

## Downeast Dance Group on the Baker Island "Dance Floor"

Reviving a favorite old pastime.

15 July 2001

When Abbie McMillen, director of Downeast Dance, saw the "Dance Floor" on a map of this area, she just had to investigate. Yes, it turned out that dances **were** held at this special place on Baker Island years ago.

Well, why not now?



After a lot of hard work and planning, Abbie's vision became reality today, as a group of 26 social dancers from all over Maine went out to Baker Island to see -- and dance -- for themselves. They were joined by 12 guests from Islesford, and 3 from Great Cranberry.

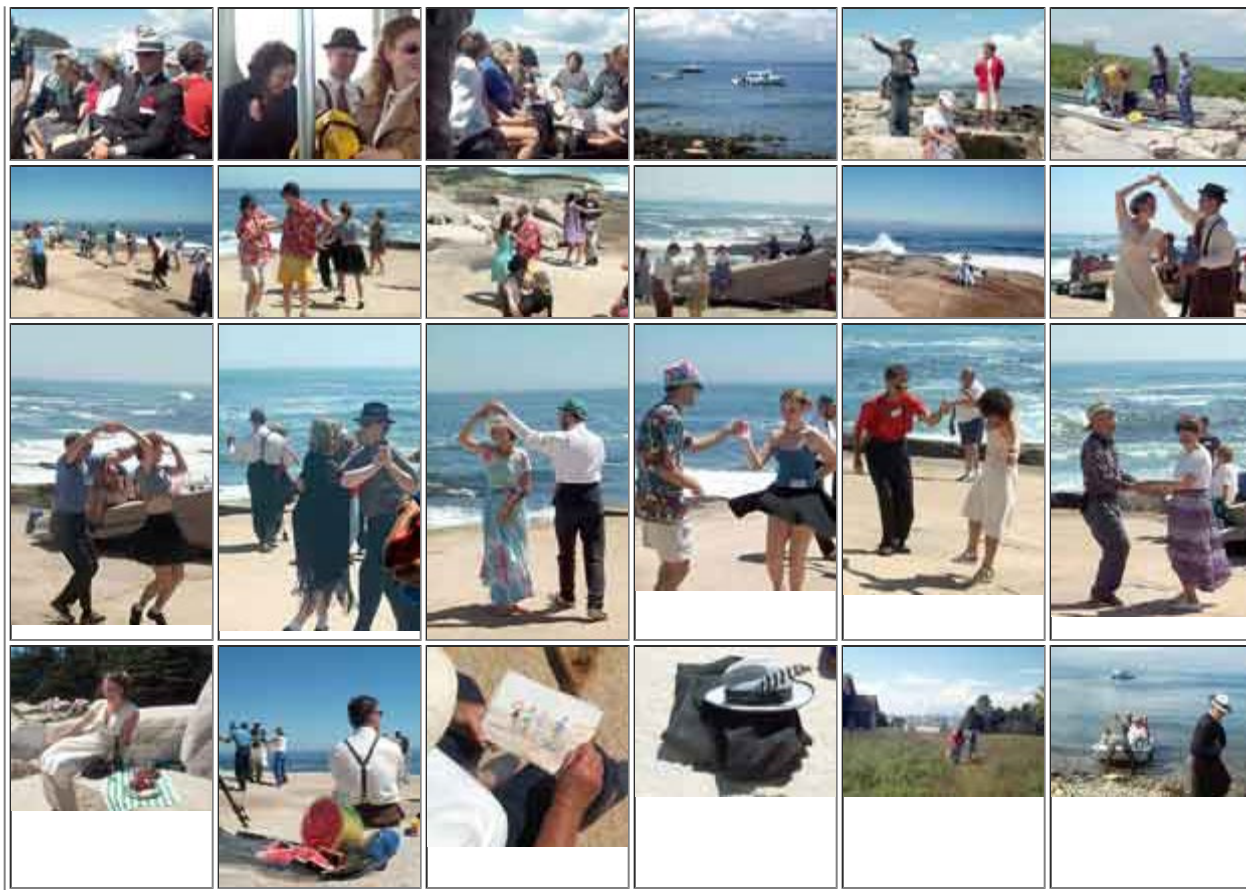
The fun outing began when the *Double B* left Northeast Harbor at 11:20 a.m., stopping at Great Cranberry and Islesford, and anchoring near Baker around noontime. Several dinghy trips brought everyone safely to the island. Amazingly, two kayaks with more adventurous dancers left Northeast at the same time, and arrived at Baker even before the last of the boat-goers were ferried ashore.

The landing place on Baker offers a breathtaking panorama. The dark green spruce-lined shores of the Cranberry Isles seem to float on the sea, while the misty mountains of Acadia National Park dominate the background.

While everyone was assembling on shore, Hugh Dwelley of the Islesford Historical Society said a few words about the Gilleys -- old-time residents of Baker. Then it was on to the "Dancing Rocks" -- actually an unusual formation of broad flat rocks at several levels, just at the edge of the shore, about a 20-minute walk from the landing. On the way, picturesque old buildings and a lighthouse punctuated the magnificent scenery.

After a quick picnic lunch, the dancing began in earnest. Two camcorders captured the action for posterity. A boom-box supplied the music, much as a wind-up Victrola might have done in earlier times. Abbie's eclectic assortment of CDs let everyone strut to their favorite steps: Lindy, waltz, fox-trot, even a Greek dance line.

Two hours passed in no time. Soon it was time to head to the landing for the return of the *Double B*. The weather was perfect, the setting was superb, and the proverbial good time was had by all.



*Dancing Rocks*  
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