

Hereburgh "Life in the old Dog" dance

Short Version

Introduction

This is a handkerchief dance, for 8 dancers, in the Harbury "tradition" for Hereburgh Morris of Harbury, Warwickshire. The title was inspired by The Dog Inn where we have enjoyed countless refreshments but it was also intended to poke fun at the relentless energy of the Hereburgh 'elders'. The formation is a long-ways set as shown:

M
1 2
3 4
5 6
7 8

- The tune is "Life in the old Dog", sequence A.(AB²)².(AC²)².A²B².A, metronome around 80 bpm.
- 1, 3, 5 and 7 are known as "Odds"; 2, 4, 6 and 8 are "Evens".
- The basic stepping pattern for most movements is 2 double steps (*ds*), 2 single steps (*ss*), feet together jump and "show" (*ftj+s*).
- Left foot start *everywhere* except for the second half of the Turn and Cross figure.
- The double stepping should be similar to the style of Ascott under Wychwood ("1, 2, 3, hop") with the arms swinging down on "1" and "2" then up on "3" and "hop".
- The single stepping should be in a simple style (e.g. no "cycling", no shuffle-backs) whether moving forwards or backwards. The arms swing down on the first *ss* and up on the second (also on the plain capers).
- The arms should be kept fairly straight (but not rigid) and should swing no higher than eye-level except in the "show" and the side steps.
- For the *ftj+s*, the arms swing out and down to "gather" for the jump, and up to chin level (elbows out, hands in front of chin) on the jump, with a final thrust straight up (vertically) on landing.
- In all choruses, the dancers pass *right* shoulders with their partners and turn *right* into place at the end of each half.
- The special capers in choruses 2, 3 and 4 are described fully in **Lucy Grant's Jig**.

The sequence is:

1. Lead on, Chorus 1 (stepping across)
2. Face to Face Left/Right, Chorus 2 (Hopscotch)
3. Back to Back Left/Right, Chorus 3 (Slows - Brush Capers)
4. Diagonal Dash, Chorus 4 (Slows - Twizzles)
5. Lead off.

Choruses

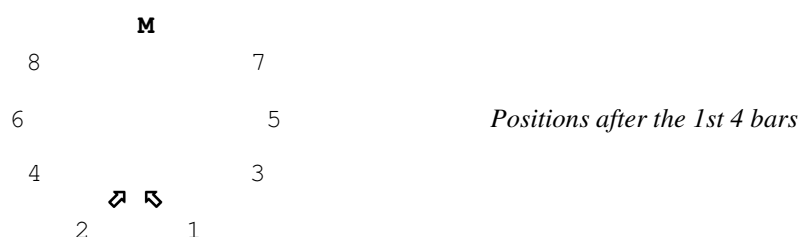
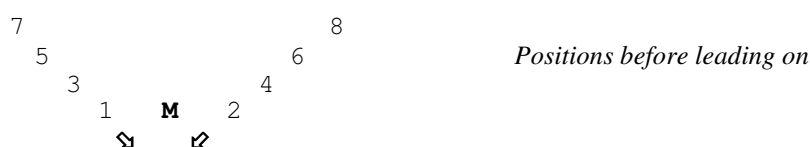
All choruses start with the same basic steps:

1. Face your partner.
2. Dance one open side step left (*ssl*), flicking left hanky vertically up and down on first step, with right hanky by the side, then one open side step right (*ssr*), flicking right hanky vertically up and down on first step, with left hanky by the side.
3. 4 plain capers on the spot while turning right through 360° .

Thereafter the chorus differs after each figure.

Leading on

The Odds stand in a line to the musician's right, in the order 1357, while the Evens stand to the musician's left in the order 2468. The Odds and Evens dance on together, crossing each other's paths twice before taking up their positions in the set.



1. After the OTY, the Odds and Evens dance in front of the musician in the direction shown by the angles of the lines above, interleaving with each other - 1 in front of 2, 3 in front of 4 etc. - using 4 bars (*2ds*, *2ss* and *ftj+s*) to reach the positions shown above.
2. For the second 4 bars, they head back towards the musician and interleave again - 1 in front of 2 etc. - to take up their positions in the long-ways set.

Chorus 1 (Stepping across)

After the preparatory side-steps and capers described above:

1. In *2ds*, cross over to your partner's side passing right shoulders.
2. In *2ss*, turn right through a small clockwise semi-circle finishing with the *ftj+s* facing your partner.
3. Repeat this routine to return to your home position.

Face-to-Face Left/Right

In this figure, the stepping pattern is performed with a diagonal 'partner'.

1. Face the dancer to the *left* of your opposite partner. In 4 bars, dance a face-to-face, passing *right* shoulders, with that person. If you are at the end of the set and have no left diagonal partner (positions 1 and 8), face an imaginary diagonal and dance the figure with that 'person'.

2. In the second 4 bars, dance a face-to-face with your *right* diagonal partner, passing *left* shoulders. Once again, two end dancers (2 and 7 this time) dance with imaginary diagonal partners.

Chorus 2 (Hopscotch)

After the preparatory side-steps and capers:

1. In 2 Hopscotch steps, cross over to your partner's side passing *right* shoulders. After the first Hopscotch step, you should be just past your partner with your arms outstretched behind (and almost touching) your partner's back.
2. In 2ss, turn *right* through a small clockwise semi-circle finishing with the *ftj+s* facing your partner.
3. This whole routine is repeated to return to your home position.

Back-to-Back Left/Right

As with the Face-to-Face, the stepping pattern is performed with diagonal partners with the end dancers dancing with imaginary partners when necessary.

1. In 4 bars, dance a back-to-back with your *left* diagonal passing *right* shoulders.
2. In 4 bars, dance a back-to-back with your *right* diagonal, passing *left* shoulders.

Chorus 3 (Slows - Brush Capers)

After the preparatory side-steps and capers:

1. In 2 *Brush Capers*, cross over to your partner's side passing *right* shoulders. As you lower yourself at the end of the first caper, you should be just past your partner with your arms outstretched behind (and almost touching) your partner's back.
2. In 2ss, turn *right* through a small clockwise semi-circle finishing with the *ftj+s* facing your partner.
3. This whole routine is repeated to return to your home position.

Diagonal Dash

This figure consists of a progression up and down the set moving along the diagonals only.

1. In 2ds, change places with your *left* diagonal 'partner', passing *right* shoulders. If you don't have a left diagonal partner (positions 1 and 8), you still turn to face in that direction and use the 2ds to dance a small individual *anti-clockwise* circle to return to your place (taking care not to dance behind the line of the set).
2. In 2ss, starting from your new position, change places with your *right* diagonal, passing *left* shoulders. If you don't have a right diagonal partner, you use the 2ss to dance a small *clockwise* circle to return to place. Finish with the *ftj+s*, jumping to face the next diagonal.

This sequence continues with alternating right and left diagonals for a total of 16 bars (the 'A' music is played twice for this figure) so that everyone returns to their original positions, having experienced being 'spare' dancers at both ends of the set.

Chorus 4 (Slows - Twizzles)

After the preparatory side-steps and capers:

1. In 2 *Twizzles*, cross over to your partner's side passing *right* shoulders. Start with two steps towards your partner followed by the first Twizzle, spinning 180° to the *right*. The next two steps are *backwards* and the second Twizzle is to the *left*. For the first Twizzle, all 8 dancers should be in line.
2. In *2ss*, turn *right* through a small clockwise semi-circle finishing with the *ftj+s* facing your partner.
3. This whole routine is repeated to return to your home position.

Leading off

The leading off is the reverse of the leading on. All dancers face *away* from the musician and those at the bottom of the set (7 and 8) lead their columns to cross over, interleaving as before, with the Odds crossing in front of the Evens. After crossing over, they head back towards the musician and interleave again to finish each side of the musician in their starting positions. The standard stepping sequence, *2ds*, *2ss* and *ftj+s* is used as before.



Peter McDonald
19 March 1998
(updated 21 March 2007)