

# *The Viking's Sheepskin*

Rod Downey, 2014

**Formation:** 3 couple longways,

**Music:** 3x 48b Reels (*eg Miss Gayton's Hornpipe*)

**Style:** Scottish / English

**Introduction:** Honour Partner,

**A1&A2:** Ladies dance 2/3rds of a sheepskin hey to finish in the order 2-3-1; (16b)

**B1&B2:** Men dance 2/3rds of a sheepskin hey to finish in the order 2-3-1; (16b)

**C1:** Right-hand Star at the top. Left-hand Star at the bottom;  
(ie 2s & 3s: RH Star into 3s & 1s LH Star) (8b)

**C2:** Parallel Reels of 3, starting right shoulder at the top; (8b)

**To dance the partial Sheepskin Hey:** ie 2/3rds of the full Sheepskin Hey

- the first lady leads the other two ladies across and above the first man and weaves between the men and round the bottom man as if dancing an extended 'figure-of-eight' around the 3 men
- when the third lady reaches the middle man she goes all the way round him and takes the lead, continuing the weaving up round the top man and back down the line of men again, and so on
- **when the second lady takes the lead they dance behind the bottom man and up to finish in the order 2-3-1.**

*In effect, the first lady crosses and dances 1½ figures of eight around the men.*

*The trailing person (first the third woman, then the second woman) will complete a full loop to change direction and take the lead, as they travel around the second man.*

*These could be thought of a "lead-change half figures-of-eight".*

**Notes:** The name comes from a local 'Viking' Ball, which began with a group of men marching as Vikings. All were wearing sheepskin jackets over their kilts.

The "Sheepskin Hey" comes from "Picking of Sticks" (which Cecil Sharp renamed "Picking up Sticks") published by John Playford in the *Dancing Master* first edition, 1651.

Rod has cleverly cut it down and put it into a Scottish dance — though there's nothing here that English dancers would have trouble with except the sheepskin hey!

The recommended tune is "Miss Gayton's Hornpipe".

A suitable recording is "The Sound of Harris" by Andrew Rankine and his Band.

Link to Video: < [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=1&v=YbSNX9ocAF8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=YbSNX9ocAF8) >