

## "Wave On Wave" biography by Alan Birchall



Wave On Wave was created in a 'bit of a hurry' (unusual for me) I found it on a Country Music Association promo CD called CDX (May 2003) I had only briefly listened to a sample of each track... I put the CD to one side to return to later.

At that time I had an annual booking at the Victoria Hotel Torquay with fellow D&G Instructors Pat & Allan Mitchell, alongside Shirley & Geoff? from the Forest of Dean - all of whom I'd met during my D&G exams. The event was also attended by Anne & Brian Bambury who presided over the D&G UK Organisation. It was a couple of days before the event and I hadn't choreographed anything so I quickly checked the CD again. There were 2 suitable tracks Walkin' by Katy Benko and Wave On Wave by Pat Green. I listened to both tracks a few times getting a feel for the type of dance I needed, checking counts and phrasing, luckily both were 32 counts and neither needed any added extras!! Both dances were choreographed simultaneously not sure which was first but I think it was Walkin'. I taught both the following weekend and both were well received, Wave On Wave seemed to be the most popular and the music was more readily available as Pat Green had already produced his first album 'Three Days' – with a stunning track called - Carry On!! Wave On Wave being from his second album called Wave On Wave. A few months later I heard that Wave On Wave was becoming popular and dancers were adding arm movements mimicking swimming etc... Personally I link both arms making a wave motion when the lyrics coincide with the cross shuffles or just wave my arms to simulate a crashing of waves when the lyrics don't coincide with that section... we now often have Mexican Waves travelling around edge of dance floors when played/danced.

I was also a member of the local LDTA (Line Dance Teachers Association) an organisation of instructors who met regularly to help/share what they'd taught... It was at those meetings I first met Pat Stott, Ann Wood & Chris Jones amongst others. The organisation hosted a few large annual charity events at the Armitage Centre in Manchester attend by around 1,200 – 1,500 dancers. They had chosen Wave On Wave as one of the Dance-a-Mile dances. Unfortunately it was also the year of a Tsunami in Indonesia, and at a meeting in January 2004 I said that it wouldn't be right to include Wave On Wave in the Dance-a-Mile as a matter of respect for the victims of that tragic event, everyone agreed. These were magnificent events where everybody shared the work - no ego's - no nonsense - Wonderful!

It was during this time that Pat Green visited the UK and myself and a few friends were fortunate enough to catch him at Manchester Academy. During the show I can remember him saying how different things were to playing in the US, a few weeks earlier he'd been playing to around 50,000 people whereas here he was playing to around 500, he thought that was more intimate and he could feel the reaction to his music better. Also at the end of the gig he bought everyone a drink in the bar – drummer's birthday apparently!! We got chatting... it seems he knew I'd choreographed to Wave On Wave (think this was a plant!!) He thanked me for my dance and I thanked him back, as without the music I wouldn't have created the dance! We both laughed, I ended the conversation by saying that all I'd really done was to open his music to whole new bunch of people giving him access to a new set of fans! It was a great night and a very treasured memory.

I was told some years later that my dance Wave On Wave won an award in the US... if it did I was totally unaware of it at the time, but what is more incredible is that the Linedance World has been dancing it since 2003... I hope it continues to bring pleasure for many years to come. Thanks must also go to all the line dance artists that have sung Wave On Wave, the Dj's that have played it over the years, and without question, all the instructors that have taught it and dancers who dance it & continue to do so - Amazing!

As Pat Green 'puts it' in an intro to a live performance on YouTube for the Texas Music Scene in 2015 "It's still the last song we play every night. It's been in movies, on The Voice, American Idol, etc. It has changed every aspect of my life, to have that longevity and to have a song like that" – He's just floored. It's humbling to know that in some small way I may have contributed to that.

**Thank you everyone - Alan B**