

**KNUTSFORD CHILDREN'S GARLAND DANCE**

- Source** : filmed at Knutsford May Day as a dance done as part of the ceremonial by the local dance school, who also provided maypole dancers, sailor's hornpipe etc.
- Set** : team of 10 in two groups of 5. Nothing magical about 10, could be only 8.
- Garland** : **small rigid** garland, unlike usual English garland but similar to common Austrian forms. Usually kept vertical and not tilted forward in the swings. Each dancer sometimes holds their own garland and at other times uses it to link to other dancers by only holding one handle.
- Music** : waltzes.
- Step** : waltz step - forward, close and step.
- Style** : The dance must owe something to the dance school and is graceful like the revived Greek dance. (Compare with the girl's dance at Kirtlington around the Lady and the Lamb)

**ENTRY**

1. The dancers in the two lines of five start in single files which are slightly angled to each other. They move forward using the waltz step, the two lines passing through each other alternately, to form an arc of dancers, in 12 waltz steps. The garland is swung with a large movement in front of the body in the direction of the leading foot.

Face front and dance four alternate sidesteps, of a step and close to each side, with a good swing of the garlands to each side, from high at the side through low in the front.

**DANCE**

2. Grouped into neighbouring pairs, all facing front, spread round an arc. Dance four long sidesteps in alternate directions, all starting to the right first, thus, open sidestep, close together, open sidestep and kick the trailing foot across in front of the supporting foot. The garlands bounce downwards on the strong leading steps, and are swung up on the kick.

3. In the same pairs, turn as pairs, moving six waltz steps each way, ending each half with a turn in to face each other on the 7th bar and a pause for the 8th. First a right hand turn and then a left hand turn back 6 waltz steps to place.

4. Swing the garlands by one handle to link up with neighbours, forming two linked lines of five, with the outer ends holding both ends of their own garland as well as one end of their neighbours. The two lines pass each other moving around the arc, right hand side behind the left and back along the same track. They take 8 "grapevine" steps each way. The first step is crossed behind the supporting foot and the next crossed in front. Bend the knee a little on the strong leading step. End by getting own garland back.

5. As 2. but the free leg is swung up behind rather than across in front, the free foot ending up behind the supporting knee.

6. Link up again as in 4, and start as 4, moving until the two lines align, one behind the other, and get own garland back.

- a. Front Row : balance to the right and to the left and turn clockwise on own on the spot. The Rear Row : does the opposite.
- b. Front Row : balance to the left and to the right and turn anti-clockwise on the spot. The Rear Row : does the opposite.
- c. as a. The front row end linked up again.

7. The lines go under and over two times round. Going under from the back, and linking and unlinking garlands as appropriate. Taking the pair as the one in front and the one immediately behind, they work round each other along a square track twice, clockwise, 1 bar per side. Take own garlands.

8. The middle dancer of each line move to stand alongside each other in the following formation. The middle pair only change places while the rest are still, then all swing to the left and up to the right.

x x    x x    Do this 4 times.  
      x x  
x x    x x

9. Working in these pairs still, all do the following eight times, step across with the rear foot, open step with the other foot and turn the body back and point back with the rear foot.

10. Pass this partner with a 1 2 3 rear foot lifted up behind and the garland raised like in the Greek dance, turn and repeat back to place.  
Do it eight times in all.

11. A reel of 10, 2 bars per pass, going only half way, ie 8 waltz steps, step, close, pause. Then a step like 9. four times, then balance and turn on the spot once as in 6. All curtsy to audience and dance off in two lines.