

Wandering Waltz Contra



WALTZ CONTRA (by Barry Moule, England)

RECORD: "Wandering Waltzes" on the LP Cabbage records "None So Pretty" by Berkeley Scottish Players, available from Michael Herman's Folk Dance House.

FORMATION: Contra lines with men in one line, ladies in the other line.

Before starting dance, have dancers make circles of four people starting at head of line, then ask those nearest to caller, to be # 1 and the others # 2. DO NOT CROSS OVER for # 1, men are one side, ladies on other side.

THE DANCE:

PART 1: First man and 2nd lady (in each group of four people) with a Right hand hold Waltz balance forward and back, then change places (without a twirl. Second man and 1st lady, do the same. Repeat all of Part 1. This brings everyone back to original place.

Part 2: First couple, with a two hand hold, take two slow side-close-steps down the center of the set. Change places with each other holding only Lady's Left, Man's Right hand, but waltzing straight ahead, the lady passing under man's Right armpit. (Sometimes called "Box the gnat".) Immediately waltz up the outside of the set (moving to original places but on opposite sides....with 4 waltz steps. Couple # 1 will now be with lady and man on wrong side.

AT THE SAME TIME....Second couple starts by casting off and do the 4 waltz steps up the outside to where the first couple started the dance, and then they take the two hand hold, and do two slow-side-close-steps down the center of the set. Change places with partner ("Box the gnat" as above) and stay there.

*All ladies and all men are now on the other side.

Part 3: In circle of four, all waltz 4 steps to Left, half way round, to original side. Keep hands joined and all move in for 2 measures.(Beware, do not go in and out!) From here, drop hands, and all make a solo turn to right with 2 waltz steps, and lo and behold all are on original sides, but have moved up or down one place.

REPEAT DANCE, with # 1 man dancing with NEW # 2 lady, etc.

TEACHING TECHNIQUE: In part 2, teach # 1 couple first by themselves. Then teach # 2 couple their part. Then tell both couples to do their own part simultaneously.

Play the dance once through. Stop. Now tell top and bottom couples to wait once through and change numbers, and the fact that everyone is now dancing with a new couple. Also inform dancers as they reach either the top or bottom, they will wait once through change numbers and also then have to the dance from the section relating to their number. We note also that # 2 couple often forgets to change over at the end of the slow slides, so make sure they do so.

Dance originally presented at Maine Folk Dance Camp by Chip Hendrickson, 1982.
Presented by Roger Whynot 1986