

Folk Dancer

The Magazine of World Dance and Culture



Canadian Presence at Mainewoods Folk Dance Camp, Week Three (Photo: Richard Brown):
(left to right) Shirley Kossowski, Mirdza Jaunzemis, Cecille Ratney, Maya Trost, Bella Lamb, Sandy Starkman,
Chris Chattin, Dorothée Beauregard, Alison Lee, Kathleen Mazurek, Lynda Vuurman, Anita Millman, Rachel
Gottesman, Janis Smith, (kneeling) Adam Kossowski, Richard Schmidt, David Yee (in spirit), Bev Sidney

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The Message of Performance

By Kevin Budd

A few short years ago I had the honour of judging a Kiwanis festival in the folk dance section. Among the variety of offerings, not surprisingly, was the high quality of "Bata" Marcetic's Serbian dance troupe. One notable characteristic of their performance was not just their technical expertise, but the fact that they seemed to be enjoying what they did. They were having fun, or at least Bata had taught them to appear that they were having fun. There were smiles on the young faces, but even more notable, there was some interaction between members as they danced, that is, they smiled at each other, and had clear connections between them. This added another layer of interest to the show, making it more appealing to watch, and making the troupe seem to be accurately displaying the traditional interplay of a group of hypothetical villagers who actually know each other.

We can enjoy the steps, and the colour and the patterns, but a performance only comes alive when we see personality and inter-personality, that is, the interactions between individuals in a larger context. It is then that we have a full, rich display of the lovely balance between group and individual that implies village and person, solo and group, one soul and a

collective soul functioning in harmony. Then we understand something profound about dance, that it is a group of actions done simultaneously in concert and individually, that reflects tradition and also presents the moment intensely.

While watching any dance performance the eye tends to go to certain people, certain dancers who are both fine dancers, but also seem to exude that pleasure or effortless involvement in the dance that makes them a pleasure to watch. This past summer, we attended a presentation in Athens by the great Dora Stratou ensemble at their outdoor stage at the bottom of the hill around the Acropolis. Essentially



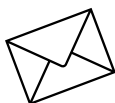
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The OFDA has established an e-mail list in order to communicate timely information of interest to folk dancers. If you would like to add your name to the list, send an e-mail request to: ontariofolkdancers@gmail.com



Please do let us know about special events!

every folk dancer who goes to Athens attends one of these shows, and for this reason, I must confess, before going, I was thinking of it as cliché and more of the same. However, in short, it was well worth it, and a pleasure in many ways. As a musician I especially enjoyed the live band and their characters, for though they perform, they are also themselves - from the elderly woman singing, to the large man on clarinet and the young man playing lauto. One dancer stood out in several pieces, for his smile, his intensity and the integration of his movement. It's fun to track a few performers, as they change costume and reappear as another version of Greek dance. They become momentary favourites and we look for them with pleasure.

To return to Kiwanis, there was one woman who danced a solo Scottish number. She was working hard, and it was clear that it took real effort for her to just be out there on stage, solo work being much more stressful than a group thing. Still, as I mentioned in my remarks to her, she was courageous to appear solo, and truly, she was only there because she loved to dance. It would be great to actually see some of what motivated her to do that work and to brave the stage situation and the judging. It's a lot to ask, technical expertise, plus some personal expression that makes the dance your own. Actor Humphrey Bogart once

said that, "All you owe the public is a good performance."



Photos by Kevin Budd

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An Excellent Mediterranean Adventure!

By Mirdza Jaunzemis

In May of this year my sister Mara and I went on a trip and cruise through the Eastern Mediterranean.

We had been talking about doing this for about 8 years, and finally the time was right!

We flew to Venice a day earlier in order to explore this beautiful city a little. It was described by Napoleon as the finest drawing room in Europe, and we agreed. Venice lies at the head of the Adriatic sea and is made up of 118 small islands joined by a network of 150 canals and 400 bridges. (The water in the canals did not have an odour) No wheeled traffic is seen – not even in-line skates or bicycles: the never-ending bridges would make it very difficult to travel by any means other than on foot. Thus, the Venetians are a very fit group of people! We even saw an ambulance going along a waterway, sirens blazing- a very different way of life! Vaporettos (motor-boats) are the usual modes of transport for goods, also to get to and from the airport, but the gondoliers are still plying their beautiful crafts with skill and style. We did go for a ride!

Venice was a historical transit point for trade



between central Europe and the eastern Mediterranean; and the Venetians were very skilled boatmen, carrying armaments and goods throughout this area. In ancient times Italy was not one country, but a collection of city-states, and the leader of Venice was the Doge (Duke). We visited the Palace of the Doges which was once the seat of government. There was a sculpture of a Lion's Head near the Palace which had an opening in its mouth into which anyone could slip a note and anonymously accuse someone of a crime. The Counselors (civil servants) would have these "criminals" apprehended and criminal judgments were pronounced without the need for the accused to be present. As the criminal was led away to jail (probably never to be seen again) he or she would have to cross a canal by way of what is now called the famous "Bridge of Sighs": this person would sigh on enjoying his or her last moments of freedom.

Near the Palace is The Piazza San Marco, which has been described as a beautiful "great marble salon". St. Mark is the patron of Venice, and his tomb is inside the Basilica. The square is right next to the canal, and is very often flooded at high tide.

Venice hosts a Carnival for about two weeks, ending on Mardi Gras, during which time people typically wear masks, often made of plaster, cloth or papier mâché. In the past they were frequently used to hide someone's identity when he (she) was involved in criminal or unacceptable amorous activities, or when mixing with people not of one's class. The art of mask making was dying out, but there is now a revival, and many booths and kiosks sell beautiful masks of many varieties.

Our hotel was overlooking the Grand Canal near the Rialto Bridge (a famous shopping area). It was a very small "pension" (very quiet), and the owners were very trusting of their tenants. We were given four keys: one for the room safe, one for the room, one for the hotel reception area, and one for the

front door of the hotel! There was no one at the front desk after we checked in, and we could come and go as we pleased. The next morning we were served breakfast, but other than that we were on our own. Even after 10 a.m. check-out, we were given two keys (to retrieve our luggage): one for the reception area and the other for the front door.

We boarded our humongous cruise ship the next afternoon: a floating apartment building, or a small city. It had 19 floors at one end and 15 at the other. (We were on the 11th floor). Everything was very organized and streamlined, and after a while we got used to being pampered at every turn. This ship had 3150 passengers and 1200 staff, 10 eating areas, 2 swimming pools and 14 bars! The entertainment was excellent for the most part, and the food was good and plentiful. Most of the waiters and room stewards were men, and they wore tags with their names and countries of origin – a veritable United Nations! At times it was hard to realize that we were on water. The beauty of cruising is that the ship is your hotel, thus you can make visits to several different places without the hassle of packing and unpacking, shuttles, etc. However, the stops are usually one day long in each place, and as a result one sees only the highlights of any given city, etc.

Our first stop was Dubrovnik (formerly called Ragusa) in Croatia on the Dalmatian coast; it is a UNESCO Heritage site. Old Dubrovnik is a walled city which once rivaled Venice in commercial ventures, having contacts as far afield as India and America. However, a terrible earthquake in 1667 demolished the city; as much as possible was rebuilt, but it was a nearly fatal blow to the former giant. In the 19th century it became part of the Austrian empire, then was swallowed up by Yugoslavia; after 1991 Croatia became an independent country. George Bernard Shaw called Dubrovnik “the pearl of the Adriatic”, and it is a beautiful, compact city. I

took a tour to the area of Konavle, to a former olive plantation which once employed about 65 people; now there is one family looking after the place, and providing delicious Croatian lunches to tourists, along with musical entertainment. My sister went to Cavtat, a popular tourist resort, for a brandy-tasting and some sightseeing. We were given time to explore the old city; it is definitely worth a visit!

We then visited the Greek island of Corfu (the birthplace of Prince Philip) in the Ionian Sea; its Greek name is Kerkira, and here as well the Venetians (and the British and French) influenced its history. Its old city (called Corfu Town) has narrow, winding streets, beautiful architecture, and its most important cathedral is the Church of St. Spyridon, its patron saint. It is said to be the greenest of these islands, and has 3 million olive trees! We took a tour to Paleokastritsa, visited the monastery there and afterwards were served a Greek lunch at a taverna. We then watched some Greek dancing, which we were invited to participate in. Paleokastritsa is a pretty town and in a bay there is a rock formation; according to local legend it is the ship of Odysseus turned to stone by Poseidon. (Lots of mythological references in the Greek islands – sometimes one begins to think that perhaps the myths are actually true...) It is also



considered to be the setting for Shakespeare's "The Tempest".

Our next port was Katakolon, which is near the original Olympic site. It is now in ruins, but represents the beginnings of our games today. Before Greece became a country, it was also just a collection of warring city-states, and the idea of the games was meant to promote peace among these cities. Festivities were held in July or August at the full moon, and a

After arriving in the port of Piraeus, we were taken into Athens, and of course up to the Acropolis to visit the Parthenon and other ruins on this hilltop. The Golden Age of Athens occurred during the 6th century B.C., and Pericles was the prime mover in initiating several building projects, of which the Parthenon is the main survivor. It was built to Athena, goddess of war and wisdom and the protector of Athens. The columns and structures are very dramatic, and one has a great view of the city. Nearby is the



Photo by Kevin Budd

"sacred truce" was honoured during this time. Causing harm to anyone was considered a sacrilege, and the perpetrator was severely punished.

However, the sporting competition itself lasted only five days, and the events (running, jumping, boxing, wrestling, discus and javelin) were thinly disguised skills useful in warfare. These games were so popular that the temple of Zeus and his forty-four-foot-high statue came to be known as one of the seven wonders of the world. During the Roman period the religious aspect of the games declined, and after an earthquake the site was abandoned and fell into ruin. In 1875 research began in this area, and the modern Olympic movement was born in 1896. We visited the archeological museum where statues (often partial) and other accoutrements have been displayed. Again, we enjoyed a sumptuous Greek lunch, and once again some Greek dancing, which we took part in!

very well-preserved Theatre of Dionysus, one of the oldest amphitheatres. We were also taken to Cape Sounion where the impressive pillars of the Temple of Poseidon are located. After another excellent Greek lunch, we spent some time in Plaka, the famous shopping area in Athens. The guide took us around downtown Athens, to point out Hadrian's arch and the Temple of Zeus, and afterwards we stopped to view the marble stadium of the present-day Olympics, where the 2004 Games were held. It was built in 1895 on the original site of the one built in the 4th century B.C. Very impressive!

I think my favourite island among the ones we visited was Mykonos, our next stop. This was the island where the movie "Shirley Valentine" was filmed, and the movie helped put this island "on the map".

It is populated by stark white buildings, and

they sparkle against the blue sea. There is a law stating that all buildings built after 1980 must be white (whitewashed stone); only doors, trim, shutters, railings, etc., can be in colour, and the usual colours are blue, red, turquoise and yellow. They can be no more than two stories high; thus, the effect is that of the quintessential Greek village, with white dwellings nestled against hillsides with spots of colour as a contrast. The island is very dry, and in the past the houses were flat-roofed with cisterns on top, to catch what little rain water there was. Mykonos has an interesting history; it is a very windy island, and because of this it was established as the island with windmills (some of which are still standing) where farmers from other islands came to mill grain. In addition, the oldest families on the island have many pirates in their ancestry, who brought goods in from their travels and then sold them to the locals. These two areas of endeavour caused the island to flourish. (There is a section of Mykonos called “Little Venice” because the water comes right up to the houses – they were built in this way, so that the pirate ships could pull in at night and surreptitiously unload their “merchandise”). If one goes further back in “history”,

it is said that both Apollo and Artemis were born on the island of Delos (seen from Mykonos); this island is no longer inhabited, but in the past it was very prosperous; however, no one could be born or die there – it was considered sacred ground. It is now a UNESCO heritage site, and the Greeks have declared the island a museum.

Another interesting aspect of Mykonos is its three resident pelicans, who wander about, eating tasty morsels from tourists or from the sea, and posing for pictures. The story is that about 40 years ago a wounded pelican was found on a beach and a man nursed it back to health. When it was ready to fly, it seems it decided to stay on the island. When it died in 1986 the people were quite upset, and one Jacqueline Kennedy-Onassis arranged for another pelican to be brought there. Later the Hamburg zoo provided another one; finally there was a third injured pelican that was rehabilitated, and became part of the family. Their wings are clipped, but they are now considered the island’s mascots.

We visited Panagia Tourliani monastery – very ornately carved with much gold leaf, and some amazing chandeliers. (People often have their own family chapels, so one sees small ‘churches’ which also have areas to bury the dead in the family.) We also visited Kalafatis beach where we were able to try out the waters of the Aegean Sea. A beautiful spot, great shopping, lovely sea breezes, interesting narrow labyrinthine streets.

And then on to Kusadasi , Turkey, originally settled by the Ionian Greeks *(the continuation of Mirdza’s odyssey will appear in the December issue of this magazine)*

Photo by Kevin Budd



AGM 2010 Highlights

The following details are taken from the 2009-2010 Year-End Financial Report that was presented by Treasurer Janis Smith at the AGM on June 2, 2010.

ASSETS	2010	2009
Total Assets	\$27329.80	\$31549.92
Includes..... Current	\$15712.84	\$19553.31
In Trust for OTEA	\$ 9954.85	\$10334.50
REVENUE		
Total Revenue, excluding Events	\$ 6509.83	\$ 6337.67
Includes..... Membership	\$5382.56	\$5159.02
EXPENSES		
Total Expenses, excluding Events	\$ 5786.39	\$ 4252.49
Includes..... Magazine - Printing	\$2332.77	\$1888.61
- Postage	\$1306.19	\$1287.27

EVENTS

International Dance Day -\$138; June Picnic -\$26.33; Dancing in the Park, Toronto -\$372.61; Dancing in the Park, Burlington -\$100; Balkan Rhythms Workshop -\$376.80; Anniversary Banquet -\$3,163.29; Albanian Café +\$30.68; New Year's Party +\$234.19; Balkan Café -\$171.85; Brazilian Café +\$78.15

OTEA Scholarship Awarded	\$ - 500.00	\$ - 150.00
Excess of Revenue over Expenses	\$ - 3830.47	\$ 1031.81

- Mirdza Jaunzemis presented the following **Membership Report**: Current Membership (June 2010) is 272, up from 217 in May 2009. Geographical distribution: Canada - 224; US - 44; Overseas - 4.
- **Elected to New Executive Committee**: Steering Committee: Bev Sidney, Helen Winkler, Riki Adivi
Members-at-Large: Adam Kossowski, Adrienne Beecker, Arlene Lindfield, Gary McIntosh, Gilda Akler-Sefton, Janis Smith, Judith Cohen, Kenneth Cowan, Kevin Budd, Marylyn Peringer, Maya Trost, Mirdza Jaunzemis, Paula Tsatsanis, Roz Katz, Shirley Kossowski



Singing at Waterloo Camp - from a photo by B.Sidney

Ontario Folk Dance Camp 2010

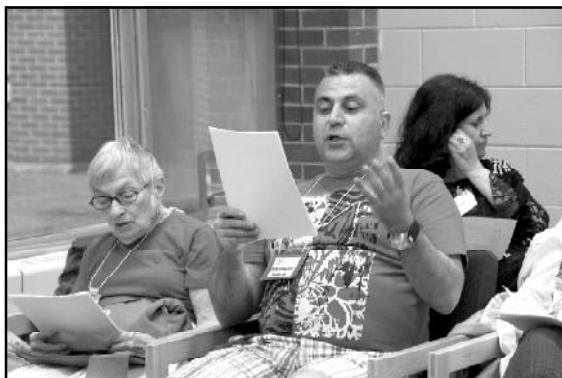
This past May OFDCamp welcomed the return of Jaap Leegwater, Bulgarian folk dance and culture expert. As well as bringing us some new dances and reviewing some from early days, he brought his son Lubo along. Lubo danced with us and accompanied Jaap in providing live music intervals; his 13th birthday fell on the last day of camp and in honour of the occasion, he was given a present that included a box of highly desirable Fruit Loops cereal - something that's not available to him at home in Holland.

It was the first time that Toronto's Fethi Karakecili attended camp as a teacher, and he brought us dances of his native Kurdish culture, as well as from Turkey.

Another first was Judy Silver's table of pottery in the Camp Bazaar – the first occasion that she'd attempted to sell any of her artwork. She wasn't disappointed, because most of her pieces were sold by the end of the weekend.



Ontario Folk Dance Camp 2010



The Culture Corners were well-attended, as was the Song Session. Fethi and Karen Bennett brought a careful of authentic Kurdish costumes which were worn by the small troupe of dancers who'd been training to demonstrate several Kurdish dances. While poised to begin their dances, there occurred an extended silence, which eventually brought forth nervous laughter. When it was apparent that the sound system was the cause of the problem, Walter Zagorski temporarily abandoned his place in the performance line in order to render some assistance. In short order he'd put together a temporary solution, and "on went the show"....





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Explorations in Folklore 4: Two Urban Costumes

By Karen Bennett

I'd like to talk about two styles of urban costumes I've come across: one from Russia and one from the Ottoman Empire.

In May 2007 I was browsing on eBay when I found this listing: "Antique Russian embroidered folk costume blouse, embroidered front and back and on the sleeves. There are hammered brass sequins on the front and back panels. The ground fabric is red and blue cotton, with inserts of colourful crocheted lace."



Antique Russian embroidered folk costume blouse

It's almost impossible to find original Russian costumes; I have two modern reproductions, but I'm always thrilled to come upon older things, especially when they're embroidered.

The embroidery on this blouse was cross stitch and running stitch. It was an extremely fine and finicky item, some of it sewn by machine but most of it by hand, with the initials "MF" (in Roman letters, not Cyrillic) embroidered close to the bottom of the front

panel. "MF" had been a slim but not tall woman, I later discovered when I tried on the blouse.

Some time after that, I saw a listing for a lone apron, also advertised as Russian, of linen embroidered in red, blue, yellow and white, with a hem of white crocheted lace, the waist tied with red and white machine-made ribbons. This apron didn't go with the blouse—except in my head. "I spy a theme," sez I; "a recurring style." A look through my costume books having proved inconclusive—the apron resembled one belonging to a costume from Belarus, but the blouse matched nothing—I put the pieces away in a trunk. For the next two years, my research on this front advanced not an inch.



Russian apron.

In September 2009 the theme reappeared: a three-piece ensemble described as "Antique 19th-century three-piece dress/costume loaded with folk embroidery and fine intricate lace." The plain red skirt

matched nothing else in the set in terms of material, hue or adornment, and seemed to be a replacement for the original. But the apron matched the fitted blouse (see photo at right), and both had been made by a professional tailor. “What we have here,” sez I, “is an urban costume.”

A month later, I hit the jackpot: a complete ensemble with the original skirt as well as a fourth piece, a bib-like front panel. The seller listed it as a “Vintage Possible Victorian-Era Russian Folk Costume.” A copy of a photograph was included in the auction, supposedly of the original owner; it indicated that she was a Madame Pasca, a French actress who had performed in Paris and at “the Court of Russia” in St. Petersburg. (“Madame Pasca” was her stage name; she lived from 1835 to 1914 and reached the height of her fame in 1875.) So: possibly a costume used to perform in.

“A very interesting piece,” an anonymous eBay buyer had commented on this listing. “It is not actually a folk costume, but an outfit made by a city woman for use for ‘ethnic’ occasions. It is, as you said, basically a Victorian outfit embellished with folk embroidery and lace. This was very popular among city people in Russia at a particular point in time. Nothing like this was ever worn by a peasant, however.”



Front of tailored Russian blouse



Complete Russian costume from the late 19th century

Alas, in the final 15 seconds of the eBay auction I was outbid for the ensemble (“I found it! I lost it!”), but I printed the listing and saved one photo, thinking, “Well, at least I’ve discovered what it is. Thank you, nameless commenter.”

In November 2009 I found an item from an eBay seller in California who regularly features stunning museum “deaccessions”: “an exquisite blue-green-silk Ottoman costume that dated from the 1920s”, the seller said. It had four pieces: a soft fez-style hat embroidered on top with the cipher (*tura*) of the last Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, Mehmed VI Vahideddin, whose rule ended on November 1, 1922; a bolero-style jacket with slashed sleeves that reminded me of the fashions of 1850s and 1860s Western Europe; what appeared to be a skirt on first glance but was really voluminous harem pants (*_alvar*); and a sash or girdle from which depended many long gold fringes. The original *gömlek* (chemise) was not included. This had to be an urban costume of a rich woman (and a petite one; the jacket doesn’t fit me), most likely living in the capital of the Ottoman Empire, Constantinople (renamed Istanbul in 1930). The owner could even have belonged to the Westernized court of the Sultan—his daughters Princess Fatma Ulviye Sultan, born 1892, and Princess Rukiye Sabiha Sultan, born 1894, are candidates as owners.

As early as 1835, the adopted daughter of a Sultan’s sister



Four-piece Ottoman costume, 1920s.

was wearing a gown “of light green striped with white and edged with a fringe of pink floss silk; while her jacket, which was the product of a Parisian dressmaker, was of dove-coloured satin, thickly wadded and furnished with a deep cape and a pair of immense sleeves, fastened at the wrists with diamond studs” (quoted in *Women’s Costume of the Near and Middle East* by Jennifer Scarce [London: Unwin Hyman, 1987], p. 78).

In addition to heelless slippers, fans, jewellery and cosmetics, such “a costume would not have been complete ... without an appropriately elaborate hairstyle.... adorned usually by an assortment of scarves wound around tasselled caps in many variations and proportions” (Scarce, pp. 78–79).

By the 1870s, Scarce says, Turkish women’s dress was, “at least in the main cities, giving way steadily to more European fashions. This is reflected at various levels in Turkish clothes, ranging from

substituting European garments such as the Parisian jacket [mentioned above] for Turkish garments, careful alteration of existing wardrobes in an effort to bring them up to date, curious amalgams of European shape with Turkish decoration, to sophisticated European clothes either commissioned from Paris by those of sufficient means such as the princesses of the Ottoman court or copied by enterprising Levantine dressmakers in the Pera quarter of Istanbul” (Scarce, p. 81).

Thinking back to the tasselled hat, I spent some time researching Turkish sumptuary laws in case I could discover which women had the right to wear the Sultan’s cipher embroidered on their hats. I never did find out, but something else turned up that disturbed me. I own a book on the Topkapi Museum in Istanbul, which possesses a large costume collection. On p. 11 of *The Topkapi Saray Museum: Costumes, Embroideries and Other Textiles*, which was translated, expanded and edited by J.M. Rogers from the original Turkish by Hülye Tezcan and Selma Deliba_ (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1986), it says, “The collections contain almost 2,500 pieces.... [which]

are virtually all men’s clothing: the clothes of the ladies of the Court and the Harem have nearly all vanished without trace.”



Skirt detail from Ottoman costume

My odd assortment of Russian urban costume pieces is reposing peacefully in my home, giving rise to not so much as a twinge of guilt that they’re inaccessible to the public except through the medium of this webpage. Perhaps I should consider sending “the Istanbul costume” across the Atlantic to where it seems to belong—the Topkapi Museum. Yet I have now provided a trace. Treasures may vanish, but they sometimes reappear.

The Back Page...

Our good wishes go out to Hy Diamond, who is convalescing in St. John's Rehab Hospital following a stroke that he suffered as a result of heart surgery.

Toronto folk dancer Fred Slater proudly reported the success of son Justin, who won the 2010 Adult Singles Division of the World Crokinole Championship and became the youngest champion ever at age 17. *(To see an explanation of Crokinole, and a video of Justin as he realizes that he's just won the championship, go to the "Folk Scene" page at www.ofda.ca)*

An article in the September 6 issue of *The Economist* magazine with the heading "Sexual Selection - The dance moves that make men attractive to women", reports on recent research findings. *(If you want to find out what the research has to contribute to your (folk) dancing pleasure, you can read the entire article online - go to the "Links" page at www.ofda.ca and look for it under the "Interesting Articles" section).*



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Ulla Brenken, long-time Don Heights folk dancer, turns 90 years young on November 4. Congratulations Ulla! One of her favourite dances is Konyali.

Jean McAdam appeared in a TorStar photo on August 27 taking part in an aquafit class at North Toronto Memorial Community Centre. She and the other participants, led by young 74-year-old Robi Roncarelli, seem to be enjoying themselves.



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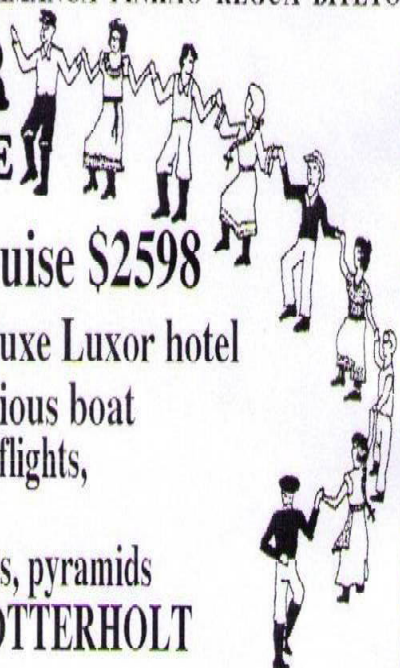
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