he now spends most of his time in the Seattle area, thinking up sneaky new ways to mess with dancers.

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Rear cover by Natalie Gray

