

The Moon Dance

Introductory note:

This dance was devised by Hugh Foss following a suggestion by Alec McPhillips that he devise a dance to commemorate the landing of the first men on the moon and their safe return. The material comes from a notebook in Hugh Foss' papers (now held in the Music Department of the Central Library, Edinburgh). It is clear from the contents that he had produced several versions of the dance. These were undated and it is not possible to decide which was the latest, or which was the preferred version. It is not even known whether Hugh Foss was satisfied with any of the versions or whether he ever intended to publish it. The version given below is that which seems to be the most complete and satisfactory one. We should bear in mind that it may not be what he was really aiming at, and that he is not to be blamed for its appearance.

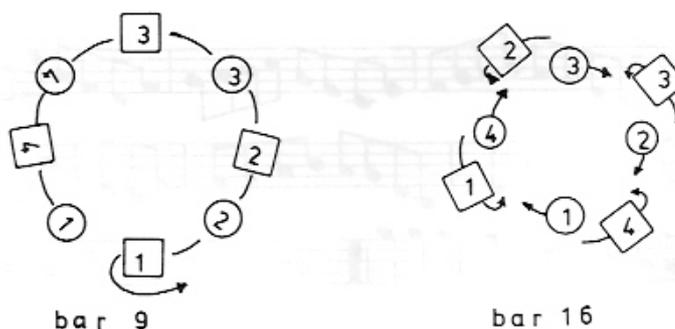
The dance is made up of three figures representing Travelling to the Moon, On the Moon, and Return to Earth. The first and last use conventional figures and steps while the middle figure requires the development of special steps to represent the reduced gravity on the Moon.

Figure 1. *To the Moon Jig*

Music: Cold and Raw.

1-8 Starting in line, led by 1st man and with hands joined to partners, all dance on with slip steps, to make a circle.

9-16 All continue dancing in the circle with slip steps: on bars 9, 11, 13, 15 the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th women cast off to dance anti-clockwise round the circle finishing again in a circle with 1st woman on the right of 4th man etc. (see diagram)



17-24 All circle round till 1st man is facing the moon; he then lets go of 1st woman, and leads with slip steps to the moon.

25-32 They continue to the Moon and form a circle round it.

33-36 They dance a circle round it.

37-40 Men holding nearer hands with woman on their left and dropping other hands, all dance 4 skip change round the circle.

41-44 Men drop hands with women and dance right hands across in the centre, while the women continue dancing clockwise round the outside.

45-48 The women, led by 4th woman, dance into a straight line, while men, led by 1st man dance into a line facing their partners.

Figure 2. *On the Moon.*

Music: The Bonnie Lass of Bon Accord, played very slowly.

Steps

- (1) Walking : Step right, left, right, close; left, right, left, close.
- (2) Travelling : Lope right, left, right and bring left foot through slowly; repeat left, right, left.
- (3) Setting: Slow pas-de-basque.
- (4) 'Slip Step' : Frog jumps. Leap into air with both feet and land on both feet. Can be done forwards, sideways or on the spot.

1-2 1st man turns left about to face out and walks backwards to centre of dance. (Short steps right, left, right, pause, etc.).

3-4 He does three frog jumps to each bar, turning on spot right about to face down the dance.

5-8 2nd man repeats 1-4 but ends facing up the dance, while 1st man travels down, casts up round 3rd man to top place in centre of the dance.

9-16 1st and 2nd men set and change places with two travelling steps giving right hands and repeat back again to end on sidelines.

17-20 1st couple, with crossed hands, travel down, cast off behind 2nd man's place (2nd man moves up on bar 19). 1st man deposits 1st woman in 2nd man's place and crosses over to 1st woman's place.

21-22 He turns 2nd woman into top place and

23-24 Changes place with 2nd man. Meanwhile (bars 17-24) 3rd and 4th couples dance the same sequence.

25-28 Eight hands round to the left using frog jumps 4 to the bar, going nearly once round to finish 2nd couple at top, 3rd at bottom, 1st on the men's side and 4th on women's side.

29-31 All turn partner by right hands finishing in Allemande position in order 2, 1, 4, 3.

32 All stand in Allemande position.

33-40 1st and 2nd couples, and 3rd with 4th couple, dance Allemande, but women stand on bars 39-40 and do not fall back to sidelines.

41-48 Led by 1st woman, the women dance up and cast into a circle going clockwise while the men stand for bars 41-42, join hands and frog jump to left to join hands in a circle (43-44), walk into the centre to join right hands (45-46) and stand (47-48). Final position as in diagram.

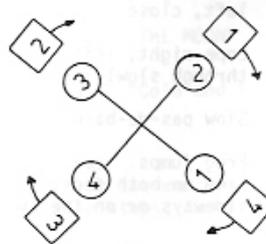


Figure 3. *Back to Earth*. Jig
Music: The New Rigged Ship

1-4 The men stand while the women dance round with skip change.

5-8 The women continue to dance round in the circle while the men dance right hands across.

9-12 The women turn to face inwards and dance round with slip steps. The men drop hands, dance out in front of partner to form a circle with the men facing out and with hands joined.

13-16 All dance slip steps clockwise.

17-24 The men turn right about, face in and all continue circling.

25-32 Led by 1st man all dance slip steps back to Earth.

33-40 All form a circle and dance slip steps to the left.

41-48 All turn left about to form a circle facing outwards, continue circling to left, gradually making the circle smaller, until all are close together, back to back. On the 2nd strong beat of bar 48, all raise their hands in the air.

Devised by Hugh Foss.

The Rose Collection of Scottish Dances 1978, which was the final collection dedicated to the memory and achievement of Hugh Foss. The book contains all remaining dances not formally published by him during his life-time.