

The Isle of Wight Tune Book

The aim is to continue the Village Band Tradition of having an Isle of Wight manuscript of tunes and airs available for dances, weddings, parties and other gatherings. No old IOW village manuscripts have as yet been found. We have gathered together some of the IOW and related tunes from a variety of sources. This is a living document with new material being added all the time.

We are looking for new tunes without copyright to include in the manuscript. Please send the music / score or an mp3 with a clear tune from which we can write out the music. More details are available about this project below. Use our email to send tunes.

We hope you enjoy playing the music. Thanks to all those so far that have freely provided tunes, given their time to checking them out and those that have given us so much encouragement.

Here are some of the tunes so far, the list is at the end.

[Isle of Wight Tune Book Volume 1](#)

[Isle of Wight Tune Book Volume 2](#)

[Isle of Wight Tune Book Volume 3](#)

[Isle of Wight Tune Book Volume 4 \(Core Dance Tunes\)](#)

To follow

Isle of Wight Tune Book Volume 5 (Alice's Collection)

Isle of Wight Tune Book Volume 6 (Sea Songs and Shanties from in and around the IOW)

[Background to Sea Songs and Shanties IOW](#)

Isle of Wight Tune Book Volume 7 (Swab the decks and many more)

Comments:

"I've just been playing through the Isle of Wight tunes and they are great. I particularly like Sailor's Return and the Isle of Wight Hornpipe. Both very jaunty. The British Man-of-War tunes are nice, as is Autumn on the Isle of Wight which has a lovely melancholic simplicity to it. The Clowns Courtship and Crockery Ware are both cute and Golden Gorse is a lovely reflective song. It reminds me a bit of Foster and Allen (way back in the day). Lumps of Pudding is sweet and I also like Roger and Dolly followed by the Parson of Chale, the latter of which is quite quirky and really appeals to me! The song of Sixpence is quite mediaeval sounding I thought. I tried it whilst playing a low drone on the G and it works really well." KG

Below are a mass of notes accumulated over the years.

Many of these manuscript, however, exist from the 18th and 19th centuries. The leader of the band, often the violinist, would write down tunes they had heard played or find them in the various books of the time. They would often adapt them and sometimes rename them. To this they would add their own tunes and other local tunes. Originally they were mainly reels, jigs and hornpipes. Later they added polkas, quadrilles, waltzes and so on. The scores sometimes had marks on them to show bowing, emphasis and generally how to make them come to life. They had to be tunes that could be easily picked up by ear, "hummable".

The Isle of Wight Tune Book, the detail.

To select tunes from other manuscripts, books, local sources, new tunes and other material to make a new Isle of Wight Tune Manuscript / Book. To have sections for core tunes, the sea, the land and

love, dance, winter, airs. To be in a format easily readable for dance bands and mainly in keys they use. Although certainly played by the IOW village bands we will not include any Scottish, military and Playford type tunes as they are easily found elsewhere.

When tracked down tunes will need to be played to see if all is fine with them. Some may have missing bars, difficult keys, strange notes and so on. They can then be passed around to see if they play well. The English style of playing has been discussed elsewhere. IOW style? Any new tunes will need to fit in with the traditional material. See IOW list of dances, villages etc that require new tunes. It wants to be a little different from a standard Folk Dance Band Repertoire. Some titles may have a variety of tunes attached to them and it is great to obtain a variety of possibilities.

On the island we have particular gaps relating to for instance the sea themes and legends. Here is an area that could be developed keeping the traditional feel. Island dialect is another area to further develop. We will avoid common themes found elsewhere such as Scottish and Irish tunes.

The way forward;

Choose tunes from the repertoire of the past that seem to have a relevance to the island. Reference manuscripts and tune books.

New Tunes for the Isle of Wight Tune Book

General Terms to use

Reel, Jig, Hornpipe, Polka, Waltz, Scottische, Rant, March, Gavotte, Bourrée, Round, Lamentation, Joke, Royal, Bell, Delight, Maggot, Hoop, Ball, Wish, Wisdom, Lass, Day, Trip to, Whim, Boys, Frolic, Frisk, Hop, Farewell, Green, Ace, Triumph, Comedy, Bridge, Mill, House, Assembly, Fair...

Making a start: Adaption of a traditional tune. Revisit tunes you or others may have written to give them an Island flavour. Read poems / stories for ideas. New fresh idea. Visit in person or virtually places on the island for inspiration and so on.

Possible title suggestions:

Place Names (see full list of towns, villages and hamlets below)

Shalfleet Strut
Brading Breakdown
Arreton Gavotte
Languard Polka
Salt Pan Reel from Newtown
Ryde Rag
Sandown Sunshine Rag

Legends

Giant of Chale March
Pied Piper of Newtown Tune
The moving church of Godshill
Knighton Gorges Ghost

Sea Collection

Yarmouth Lifeboat Reel
Wreck of the Irex
St Helens Hornpipe
Shalfleet Quay
Medina River Boat Hornpipe
Cowes Regatta Quickstep

Historical Events / Places

Charles 1 Escape Reel

Hulverstone March
Victoria's Arrival
Osborne Quadrille
Osborne Waltz

Country Dances

Red Squirrel Waltz
The Fogo Jij (Bad Smell Jig)
Pitzaa Polka
Rattle Trap Polka
Newtown Randy Polka
Billy Bitter Jig (Blue Tit Dance)
Dumbledore Dance (Bumblebee Dance)
Rattlemouse Reel (Bat Reel)
The Saacy Jig
Devil's Dancin' House (Newport Dance)
Smuggler's Reel

Festival Tunes

May Day
Midsummer's Eve
Valentine's
Michaelmas Day
Plough Day
More Christmas Tunes

Airs

Island themes sea, downs, landscapes, summer, winter and much more.

Miscellaneous

Glass Medina Shine Reel
Cowes Crane Rag
Island Cider Polka
The Island Beer Barrel Polka

References

Try here for ideas:

Village Music Project - Dance Books to 1860 - Johnson Volumes 1-8 and the manuscripts.

Vaughan Williams Memorial Library (VWML) - Browse Archives - Dip into the various collections and Manuscripts

Some of the key manuscripts are in print such as The Sussex Tune Book and have to be bought or borrowed.

.....

Full list of towns, villages and hamlets. Plus Flora and Fauna ideas

Isle of Wight Towns

Newport
Brading
Cowes
East Cowes
Ryde
Sandown
Shanklin
Ventnor

Yarmouth

Island Villages

Alverstone
Arreton
Bembridge
Binstead
Blackgang
Blackwater
Bonchurch
Brighstone
Brook
Calbourne
Carisbrooke
Chale
Chillerton
Cranmore
Fishbourne
Freshwater
Gatcombe
Godshill
Gurnard
Havenstreet
Lake
Luccombe
Merstone
Nettlestone
Newbridge
Newchurch
Newtown
Ningwood
Niton
Northwood
Porchfield
Rookley
Seaview
Shalfleet
Shorwell
St Helens
St Lawrence
Totland
Whippingham
Whitwell
Winford
Wootton
Wootton Bridge
Wroxall
Yaverland

Hamlets and other places IOW

Adgestone
Afton
Afton Park
Alum Bay
Alverstone Garden Village
Appley
Apse Heath

Ashey
Barton
Bathingbourne
Bierley
Binfield
Bouldnor
Borthwood
Bowcombe
Branstone
Chale Green
Cross Lane
Culver Down
Downend
Easton
Egypt Point
Elmfield
Five Houses
Foreland Fields
Forest Side
Freshwater Bay
Great Thorness
Gunville
Hale Common
Hamstead
Havenstreet
Haylands
Hillway
Horringford
Hulverstone
Hunnyhill
King's Quay
Kingston
Knighton
Lane End
Limerstone
Little Atherfield
Little Thorness
Littletown
Locksgreen
Lowtherville
Mark's Corner
Mersley
Moortown
Morton
Mottistone
Nettlecombe
Ninham
Niton Undercliff
Norton
Norton Green
Nunwell
Oakfield
Osborne
Parkhurst
Pondwell
Princelett
Puckaster

Quarr Hill
Queen's Bower
Rew Street
Rookley Green
Roud
Rowridge
Sandford
Seagrove Bay
Shalcombe
Shide
Staplers
Steephill
Steyne Cross
Thorley
Thorley Street
Thorncross
Totland Bay
Upper Ventnor
Wellow
Whiteley Bank
Winford
Wootton Common
Yafford
Yarbridge

Flora and Fauna

Burnt Orchid Reel
Sundew
Violet coral
Guillemot
Yellowhammer
Gentian
Field cow-wheat
Great crested newt
Lady Eleanor Glanville (Glanville Fritillary)
Starlet Sea Anemone
Dead men's fingers
Porbeagle
Snakelock

.....

Some background notes taken from archive.

Church Bands

It seems there were a number of church bands on the IOW. These used to play in a gallery opposite the altar. The congregation would turn round to face them and then sing. They also played for dances, festivals, weddings etc. They were good musicians, some able to read music, play various harmonies, create new tunes etc. They would be constantly practising so the village would be full of music. Sadly this all stopped when every church had to have an organ!

I cannot find the relevant passage regarding IOW Brading Band but I remember it consisted of violin, oboe, serpent and Cornet (Trumpet, keyed bugle) other bands had cello and piccolo. There was also a quote about English bagpipes being played.

Other notes

"We have started on the Alice Gillingham set and to our surprise there are some very interesting ones. Some tunes need considerable work to make them playable

I see we were going to do: "Sea Songs and Shanties on and around the Isle of Wight" these were songs sung by the likes of Bob Roberts and so many more wonderful island shanty singers. This is a huge tomb of music (150 tunes) that I see is almost ready. We will try and put it together in an alphabetical set. ”

Isle of Wight Tune Book

Volume 1

Sea and Coastal

Atherfield Ledge (St Catherine's)
Crossing the Bar
Cherbourg to Wight
Dark Eyed Sailor
Rat of Wight (Gilbert Lee)
Sailors Return
Isle of Wight Hornpipe
Man O' War

Land, Love and more

Autumn Song
Carter's Mate
The Clown's Courtship
The Crockery Ware
Golden Gorse
Lumps of Pudding
Mary Maid
Old Man Clothed in Leather (Misty Moisty Morning)
The Old Miser
Roger and Dolly
The Parson of Chale
Song of Sixpence
Whistle Daughter Whistle
Scrow Day
Little Cappender
The Widow
Recruiting Sergeant

Volume 2

Spring Song
March of the Wight Men (Men of Wight)
Forsaken
My Maid
Sayings Song
Three Drunken Maidens
Jolly Waggoner
The Old Grey Hen

Volume 3

Festivals

Home Harvest Evening
Shrove Song
Shickshack Day
Shroven (Newchurch & Brighstone)
Newtown Randy

Winter

Isle of Wight Wassail
Island Christmas Party
Isle of Wight Mummers Christmas Carol
Holly Red and Mistletoe - IOW Carol
Hark (The Newchurch Carol)
Island Winter Song
Apple Tree Wassail

Historical

Brading Haven
Damask Rose
Silver Bow

Volume 4 Core Tunes

Three Around Three / Enrico
Harper's Frolic / Bonny Kate
Huntsman's Chorus / Astley's Ride
Curly Headed Ploughboy / The Quacker
The Knife's Edge / The L.N.B. Polka
Babes in the wood / I looked East and I looked West
P&O Polka / Heel and Toe Polka
Dumpty Umpty / Jenny Lind
New Rigged Ship / Oyster Girl
One more dance and then / The Sloe
Foul Weather Call / Speed the Plough

Volume 5 Alice Gillingham Set 1909**Other**

Grandma's Old Armchair (Collected Newchurch in VWML)
Throw out the Lifeline

To do
Polly Oliver