

# THE HUNTER VALLEY SET

*The Hunter Valley Set was written by James Garner of Sydney to commemorate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Newcastle Irish Set Dancers in November 2009. The Newcastle Irish Set Dancers are part of the Newcastle and Hunter Valley Folk Club and its members have been involved with the various dance traditions of the Newcastle region. Newcastle, a dance published by Playford in 1651, provided inspiration for an element of the second figure. The Australian folk dance Love 'Em and Leave 'Em, written by Noreen Grunseit in 1983, provided inspiration for an element of the fifth figure. First side couple are on the left of first top couple. All swings are in waltz hold.*

## FIGURE 1: REEL - THE QUICK FLING (168 BARS)

- (a) All couples advance and retire once in a circle (4 bars); then, facing left and keeping hands joined, dance clockwise to opposite places (4 bars). Repeat to home (8 bars). (16 bars)
- (b) All couples swing. (8 bars)
- (c) Top couples house around each other. (8 bars)
- (d) Tops: Gents dance across, swing a turn with the opposite lady and face across the set, retaining waist hold but dropping their joined hands; they form a circle of four and dance clockwise around (8 bars). Gents (keeping left hand in right with original partner and releasing visiting lady), retire to opposite place with partner (who dances forward), swing a turn and change to waist hold; they form a circle of four, dance clockwise around and retire in waist hold in opposite places (8 bars). (16 bars)
- (e) Top couples advance (1-2, 1-2-3) and retire once (waltz hold with joined hands) and house in place one turn. (8 bars)
- (f) Top couples dance (c) to (e), finishing at home. (32 bars)
- (g) Side couples dance (c) to (f). (64 bars)
- (h) All couples house around the set. (8 bars)

## FIGURE 2: REEL - THE PARTING GLIMPSE (168 BARS)

- (a) All couples advance and retire once in a circle (4 bars); then dance clockwise to opposite places (4 bars). Repeat to home (8 bars). (16 bars)
- (b) All couples swing. (8 bars)
- (c) Top couples house around each other. (8 bars)
- (d) Tops: Face partner holding right hands and dance clockwise a half-turn around (changing places) and dance past your partner (2 bars). Ladies dance to the centre taking left hands (low) and dance around a complete turn, while the gents dance clockwise around the outside of the set to opposite places (behind the side couples) (4 bars). Gents turn their partner anticlockwise into the centre of the set with right hands and form a basket (2 bars). (8 bars)
- (e) Top couples swing in four (basket) in the centre (6 bars) and retire to opposite places with partner in waist hold (2 bars). (8 bars)
- (f) Top couples advance (1-2, 1-2-3) and retire once (waltz hold with joined hands) and house in place one turn. (8 bars)
- (g) Top couples house around each other. (8 bars)
- (h) Tops: Face partner holding left hands and dance clockwise a half-turn around (changing places) and dance past your partner (2 bars). Gents dance to the centre taking right arms and dance around a complete turn, while the ladies dance anticlockwise around the outside of the set to opposite places (behind the side couples) (4 bars). Gents turn their partner clockwise into the centre of the set with left hands and form a basket (2 bars). (8 bars)
- (i) Top couples swing in four (basket) in the centre and retire to home with partner in waist hold. (8 bars)
- (j) Top couples advance and retire and house at home one turn. (8 bars)
- (k) Side couples dance (c) to (j). (64 bars)
- (l) All couples house around the set. (8 bars)

### FIGURE 3: REEL - THE STAR-CHAIN (168 BARS)

- (a) All couples advance and retire once in a circle (4 bars); then dance clockwise to opposite places (4 bars). Repeat to home (8 bars). (16 bars)
- (b) All couples swing. (8 bars)
- (c) First top couple house inside the set. (8 bars)
- (d) *Star-Chain* (16 bars)  
Tops: Form a right hand star and dance clockwise around (ladies' hands supported by gents') (4 bars). Gents retire slightly to home while the ladies continue the star, chaining around to face the opposite gent, taking left hands and dancing around anticlockwise to face into the set again (with the gent following the lady around) (4 bars). Couples form a left hand star and dance anticlockwise around (4 bars). Gents retire to home while ladies chain to partner. Gents turn the ladies under anticlockwise with right hands into place (4 bars).
- (e) Top couples advance (1-2, 1-2-3) and retire once (waltz hold with joined hands) and house in place one turn. (8 bars)
- (f) Repeat (c) to (e) with the second top couple leading. (32 bars)
- (g) Side couples dance (c) to (f). (64 bars)
- (h) All couples house around the set. (8 bars)

### FIGURE 4: JIG (down step) –THE CROSSING (136 BARS)

- (a) All couples advance and retire once in a circle (4 bars); then dance clockwise to opposite places (4 bars). Repeat to home (8 bars). (16 bars)
- (b) All couples swing. (8 bars)
- (c) Tops: House inside. Couples advance (1-2, 1-2-3) and retire once (waltz hold with joined hands) and house in place one turn. (16 bars)
- (d) Tops: Form a right hand star and dance clockwise around (ladies' hand supported by gents') (4 bars). Ladies take left hands and dance anticlockwise around finishing in the opposite place;\* **meanwhile**, the top gents (drop hands) dance under an arch made by the side couple on the left (made by taking right hands) and dance clockwise around the set to opposite place. Gents take right hands with their partner while ladies keep left hands, thereby forming a line of four across the set with gents and ladies facing opposite directions. (4 bars) (8 bars)
- (e) Sides: Advance holding right hands and retire with gents turning the ladies anticlockwise (in the last 2 bars) bringing right hand onto right shoulder (4 bars); and dance anticlockwise around under the arch made by the top couple on the right to opposite place (4 bars). Side couples turn the ladies anticlockwise to face into the set, bringing right hands over in front and top gents turn the ladies anticlockwise to place facing into the set (in the last 2 bars). (8 bars)
- (f) All: Advance holding right hands and retire with gents turning the ladies anticlockwise (in the last 2 bars) bringing right hand onto right shoulder (4 bars); and dance anticlockwise halfway around the set. Gents turn the ladies anticlockwise to face into the set, bringing right hands over in front (4 bars). [All couples finish in home places.] (8 bars)
- (g) All couples swing. (8 bars)
- (h) Repeat (c) to (g) with sides leading. (48 bars)
- (i) All couples house around the set. (8 bars)

---

\* Suggested timing; change hands and direction (1 bar), dance around (2 bars), form arches (1 bar).

## FIGURE 5: POLKA - THE VALLEY TRADITION (232 BARS)

*In this progressive figure, the ladies remain either top or side ladies at the start of each of the four iterations, while the gents progress around the set. Top or side refers to those dancers currently in those places.*

- (a) All couples advance and retire once in a circle (4 bars); then dance clockwise to opposite places (4 bars). Repeat to home (8 bars). (16 bars)
- (b) All couples swing. (8 bars)
- (c) *Meet and Greet* (16 bars)  
Top couples advance holding right hands and retire with gents turning the ladies anticlockwise (in the last 2 bars) bringing right hand onto right shoulder (4 bars); **meanwhile** side couples dance around outside the set anticlockwise to opposite places in right shoulder hold with lady leading. The side gents finish by bringing right hands over to be in front at waist height (4 bars).  
Top couples dance around to opposite places while side couples advance and retire once (4 bars). Top couples advance and retire once while side couples dance around to home (4 bars). Top couples dance around to home while side couples advance and retire once (without turning the lady) (4 bars).
- (d) *Steal Ladies* (16 bars)  
Tops couples, in waltz hold, slide in (1-2, 1-2) and gents take the opposite lady's right hand in left and bring her across in front of him turning her clockwise into waltz hold; they both slide out to the gent's place (4 bars); and house in place (4 bars).  
Side couples repeat (8 bars). [Ladies will now be in opposite places.]
- (e) All couples swing. (8 bars)
- (f) *The Chase* (8 bars)  
All ladies dance take hands to form a circle and dance clockwise around inside the set, while the gents dance three quarters anticlockwise around outside the set until they reach the position on their original left (6 bars). Gents take the ladies' right hand in right and turn the lady into place (2 bars). [Top ladies turn under to finish facing into the set, while side ladies turn to face around the set in right shoulder hold.]
- (g) Repeat (c) to (f) with top ladies and current partner leading but top ladies finish facing around the set in right shoulder hold, while side ladies finish facing into the set, right hand in right. [Ladies will now be in home places and gents in opposite place] (48 bars)
- (h) Side ladies with current partner lead (c) to (g). Side couples advance and retire first while top couples dance around. Side ladies cross before top ladies. All finish in original places. (96 bars)
- (i) All couples swing. (8 bars)