

What is Contra Dancing

So what is Contra Dancing?

American Contra Dancing is the equivalent of our Australian Bush Dancing, both being based on the music and dances of the early English/Irish settlers. Some people consider Contra even more fun than Bush Dancing. It has certainly proved to be very popular with the bush dancers.

Julie Bishop, popular Contra - she is not known as "Australia's Queen of Contra" for nothing - and her husband Alex, the flautist in Contra Band "Pastrami-On-Ryebuck", lived in America for some time and are virtually responsible for introducing Contra to Australia. All dances are walked - some faster than others - and the music is usually up-tempo.

While most Ozzie bush dancers resist American influences, Contra Dancing is so much fun that most seem to have made an exception and adopted it as part of our own dance scene now - just calling it "Contra".

As with all CCBDMA functions, all the dances are taught, walked through and then called as they are danced. Some can be a bit intricate, but most are easy and the evening always starts with the easy ones and works up to the more difficult, depending upon the standard of dancers present on the night. As with all called dances, it is mainly just a matter of listening carefully to the Caller and Julie will run through the basic calls at the commencement of the dance.

If you haven't experienced Contra dancing yet, try to make it to the Christmas Dance. There are usually only three Contra Dances held each year - one in Sydney mid year, one in Newcastle and the other here on the Central Coast. A pity to miss any of them, really.