

Want to “Fluff” With Me?

Sounds and movements frequently used by Rosetown Ramblers

Over the years, creative square dancers add extra flourish to the way they dance, and gay square dancing is clearly no exception! The fluff is not usually taught to new dancers until they are dancing calls confidently without fluff.¹ What is popular as fluff can change over time. Some of the fluff most commonly used by Rosetown Ramblers is described below.

GENDER-IDENTIFIED calls² (“boys trade”, for example) – gay square dancers usually identify themselves by shouting “boy!” or “girl!” This habit may cause a little embarrassment the first time a gay dancer attends a “straight” square dance!

ALLEMANDE LEFT — Clap, and then execute the call.

CIRCLE TO A LINE – couples meet; veer to left, then veer to right. Along with the veer right, the out-facing couple does a wheel around. An easier way to teach: starting with facing couples, couples veer left; then the couple on the left side, as a couple, “run” around the other couple. Like any “run”, the couple being “run around” should slide over to the footprints the “running” couple has vacated.

DOSADO – “Highland fling” styling: dancers meet front-to-front, right arm around other dancer’s waist, left arm arched above their heads (sometimes touching hands). Dancers rotate clockwise a full 360 degrees around an imaginary pivot point between them.

DOUBLE PASS THRU – Clap-clap-clap.

FERRIS WHEEL – each couple substitutes an underarm turn, in place of the wheel around movement. Spoken, “*Wheeee!*”

GRAND SQUARE – (described from “Sides face...” version)

Head couples forward 3 steps to meet in the middle of the square, then a full-circle turn with the person you meet (swing-type counterweight, with ‘single circle’ handhold) while simultaneously drifting away from your previous partner and ending at the sides. Then back away 4 steps, and 4th step turns in. Forward 3 steps, then Highland fling with the person you meet. Back away 4 steps, and 4th step turns in. Forward 3 steps, then a full-circle turn with the person you meet (swing-type counterweight, with ‘single circle’ handhold) while simultaneously drifting into the middle of the square. Back away; you are home.

Side couples face, back away 4 steps, and 4th step turns in. Forward 3 steps, then a full-circle turn with the person you meet (swing-type counterweight, with ‘single circle’ handhold) while simultaneously drifting into the middle of the square. Back away with new partner, and brief stop. Forward 3 steps, then a full-circle turn with the person you meet (swing-type counterweight, with ‘single circle’ handhold) while simultaneously drifting away from your

¹ Angels are discouraged from dancing fluff during class, until the fluff is being taught to the class.

Sounds are rarely taught; dancers simply pick them up. Since sounds do not seem to confuse the new dancers, there is usually no issue when angels make the sounds. Some sounds assist the dancers, as a memory cue.

² At any time, it is completely acceptable for a caller at a gay square dance to ask the dancers to identify. (Examples, “Boys (or Girls), please identify”, “Point to your Corner (or Partner)”)

previous partner and ending at the heads. Then back away 4 steps, and 4th step turns in. Forward 4 steps to meet original partner, Highland fling and square set.

PASS THE OCEAN – Clap hands once, at the beginning of the move. Then extend hands into the wave that forms at the finish of the move. *Also note, most clubs including Rosetown Ramblers do not dance Pass The Ocean truly by definition.*

PROMENADE – “Varsouvienne” position. The boy crosses his right arm behind the girl and holds her right hand with his right hand in front of the girl's right shoulder. The boy's arm is held just above the girl's shoulder. The boy's left hand is crossed in front of his chest to hold the girl's left hand in front of her left shoulder. On getting home, we do a little “pattycake” thing in four counts: pattycake – pattycake – clap – bump hips.

PROMENADE HALFWAY – While the active couples promenade, the non-promenading couples meet in the center of the square, do a quick highland fling with the dancer facing them, then quickly back out again.

SLIDE THROUGH – Spoken, “*Whoosh!*”

SPIN THE TOP – Spoken, “*That's no top!*”

SWEEP A QUARTER – Pantomime sweeping; sometimes a sweeping sound.

SWING THRU – Spoken, “*First by the right, then by the left.*”

WEAVE THE RING – On hearing the call, count, “*Five, six, seven, eight!*” With first partner: slap knees, clap, hold hands to pull back, turn the girl under. Pass second partner with left shoulders. With third partner, repeat like with first partner. Pass fourth partner with left shoulders.

Callers says “YOU ARE HOME” (or says “AND YOU SHOULD BE ...”) – clap-clap-clap – right arm bend at elbow bringing fist upward – left arm same – keeping arms in position, two-arm downward thrust (elbows leading) while one knee comes up and spoken “*HUH*”

ANOTHER NOTE:

SWING – Most Rosetown Ramblers don't do it particularly well, and many straight dancers don't either. We could use a special session on how to truly swing a partner, including putting some body weight into it, leaning back, where to put the feet, and the lead/follow responsibilities such as who is in charge of choosing when to end the swing.