

History: Composed on the plane ride back home from the Lammas Ale in Vancouver, BC. First dance I was inspired to write as a result of 72 hours of sleep deprivation, starting a trend.

The opening is especially variable, since the dance was originally choreographed for an arena-type space. It's since been used at a morris ale and at the San Francisco Gay Pride Parade, where we performed a shortened version in front of the judge's stand. At the Exotic Erotic Ball, we got the crowd to sing along for the chorus. In 2004, we danced it on stage at the Border Bash as part of the Rochester Sweeps Festival in Rochester, England. The dance originally had six figures, with a Cross and Turn as the second-to-last figure. In practice, the figure worked, in performance it was Crash and Burn. We did it with enthusiasm, so we still got cheers, but as the choreographer, I decided to cut it.

The Music: Minstrel show tune "Bald Headed End of the Broom." One of three known tunes associated with the song, we got this version from Waterson and Carthy.

BALD-HEADED END OF THE BROOM

A border dance for a set of 6, long sticks

Tune: "Bald-Headed End of the Broom"

composed by Lee Thompson 27 Aug, 2000

destruction tested by the White Rats 31 Aug, 2000

Stepping and Style: Stepping is step-hop single steps, knees brought up high, feet nearly underneath you. Definitely NOT cotswald-style single steps. Body stance is slightly forward, leaning into surges and turns. Stick is in your right hand, end resting on your shoulder unless otherwise stated.

Figure 1: Dance on and around. (A music, 16 or 24 bars)

Dance on in two lines, from opposite corners, making two concentric circles. Lines start out on the opposite side of the dance space from where they will end in the set. The lines cross Right shoulders at the Bottom of the dance area, Left shoulders at the Top, Right shoulders again at the bottom to form two parallel lines that are wider than your intended set. On the last four bars of the intro, the lines surge into set position.

This figure is intended to clear out your intended dance space, so make your circles BIG.

Chorus: Grand Hey. (B music, 8 bars)

Numbers 1 and 2 face each other across the set. 3 and 4 face down. 5 and 6 stay facing up (so they face 3 and 4). Start the hey by sticking high with the person you're facing, move past them to stick low as you pass. One strike per step-hop, So you'll stick high on your first step (right foot), then stick low on your second (left foot). Continue around the set until you're back to your starting place (6 bars). Face your partner to stick forehand, backhand, 3 quick strikes (7 and 8-two-three)

Figure 2: Shetland Back to Back (A music, 8 bars)

1 and 2 will do a normal back to back. 5 and 6 will also do a normal back to back. 3 and 4 will do the figure in tandem with the pair to their RIGHT for the first half of the figure, then with the pair on their LEFT for the second half.

Middles will cast hard over their Left sholder to go RIGHT.

3 lines up behind number 5,

4 lines up behind number 2.

2 and 4 in tandem pass right shoulders with 1.

3 and 5 in tandem pass right shoulders with 6.

Everyone takes their steps left and backs up.

Middles will cast hard to get out of the way so 1 and 6 can back into place. Middles then loop through their own spot, continuing that turn to line up for the second half of the figure.

Middles now line up behind the pair to their LEFT.

That means 3 lines up behind 1, 4 lines up behind 6.

Everyone passes left shoulders to go back to back. Middles then cast to get back home and get in position for a chorus.

CHORUS (B music, 8 bars)

Figure 3: Top and Bottom Stars (A music, 16 bars)

[4 bars] 1, 2, 3 and 4 make a Right hand star. Switch your sticks to your left hand as you go in, and hold the left arm straight out, stick held straight up and down. Hard cast into

[4 bars] Left hands back, remember to switch the stick to your right hand as you turn.

While the star is happening at the top of the set, 5 and 6 stick on the beat (still stepping if you can).

[4 bars] For the second half, 3, 4, 5, and 6 make a Right hand star. Hard cast into

[4 bars] Left hands back while 1 and 2 stick on the beat.

CHORUS (B music, 8 bars)

Figure 4 : High Tops or top and bottom heys (A music, 16 bars)

Country dance heys. Middles turn to their RIGHT first. (*yes, really*)

1, 2, and 4 do a hey for three,

3, 5, and 6 do the same. *This is an 8 bar hey, it will seem slow*

Middles turn to their LEFT for the second half.

1, 2 and 3 hey, 4, 5 and 6 hey. (8 bars)

CHORUS (B music, 8 bars)

Figure 5: Linked Hey and Off (A music, as long as it takes to get offstage)

1 and 2 face down, loop their arms over each other's shoulders. Everyone else faces up, partners with arms on shoulders. Number 1 should jump over to meet number 2, 4 should jump over to meet number 3. This gives you enough clearance to pass right shoulders to start the hey. 5 and 6 will step in place until the hey comes to them.

Partner hey begins, each pair counting as one unit in a hey for 3. When the first couple gets back to place, they don't stop, but instead continue dancing "up" and out of the dance area. The other couples follow at high speed. First couple needs to make sure they don't leave the rest of the set in the dust, since the other two couples still have to finish the hey before they can dance off. If you still have enough wind, you can dance all the way around the dance space before dancing off.

Last Revised: 24 Feb, 2006