The medley of G jigs -

The Hare’s Ear / The Grey Ghost / Quill Gordon

magnificently composed and performed on Frank Ferrel’s CD **Yankee Dreams**, commemorates fly-fishing ties in Frank’s lure box. The tunes enchanted several Seattle-area musicians of the time, fiddler Ward Beebe, flute player Arne’ Reinert, and myself, D/G box-player Phil Katz. Soon after hearing the CD, Ward began a careful transcription of the three, which he passed on to Arne’, myself, and others in the Seattle area. They proved to be exquisite on the flute as well, and Arne’, a fine connoisseur of both Contra and Irish styles of playing, undertook to lead them as a dance medley in the Salmonberry Contra Dance Band of the day, myself and then the rest of us catching his enthusiasm. The medley was played on multiple occasions in the 1990’s at our Second Saturday “home dance” in Seattle, up until the tragic death of Arne’ in a mountain hiking fall in Summer 1996. And then they were played no more for Seattle contra dancers until another superb flute player, Paul Englesberg, took them up briefly at my behest on occasions when he joined Small Pleasures for the Fifth Saturday Tacoma Dance.

Some time after the CD (issued on the Flying Fish Label, btw) and Ward’s transcriptions, Frank published the three jigs in his tunebook **Music For the Feet** (Mel Bay 1996, ISBN 10: [0786629592](https://www.abebooks.com/products/isbn/9780786629596?cm_sp=bdp-_-ISBN10-_-PLP) / ISBN 13: [9780786629596](https://www.abebooks.com/products/isbn/9780786629596?cm_sp=bdp-_-ISBN13-_-PLP)). Evidently Frank revised the tunes a bit between the CD and the book, because a few differences exist between Frank’s “book” version and the version Ward transcribed; this even after careful checking by Ward at the time and by Arne’ and myself afterwards. Nobody should insist on versions of tunes to the author thereof, least of all to one as distinguished as Frank. But this website documents what was in Arne’s and my fingers, the versions we played for our dancers; I hope Frank won’t mind the differences.

I comment here that Frank’s tunebook is one of the great under-appreciated masterpieces of its genre’ and time. It is chock-a-block full of lovely tunes, some of which can be played by a normal mortal, and the more difficult of which will nonetheless inspire.

I (a “normal mortal”) discovered that “Yankee Dancers” (with lovely Barnes chords, and recorded on Frank’s **Moxie** CD) just leaped onto my E/A/D 3-row and declared itself a third tune for the dance Lady of the Lake - if using Maine Jigs “Billy the Barber” and “Jimmy’s Fave” beforehand. F#min, E, and Bm, on a button accordion? Dancing high across the rows, before Barnes crashes home to the final I-V-I with a IV-chord one beat early. For an old Yankee Chestnut dance?

And “a few cuts above the rest of us”, contra and contest fiddler Vivian Williams wow’ed ‘em in one of the rounds on the way to her first Senior-Class fiddle championship at the National Oldtime Fiddlers Contest at Weiser, playing the soaring A jig “Peter Barnes” as her “tune of choice.”

I suggest any serious Contra or Downeast musician hunt down a copy of **Music for the Feet** (and for that matter the two CD’s mentioned above) from Frank or one of the online sellers and go to work mining your own favorites.