

Larry's Corner

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Do you have any likes or dislikes, stories, or helpful hints for dancing? If so, write it down and give to Larry Ablin or Barb Johnson. We will add it to one of the future News letters.

If you would like to tell us how you became interested in dancing, write it down and give to Larry or Barb, we will add your picture with it and put it in one of the future Newsletters

The question last month was.

Are you enjoying the Newsletters we are writing?

Thank you for your response in letting me know that you like to read these newsletters. If you have anything you would like us to write about and discuss let us know.

If you have anything you would like to write for us, just write it up and give to Barb or Larry.

I enjoy writing something for you. LARRY

Dance Descriptions

Below is an incomplete list of Early American Social Dances, together with related line dances, followed by a brief description of each.

Balboa was created in Balboa Island, California during the 1930s. Balboa is built on smooth, tight footwork and is ideal for fast tempos. It is also very adaptable and can be performed to slow music as well. The Balboa is danced almost exclusively in closed dance position and most closely resembles a dance the natives of 1930s Chicago called the Shag. Influence of The Charleston can also be seen in this dance. The Balboa originated in a large ballroom on Balboa Island in southern California. It's common belief that when the ballrooms began getting so overcrowded, this dance naturally evolved since there was literally no place to swing out your partner. It takes on a cartoon like quality, close together, with lots of footwork, although the feet hardly leave the floor. The upper body remains still and the dance doesn't travel much around the room. At one time it was popular up and down the west coast, from Seattle to southern California. Incidentally, the Balboa is the dance done by the

Inside this issue:

Dance Descriptions

popular cartoon character *Popeye*.

Big Apple was a popular group dance that was primarily done in a circular format. Its origins can be traced to a Southern club called The Big Apple where dancers gathered to hear the big bands that came through town. The dance moves fast and is another standard for the true Lindy Hop enthusiast.

Cajun Swing: a Louisiana Bayou style of Lindy danced to Cajun music.

Cakewalk - 1899 [Tango - 1917](#) [Lindy Hop/Jitter Bug - 1934](#) The Cakewalk was one of the most famous of a group of plantation dances that were competitive. This dance developed as a parody of plantation masters' aristocratic manners by slaves. The slaves had witnessed the owners dancing the quadrille and other pattern dances, and imitated their stiff upper bodies while contrasting it with loose leg movements. Eventually the owners began to enjoy watching the comic antics and held contest between dancers and plantations for the best dancers. It was customary for the winner to receive the prize of a cake. The use of improvisation as a way to display a dancer's individual traits was paramount in the development of the dance in America.

Carolina Shag: Carolina Shag (*also known as FLORIDA BEACH BOP and NEW ORLEANS JAMAICA*) - The Carolina Shag originated in Myrtle Beach, North Carolina. It is a smooth dance done to medium and slow music. The upper body and hips hardly move as the legs do convoluted kicks and fancy footwork. The man is the center of attention (sometimes lending the *appellate peacock* dancing to the Shag) and the woman's steps are either mirror steps of the man's or a sort of marking time while he does spins and other wildness. Traditionally the music was rhythm and blues, mostly from the 1950s. In Atlanta, Georgia, the Carolina Shag dominates the swing dance scene. A style of Swing popular in the Carolinas emphasizing the leader's nimble feet.

Charleston Jazz Dances - 1926 The Charleston is a dance that uses a frenzied combination of swinging arms, kicking legs, and turned-on toes and knees in a syncopated 4/4 meter. It was the ballroom sensation of the 1920's. It is thought that it was named about Charleston, S.C. and probably evolved from the black dance steps common in the south, specifically the Jay-Bird and the Juba. It took on a fast, flapping kick in Harlem. It was introduced in "Running Wild," in 1922 in an all-black revue and took the U. S. by storm. Those who avoided the Shimmy as too effeminate danced with greater abandon than the women.

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

Collegiate Shag The Collegiate Shag originated in the South (New Orleans) and has been known at times as the "Flea Hop". The Shag was popular in the early 1920's and predates the Lindy Hop with the college students. It was primarily danced to fast Ragtime - Jazz type music. There were many Intercollegiate Dance Contests held in NYC in the 1920s-1930's which held a "Shag Division. It is popular today with swing dancers from Southern California to Washington DC. The "Shag" Arthur Murray taught was actually a newer version of the "Collegiate Shag" that was done in the 1920's by the College kids but slightly different than the "Collegiate" as done today. It was originally called the "Flea-Hop" in New Jersey and in North Carolina as the "Sugar Foot" and only in the deep south as the Shag in 1931. It is basically a Slow-Slow-Quick-Quick, similar to the "belly roll" of the Carolina Shag but a lot faster. The lead holds the follower very closely with very fast feet (stomping) movements, and a few body moves. The Murray Shag may have influenced the "Balboa". A good film clip of this is "Arthur Murray and his Shag Dancers"- this short film is not available, but many swing dancers have copies of this tape. It is basically a quick instructional video on how to do the shag and a few performances by his students at the end they do a team type routine for the audience. Note: Arthur Murray's 1937 Let's Dance book breaks it down as a Hop-Hop-123 (kicking on 3). The Movie Swing, Swing, Swing has a good musical short of this dance. The 1937 and 1938 Harvest moon ball featured a Collegiate Shag Division.

Country-Western Swing: a style of Jitterbug popularized during the 1980's and danced to Country and Western music.

DC Hand Dancing: a Washington, DC synthesis of Lindy and Swing.

East Coast Swing: a 6 count (Slow, slow, quick, quick) style of Lindy popular in the ballroom dance school organizations.

Fox Trot - 1920 The Fox Trot is said to have originated in the summer of 1914 by Vaudevillian Harry Fox) born Arthur Carringford in Pomona, California in 1882). In early 1914, Fox appeared in vaudeville in the New York area. His troupe was hired to provide vaudeville between shows at a theater. As part of the act Fox was performing trotting step to ragtime music and people began to refer to his strutting as "Fox's Trot." It was G. K. Anderson to settle the style of the Fox-Trot. The popularity spread and evolved into a ballroom dance. It was a dance that could be adapted to the slow syncopated 4/4 rhythm of early jazz. The Fox Trot probably was the most significant development in all of ballroom dancing. The combination of quick and slow steps permitted more flexibility and gave much greater dancing pleasure than the One-Step or Two-Step which it replaced. There is more variety in the Fox Trot than in any other dance. Variations of the Fox Trot include the "Peabody," the "Quickstep," and the "Roseland Fox Trot." The original dance had a tempo of about 160 beats per minute. It rapidly became popular in New York and a year later in London. It was fashionably regarded as a rebellion against 19th century dancing, as it used parallel feet (rather than the turned out feet of the Victorian dances). Around 1922, the trotting steps were discarded for a less energetic movement called the "Saunter." By 1927 the dance was called the slow Fox Trot and was characterized by smooth gliding movements. Since that time, the dance has been de-

veloped into two derived forms internationally: the "Quickstep" and the "slow Fox Trot." The slow Fox Trot is performed to slower music (120 beats per minute), and retains the walks and pivots of its predecessor. It was made popular also by the dance team of Vernon and Irene Castle.

Galop - 1902 The popularity of the Polka led to the introduction of other like dances, including the Galop - a dance coming from Hungary. It was in 2/4 and it was a springy step, also with a glissade and a chasse around the room with occasional turns. The music used many times was a fast Polka. The Galop was particularly popular as the final dance of the evening.

Grizzly Bear Jazz Dances - 1910 This is a dance that the woman threw and wrapped herself around her partner in what at that time 1900-1910 was considered very shocking. A simple ragtime dance followed its daring overture.

Imperial Swing: a style of Swing popular in St. Louis, Missouri.

Jitterbug: In the mid 1930's, a bouncy six beat variant Slow slow quick quick was named the Jitterbug by the band leader Cab Calloway when he introduced a tune in 1934 entitled "*Jitterbug*".

Jitterbug Stroll The Jitterbug Stroll is a line dance based on early jazz steps tracing back to the swing era. It was created specifically for Lindy Hoppers. It is danced to a Blues Format (6 bars per phrase). Woodchoppers Ball was the first tune chosen by Lindy Hoppers for this dance.

Jive: the International Style version of the dance is called Jive, and it is danced competitively in the US and all over the world.

Lancers - 1897 At once one can see the training that is needed to understand and dance the Quadrille and Lancers, a dance even more complicated. The combination and movements that form the figures of the lancer, are certainly more attractive than those in the plain Quadrille. They are necessarily somewhat more complicated, and require, perhaps, a greater degree of precision in attempting to execute them. They consist of five figures, and can only be danced by four couples in a set.

The Lancers were originally done by mounted horsemen and later brought to the ballroom floor.

Lindy Hop & Jitterbug - 1933 A famous dancer named the dance after Colonel Lindbergh after his flight over the Atlantic. This 'swing' dance had as much 'air time' as possible. However the acrobatic style of exhibitionist was toned down for the regular dancers. There are many varied steps and it is not a dance that stations the partners together, many of the steps being done by holding your partner's hand extended and doing dance steps apart, swinging in circles, going under the held hands and inventing new step in various hand positions. In the mid 1930's a bouncy six beat was named the Jitterbug today known as single time East Coast Swing, being introduced in 1934 by bandleader Cab Calloway in a tune called the Jitterbug. By the end of 1936 the Lindy and Jitterbug were sweeping the country.

(Continued from page 2)

Style is a smoother-looking dance. Considered the *Grand Daddy* of Swing, the Lindy Hop evolved in Harlem ballrooms such as the famous *Savoy*. It is most recognizable for its low to the ground, whirly and bouncy style. It was danced to big band music and was characterized by "breakaways" in which partners in a couple separated and improvised steps individually. Later called the "Jitterbug", it exploded in popularity across the country throughout 1930-1950. The Lindy Hop owes much to African American influence, particularly Charleston, Jazz and Tap steps. In 1943, Life Magazine characterized Lindy Hop as "America's National Folk Dance."

Madison Time The Madison is an amusing line dance that originated in the late 1950's. "The Madison probably started in Chicago, although it may have been Detroit or Cleveland. The Baltimore Colts learned it in Cleveland and brought it to Baltimore in 1959". It is danced to the Ray Bryant tune, *The Madison Time*, with calls for the particular dance sequences provided by a disc jockey who starts calling the steps. Based on a six count chorus step, The Madison contains several dance sequences which make playful references to the big stars of that time period. The Dance resurfaced in 1988 in the John Waters film "Hairspray". There is also a Madison partner dance that is still danced today in England.

Mambo: It may be described as a riff or a Rumba with a break or emphasis on 2 and 4 in 4/4 time. Native Cubans or musicians without any training would break on any beat. It first appeared in the United States in New York's Park Plaza Ballroom - a favorite hangout of enthusiastic dancers from Harlem. Most people treat Mambo as a very fast dance. In essence, it is a slow and precise dance that doesn't move very much.

Nightclub 2 step: Is used on crowded dance floors. It takes up a small area of floor. It can be danced to any music, if not too fast for you. So if you don't know how to do a dance, you can do Nightclub 2 step.

One-Step Jazz Dances - 1918 The One-Step evolved during the turn of the 20th century. It reached its popularity in the late teens of the 20th century. In the early 20th century you can find a tutor book of B. Feldman - "How To dance the One-Step."

Polka - 1893 The Polka was introduced to society around 1844. It is said that it was created by a Bohemian girl (Anna Slezak) in 1834. The basic step consists of preparatory hop followed by a chasse done first to the left then to the right. It is in triple time. It is said that it was originally a Czech peasant dance. It was introduced into the ballrooms of Prague around 1835. The name means 'half-step.' It is also said that in 1840, Raab, a dancing teacher of Prague, danced the Polka at the Odeon Theater in Paris where it was a tremendous success. Dance masters in Paris took the new dance and refined it for their saloons and ballrooms. These dance academies were swamped with pupils and recruited ballet girls as dancing partners to help them teach the Polka. This attracted many young men who, like young men, were not only interested in the dance but also in the attractive teachers. This may be one reason that dancing developed a bad name. By the middle of the 19th century it was introduced in England but didn't reach the popularity it had gotten on the continent. By this time it reached the United States. Both the Waltz and the Polka eventually replaced the contradanse and the cotillion.

Pony Swing: a Country Western style of Cajun Swing

Push: a style of swing popular in Dallas, Texas, emphasizing moves spinning the follower between dance positions with a rock rhythm break.

Quadrille - 1886 The Quadrille was the most popular dance around New Orleans during the birth of jazz. It was a very refined dance and was danced by most of the population of the city - Creole, Black and White dancers). The Quadrille was introduced, via Paris, by Lady Jersey in 1815. The earliest printed description found is in an anonymous booklet entitled *Le Maire a Danser, or the Art of Dancing Quadrilles*, published in 1820. Quadrilles should be danced by four couples, each couple occupying one side of the square. Quadrilles (sic: a small square) is written in both 6/8 and 2/4 meters, alternating but with no set structure.

Salsa: is a combination of many of the following dances. Rhumba, Són Montuno, Guaracha, Mambo, Cha cha cha, Danzón, Són, Guguanco, Cubop, Guajira, Charanga, Cumbia, Plena, Bomba, Festejo, Merengue, among others

Savoy Swing: a style of Swing popular in the New York Savoy Ballroom in the 30's and 40's originally danced to Swing music. The Savoy style of swing is a very fast, jumpy, casual-looking style of dancing

Saint Louis Shag This unique dance can be traced back to St. Louis. It is a dance with a bouncy step that swivels in and out very much like the Charleston. It has patterns with kicks and jumps, patterns that are traditional, dating back more than twenty-five years. The St. Louis Shag, like the Balboa, is described as a non-swing dance. Also like the Balboa, the Shag is done to very fast music: 165 beats per minute and faster. The other related dance native to St. Louis is called Imperial Swing. So called because it was nurtured in the Imperial Dance Club on Florescent Street in St. Louis, it is a variant of east coast swing with a six-count step which includes eight-count steps similar to the Lindy. Furthermore, the Saint Louis Shag is more of a Speed dominated/ Competition shag, which is different than the Collegiate, Carolina and Murray Shags.

Schottische - 1903 The Schottische is similar to the polka. It is characterized by the clapping of hands after having taken three hopping steps. It is written in 4/4 meter. The dance had a considerable vogue in England during the mid-19th century. First danced in England around 1848 it was a round dance with music somewhat similar to the Polka, but played slower. We State: 'In the year 1850 there appeared in all parts of Europe the 'Schottische,' a round dance which had, as early as 1844, been executed in Bavaria under the name 'Rheinlaender,' and in the Rhemish countries it was known as the 'Bavarian Polka.' It is German in origin and one can only hypothesize that when asked to play the dance a Polka was used in slower tempo."

Shim Sham is a line dance based on early jazz/tap dance steps. Lindy Hoppers have taken this original Tap Routine and made it their own. The dance is divided into 10 musical phrases with specific steps such as; the Shim Sham, the Cross Over, the Tacky Annie, and the Half-Break. These steps are repeated and then followed by Boogie Backs, Boogie Forwards, and Shorty George steps, after which you grab the nearest person and dance until the song is finished. The version we teach is heavily influenced by Frankie Man-

ning.

Shimmy Jazz Dances - 1922 The Shimmy was probably the most controversial dance of the 20's. It was a shaking of the shoulders and the whole body.

Supreme Swing: a style of Swing popular in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Swing: The history of swing dates back to the 1920's, where the black community, while dancing to contemporary Jazz music, discovered the Charleston and the Lindy Hop.

Tango - 1923 The Tango evolved in Buenos Aires, Brazil at the end of the 19th century. It is said that it evolved from the Milonga, a lively, suggestive Argentinean dance, and the Habanera of Cuba. By the 1920's it had become a standard ballroom dance in Europe and the United States. It evolved into a flowing, elegant dance accompanied by somewhat melancholy music with a characteristic tango beat. The Tango caused a sensation in dancing circles and is danced in both the closed position and in various types of extravagant dance relationship which incorporate a particular freedom of expression. The Tango uses some of the same step patterns as other 'walking' dances, including the Fox Trot and the Quickstep. No other dance but the Tango connects two people more closely and emotionally as well as physically, part of this is the dance position. Partners face the same direction (the women's right, the man's left) and so dance almost cheek to cheek. You also keep your arms around each other for the entire dance. The dance begins in a standard dance position, keeping your upper body straight, then shift your weight onto the balls of your feet. This will push you and your partner together.

Trunky Doo is another line dance which dates back to the early Thirties; however this one was created by the Lindy Hoppers themselves. It has a more challenging and complex set of patterns. The version we teach has been more recently rearranged and tends to be the popular version throughout the swing circuit.

Two-Step Jazz Dances - 1813 The Two-Step appeared around 1890. Its origins are unclear but may include the Polka, Galop and/or Waltz. The dance consists of sliding steps to the side in 2/4 meter. It was one source of the Fox Trot, which became its successor about 1920. It is more or less a double-quick march with a skip in each step done as rapidly as a couple can go forward.

Waltz - 1880 – There is a definition of the Waltz in the Encyclopedia of Dance that states: "The real origin of the Waltz is rather obscure, but a dance of turns and glides, leaping and stomping appeared in various parts of Europe at the end of the 17th century and the beginning of the 18th century. In Italy it was the Volta, France had its Volte, Germany the Weller and Austria had its Landler. These were round dances but at the end of the dance itself there was a short period in which the circle would break up into couples who would whirl madly round and round and finish with a jump in the air. In the Landler the hopping gave way more to a gliding motion and that is why it is considered the forerunner of the Waltz. The Waltz can be traced back as far as 450 years. The Waltz regained its real popularity in the 20th century. The Waltz blossomed out as the Hesitation Waltz in 1913. Until the development of the hesitation, couples had waltzed in one

direction until dizzy and then reversed until ready to drop. The Waltz had degenerated into an endurance contest. The hesitation resulted in the Waltz as it is done today. The slow Waltz was once known as the Boston Waltz. Today the slow Waltz is the American Waltz, English Waltz or just Waltz, and the faster is the Viennese waltz." "The Waltz is a turning, gliding dance in ¾ time that overcame initial opposition to revolutionize, and ultimately dominate, social dancing from 1750 to 1900. Its most shocking innovation was the closed hold, in which each couple danced face to face with arms wrapped 'immodestly' around one another, now the accepted ballroom position. A direct outgrowth of the German and Austrian Landler and Deutsche. The Waltz appeared in France after the Revolution (displacing the minuet) and in England in 1812. Its universal adoption marked the first occasion in centuries that mass taste prevailed in dance without the official sanction of either courts or dancing masters. The Waltz required little skill: six evenly accented steps completed a full turn in two bars of music; the turns were repeated endlessly as the couples swiftly circled the dance floor. The brilliant Waltz music of Johann Strauss, Sr., and Josef Lanner inspired the Viennese Waltz, which stressed the first step in the sequence and doubled the prevalent tempo. Today's polite Waltz is virtually identical to the vigorous original." The Waltz became very popular in Vienna, with large dance halls being opened to accommodate the craze. In London, it caused a great sensation, and Lord Byron, when he first saw it, found his lady friend clasped closely by "A huge-hussar-looking gentleman, turning round and round to a con-founded see-saw, up-down sort of turns like two cockchafers spitted on the same bodkin."

West Coast Swing: Dancer stands in a more relaxed and agile position. A style of Swing emphasizing nimble feet popular in California night clubs in the 30's and 40's and voted the California State Dance in 1989.

Ballroom West Coast Swing: Dancer stands more upright and focused on the dance step with less agility. A style of swing popular in the ballroom dance school organizations and different from the style performed in the California night clubs and Swing dance clubs.

Whip: a style of Swing popular in Houston, Texas, emphasizing moves spinning the follower between dance positions with a wave rhythm break.

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Teach Beginners at Singles All Together dance class on Monday night, at Lenox center on Minnetonka Blvd in St Louis Park.

Teach at Singles All Together on Tuesday night 8pm at Medina.

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