

## **Otters in Kenick Burn**

A 32 bar jig for three couples in a four couple set.

This dance was inspired on 14 May 2015 by seeing a pair of otters darting around in the pools and cascades of Kenick Burn, in the grounds of Laurieston Hall, with first one, then the other catching and eating a fish before swimming off downstream.

### *Bars Description*

- 1-8 1st woman dances down and out between 2nd and 3rd women, crosses below 3rd couple and casts up around 3rd man to end facing 3rd woman while 1st man dances straight across, casts around 2nd woman, crosses down below 3rd couple and chases 1st woman up around 3rd man to end in tandem behind her facing 3rd woman. The 2nd couple step up on bars 7-8.
- 9-12 1st couple, with 1st woman leading, dance half an alternating tandem diagonal reel of three with 3rd woman and 2nd man, starting right shoulder to 3rd woman. 1st man takes the lead and lengthens steps to catch 3rd woman by the right hand in 1st man's place while 1st woman ends facing 2nd woman on the side.
- 13-16 1st man sets to 3rd woman with right hands joined, then turns her once round and ends facing 3rd man while 1st woman dances half a reel of three on the side with 2nd couple, starting left shoulder to 2nd woman, to end in tandem behind 1st man.
- 17-20 1st couple, with 1st man leading, dance half an alternating tandem right shoulder diagonal reel of three with 3rd man and 2nd man. 1st woman takes the lead and lengthens steps to catch 3rd man by the right hand in 1st woman's place while 1st man ends in the centre in 3rd place facing 2nd woman.
- 21-24 1st woman sets to 3rd man with right hands joined, then turns him while 1st man dances half a reel of three across with 2nd couple in 3rd place starting left shoulder to 2nd woman. 1st couple end in tandem, with 1st woman leading, in 2nd place on the women's side.
- 25-28 1st couple dance across in tandem and cast around 3rd man's place to end side by side in the centre in 3rd place facing up. Meanwhile 2nd and 3rd couples set to their partners and cross over (no hands) to end facing up and down on the sidelines. Ideally the women start by casting away from each other and cross outside their partners whereas the men cross and then cast away from each other into places. This is supposed to represent counter rotating vortices in the water.
- 29-32 1st couple dance up to the top, side by side, but without joining hands, and cast off to 2nd place on their own sides while 2nd and 3rd couples set and change places on the sidelines (no hands) with 3rd couple casting away from each other first and passing outside 2nd couple who end by casting into place. The final order is 2,1,3.

### **Music**

- Suggested tune: The Famous Baravan (Gordon Duncan).
- Set of Jigs (Marian Anderson and her Band: Diamond Jubilee Dances - Belfast Branch).

## Notes

Alternating tandem reels were first invented for falcons and later reused for dolphins but they do very nicely for otters as well. Here 1st couple are the otters. The supporting couples are rocks in the pools for bars 1-8, then fish being chased in bars 9-24 (lucky 2nd couple escape but the hapless 3rd couple get caught, metaphorically eaten and their remains neatly discarded in the corner - sorry!) and finally in bars 25-32 they are flotsam eddying with little vortices in the wake of the departing otters.

This dance was first envisaged as a reel but I was later encouraged to change it to a jig.

