

RIBBON DANCE

- Source** : TV repeat broadcast (26.7.90) of Gilbert and Sullivan's Mikado produced by Jonathan Miller for the English National Opera in modern dress (20's style). It included a short dance for six persons with wide ribbons.
- Music** : to the opening tune at the start of ACT II with the chorus of sopranos singing "Braid the Raven Hair.." and danced to the reprise after Pitti-Sing's solo.
- Step** : running step to go forward, and quick little slip steps to move sideways.
- Set** : six persons, joined in pairs with long, wide ribbons, more like scarves, about 10 ft long by 18 inches wide. The ribbons appeared to be of a light weight material, and three of the dancers had them wound around their waist to start. There is a seventh solo dancer who participates at appropriate times by posing, making gestures or movements or "stepping".

ENTRY - come on, one standing still and the other of each pair unwinding the ribbon as they came twirling down the dance area, the start of the movement for each dancer being staggered in time, ending with the ribbon held taut overhead with arms upstretched, the rear dancer standing upright and the front down on one knee. Pose, then rotate the set to form a set of three facing three across, with ribbon with only a little slackness. Pose again, ribbons horizontal but front pair holding it lower than the middles and back pair higher than the middles and canting the ribbons sideways towards the audience. The solo dancer is at the back.

FIGURES

1. Stand on spot and wave ribbon up and down four times, the middle one out of phase with the others and going down and up, and all avoiding producing additional waves along the ribbon. The dancers raise the ribbon to be at a full upward stretch and lower them till it is on the ground and they are kneeling or crouching. The ribbon is horizontal only when at head level.
2. (a). All float the ribbons up so that the centre is high, well above head level between the pairs, twice up and down from touching the ground at the start, the dancers moving a little inwards when ribbons are high.
2. (b). Float the ribbon high enough that there is time for the pairs to run on four steps to meet and touch both hands r+l/l+r and retire on four steps to place before the ribbon falls. Repeat once. End as at start of figure 1.
3. Dip-&-Dive Reel or Roll, in two halves, danced slowly, all facing across and using many fast but little sidesteps. The bottom pair move to the top during this half figure while the other two pairs keep to their relative positions. The ribbons are slackened or floated as necessary to allow the pairs to pass. The third ribbon goes over the second while the first is floated up, then under then first while the second goes over the 7th dancer with ribbon at full stretch. The seventh dancer, who had been standing at the back, walks through the set under the ribbons at this halfway point through the figure, such that they pass under all the ribbons. The first goes over the 7th at full stretch while the third is making a big swing at the top, then the third goes over the 7th. The second half of the dip-&-dive returns the bottom pair back to place. Second over first as third is going over 7th, then third over second while first floats up, then first over third and second over first. Third ribbon over the first and then under the second. End as start of figure one again.
4. Form a star slowly, one pair moving at a time, and taking eight running steps for each position change. The forming of the central knot should make the ribbons appear more ray like.

METHOD ONE as deduced from a video recording.

- a 2&6 change places, 2 going inside 4 and under ribbons, and 6 going outside 4.
- b 5&6 (from 6's new position_ change places under the ribbons, passing right shoulders.
- c 2&1 (from 2's new position_ change places under the ribbons, passing right shoulders and turning to right to face back.
- d 3&4 change places under the ribbons, so that all end the figure on the opposite side to which they started and the odd side only being in reverse order.

METHOD TWO suggested manner more consistent with traditional ribbon dances.

- a 3&4 change with 5&6, 4 going outside 6 and 3 inside 5 so ribbons bent and folded and forming a cross,
- b 1&2 go between 6&5, 2 continuing to the bottom outside 4 and ending on centreline of set, 1 turning back around 5 to end at the top on the centreline,
- c 3&4 and 5&6 change back, 4 going inside 6 and 3 outside 5.
- d 1&2 dance to other end, 1 passing inside 4 and outside 6 and 2 inside 5 and outside 3.

5. Tilt star to form a background to the seventh dancer with their head near the centre and the rays radiating away!

Suggest adding a movement with the star rotating in the tilted position rather than horizontally. This can be done either separately or in sequence with the dancers holding their ribbon ends at the same height as they go round, or with them raising and lowering their ends so that the tilt stays in the same position on the dance area.

**FIVE HAND REEL**

- Source** : As danced by Jolly Holly Molly of NE Hants, at Christmas. Notation provided by Grahame Upham, now at Glastonbury.
- Music** : 32 bar hornpipe.
- Step** : gentle stephop, arms swung loosely at the side, except for the person holding the stick with a model fool's head on the top, which is held up fairly high.
- Set** : five persons, four in a square and the fifth in the centre. It ois basically reels of three danced on the diagonals, each dancer taking it in turn to go into the middle.

Start Music Figure

- | | | | | |
|---|---|----|--------------------|------------------------|
| 4 | 1 | A1 | reel 5 with 4 & 2, | [5&4 start the reel] |
| | 5 | A2 | reel 5 with 1 & 3, | [5&1 start the reel] |
| 3 | 2 | | 5 & 1 change. | |
| | | | | |
| 4 | 5 | B1 | reel 1 with 5 & 3, | |
| | 1 | B2 | reel 1 with 2 & 4, | |
| 3 | 2 | | 1 & 2 change. | |
| | | | | |
| 4 | 5 | A3 | reel 2 with 1 & 4, | |
| | 2 | A4 | reel 2 with 3 & 5, | |
| 3 | 1 | | 2 & 3 change. | |
| | | | | |
| 4 | 5 | B3 | reel 3 with 2 & 5, | |
| | 3 | B4 | reel 3 with 4 & 1, | |
| 2 | 1 | | 3 & 4 change. | |
| | | | | |
| 3 | 5 | A5 | reel 4 with 3 & 1, | |
| | 4 | B5 | reel 4 with 5 & 1, | |
| 2 | 1 | | 4 & 5 change. | |

END

3 4
5
2 1

To make the change of dancers into the middle, the two who are swapping have to get round further than if they were doing a reel to end where they started. They also pass the sticks as they make the change, right hand to right hand. As they pass the stick, they almost do a half hands-round, because each time the change is made, the reel starts with the two who have just changed. When that reel is completed, the dancer in the middle starts with the next person round to their right, and that is the one they swap with. If the dance is successful, all the dancers should have moved round one position clockwise.

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and editorial changes.

ADDERBURY THREE HANDED STICK DANCES

- Source** : Adderbury on a Wheatley tour after half of the team had inadvertently disappeared down the M40!
- Set** : Three dancers with long sticks.
- FIGURES** : In 3 in a line, 3 in a circle, and 2 v. 1 in two lines.
- CHORUS** : Stand in a circle of three for stick tapping which is done one way round the circle and then the other way in the repeat.

1

2 3

for example, **LADS A BUNCHUM**

hitter : 1 1 1 . 2 2 2 . 3 1 1 2 2 3 3 .
 / / / x //

receiver : 2 2 2 . 3 3 3 . 1 3 2 1 3 2 1 .

hitter : 1 1 1 . 3 3 3 . 2 1 1 3 3 2 2 .
 / / / x //

receiver : 3 3 3 . 2 2 2 . 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 .

Similar constructs can be made from some of the other dances.

The same concept can be used by the threes on the sides of sets of six dancers.



BAMPTON FOR NINE

Source : Inspired by Palmerston North, New Zealand, although these are not their dances.
Set : nine dancers in a square with one in the centre.

Dance ideas : The middle line dance half figures with either side file in turn or the set does quarter turns so that figure could take 8 bars (2 x 4 bars) or even 16 bars (4 x 4 bars).

Chorus can have half heys in different directions. Or half heys where all turn out the same way, ie not mirror images. Chorus stepping can be all facing up rather than facing an opposite. Possibilities for sidestep dances seem endless!

DAD'S ARMY MORRIS DANCE

- From** : Dad's Army series on BBC TV, the episode "Godiva Affair" first broadcast 3.11.74 and repeated early in 1991. Supposedly to be danced at the end of the Warmington-on-Sea "Spitfire Week" procession, and based on an Instruction Book. One of the scenes in the stage musical of "Dad's Army" in 1975-6 was called "Morris Dance" but it is not known if there is any connection with the choreography.
- Stick** : about 22-24 inch long, normally held in the right hand near the bottom and upright during the dance but resting on the right shoulder when stationary or processing. Called "whiffing sticks".
- Music** : non-Cotswold 6/8 jig rather like the alternative "Maid of the Mill". Played on a large concertina and accompanied by a side drum.
- Step** : walk step and hop step. Because of the age of the performers they appeared to walk where a springy hop would be more likely.
- Set** : six dancers arranged as a normal Cotswold set, three versus three. They also had the Capt as an extra and Sarg Wilson in a rather large tourney hobby horse. The dancers wore a rosette on the front crossing of the baldrick but not the back, but had another on the back of their straw hats where the ribbons hung down.

The final practice performance was preceded by the statement from Captain Mainwaring, "Now where did we get to last time?", implying that we saw only the final part of the dance. It is proposed that the dance be extended to the same pattern, preceding the observed part with sequences including alternative figures such as back to back, cross over and whole hey, to be used in place of half rounds.

- Fig 1. **Dance Facing** : 8 steps marking time on the spot facing across the set, bouncing the body up and down. Sticks held vertically.
Retire four steps, then approach four steps and clash tips on the last.
- Fig 2. **Half Rounds** : Turn easy way into clockwise round for 8 hops, all turn inwards and come back to place anticlockwise, turning the easy way to face front and clash tips.
- Fig 3. **Sticking** : holding stick near bottom, stand still and hit tips, alternately right to left and left to right, for 4 bars, 8 hits.
Dib & Shout : holding stick in the middle, bend knees and dib butts 2 times in the first bar, straighten up and raise both hands to head height shouting "wow!" on the middle beat of the second bar. Repeat 3 more times making 8 bars in all.
Sticking : repeat sticking above for 4 bars.

End the dance by all turning to face up on the last clash.