

FAREWELL TO PATERNOSTER SQUARE

The London Highland Club held open-air dancing in Paternoster Square every August from 1968 until 1991 – 24 years (hence the length of the Strathspey section of this dance). This dance commemorates many of the features which gave these dances their unique character and was first danced on the final evening in the Square on 31st August 1991. The original tune for this dance, the strathspey "The Earl of Epsom" was specially composed by Ian Muir for Graham Cattell.

Square set medley for 4 couples – 24 bars Strathspey/48 bars Reel

BARS

Strathspey

- 1 - 8 Grand Chain
- 9 - 10 Men dance into centre for half RH wheel to finish back-to-back in the middle facing the opposite lady (ladies stand still)
- 11 - 14 All set with rocking step
- 15 - 16 All turn RH to bring ladies into centre
- 17 - 18 Ladies half LH wheel to face partners (men stand still)
- 19 - 22 All set with rocking step
- 23 - 24 All turn RH three-quarter turn
All clap to enter Reel time

Reel

- 1 - 8 Ladies moving to the right dance petal formation half-way round the set (Men stand still, Ladies right shoulder to first corner to start – end in opposite man's position)
- 9 - 12 1s and 3s half rights and lefts
- 13 - 20 Men repeat bars 1-8 but moving to the left (ladies stand still)
- 21 - 24 2s and 4s half rights and lefts (end facing corners)
- 25 - 28 "Shake and Travel" right and left with corners
- 29 - 32 Turn right about with four pas-de-basque steps to end facing partner ready for Grand Chain
- 33 - 36 Half Grand Chain
- 37 - 40 RH Tulloch turn with partner for 4 bars
- 41 - 44 Half Grand Chain
- 45 - 48 RH Tulloch turn with partner.

Devised by Graham and Fay Cattell © – August 1991

Original tune – (Strathspey) The Earl of Epsom (Reel) any suitable

During August 1968 the Royal Scottish Corporation Hall in Fetter Lane (in the City of London) – the Club's then meeting place – was closed for redecoration. In order to keep dancing alive, the London Highland Club sought an alternative venue and as a result the open-air dancing in Paternoster Square (near St. Paul's Cathedral) was born. The original intention was for one year only but the dances were so popular that they continued and became a regular feature in the Club's calendar.

Sadly the whole complex of Paternoster had to be redeveloped. To mark the occasion of the last dance in the Square on 31st August 1991 "Farewell to Paternoster Square" was devised. The dance features themes which signify a typical evening at the Square.

24 Years of Dances

As dances spanned 24 years from 1968 to 1991 – the Strathspey has 24 bars and the Reel 48 bars. (We always dance Reels twice as fast as Strathspeys).

Tourists and Visitors

On these evenings we started with simple dances for the beginners and tourists and as the evenings progressed the dances became more complex. The Strathspey is simple and the dance becomes more intricate in the Reel.

Highland Displays

As a special feature for the tourists, two show spots of Highland Dancing were included one in each half of the evening – the Rocking Step in the Strathspey and the Shake and Travel in the Reel.

The Wind

Paternoster Square was notoriously windy – the wind blowing round the tall buildings and down across the Square is portrayed in the Petals Formation and the Rights and Lefts in the Reel.

The Collecting Box

Throughout the 24 years, the Club financed the dances without sponsorship. A collecting box was taken round the Square in the hope of contributions to supplement money raised by raffles and this is signified in the final Grand Chain and Tulloch Turn.

The Sir Christopher Wren

The dance ends with the couples on the opposite side of the square – and on the opposite side of Paternoster Square you will find the Sir Christopher Wren for a final dram before toddlin' home.