

Creaky Floorboards

A 32 bar strathspey for 3 couples in a 4 couple longwise set.

Dedicated to Fiona Wilkie and Michael Lawson with many thanks for the warm hospitality I have received over several years of visits to the Wilkie-Lawson household. This is a lovely converted barn but has lots of very creaky floorboards.

The dancers, especially 2nd and 3rd couples, will lose sight of their partners in the central “set and slither” figures, but they should keep calm and tell themselves “I’m not going to panic - it’s all going to be OK!”. The figure is named after the combination of a modified set and link with the snake pass but is also reminiscent of the way the household cats and their tails sinuously wind themselves around a visitor’s ankles.

Bars Description

- 1-4 1st and 2nd couples set advancing on the sides passing left shoulders, then 1st couple turn 3rd couple with both hands and end facing 2nd couple on the sides.
- 5-8 All dance half a reel of three on the sides. 1st couple start by giving left shoulder to 2nd couple. 1st woman and 3rd man curve into place to end in the order 3,1,2.
- All dance the “set and slither” figure (bars 9-16) as follows:
- 9-12 All set on the sides. Then the central couple and those with right hands free (1st couple, 2nd man and 3rd woman) cast as in “set and link” while those with left hands free (2nd woman and 3rd man) turn left hand to end in the centre facing the position they just left.
- 13-16 1st man followed by 2nd man and 3rd man also 1st woman followed by 3rd woman and 2nd woman each dance the path of the snake pass figure curving around each other passing left shoulder.
1st couple end by crossing over into their 1st corner's place. 2nd man and 3rd woman (who had right hands free) end back in the same places as at bar 9 while 2nd woman and 3rd man (who had left hands free) end in the centre of each line on their own sides.
- 17-24 Repeat bars 9-16 from new places ending with 2nd woman, 1st woman and 2nd man down the men's side and 3rd woman, 1st man and 3rd man down the women's side.
- 25-28 All dance a slightly modified three couple bourrel: 3rd woman and 2nd man chase half way around the set anticlockwise as usual while 2nd woman and 1st man, also 1st woman and 3rd man, set advancing and turn with both hands all the way around so that all end facing their partners up and down the centre line.
- 29-32 All set and turn their partner with both hands to end on the sides in the order 2,1,3. After the second repeat, 1st couple can dance bars 1-2 again to end in 4th place.

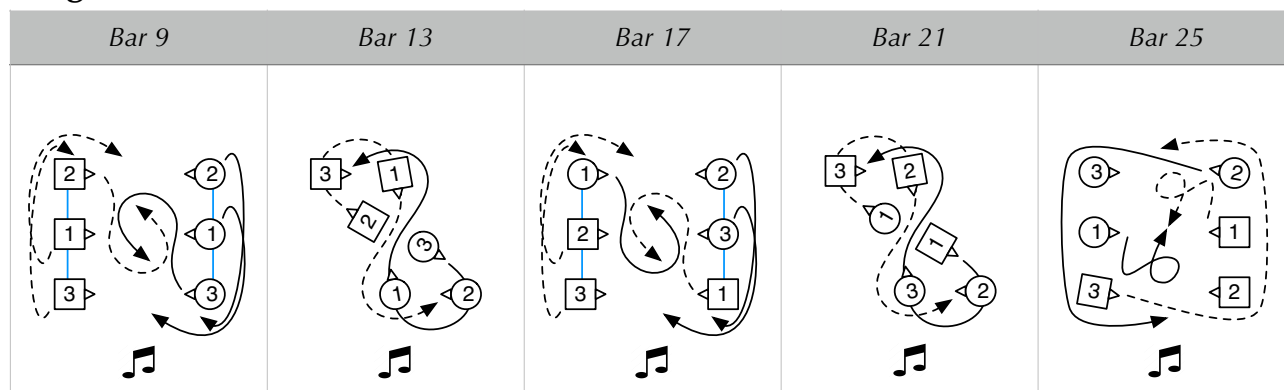
Music

- Suggested tune: Miss Margaret Grant of Catrine (Alan Humberstone).
- Recording: The White Rose of Scotland (David Hall & his SDB: RSCDS London 75th Anniversary).
- Suitable recording for 3C set: The Partnership (Keith Smith & Muriel Johnstone: Vintage Goldring).

Three couple set Variation

For a three couple set, replace the turn in bars 3-4 by 1st couple set advancing past 3rd couple, then in bars 5-8 3rd couple start the reel giving right shoulder to 2nd couple to end in the order 1,3,2 (instead of 3,1,2) now with 2nd woman putting on the extra loop. Continue from bar 9 with 3rd couple as the central couple (swapping 1 and 3 in the diagrams below). In this case the final progression is 2,3,1.

Diagrams (music at the bottom)



Michael and Fiona at home with a cat

