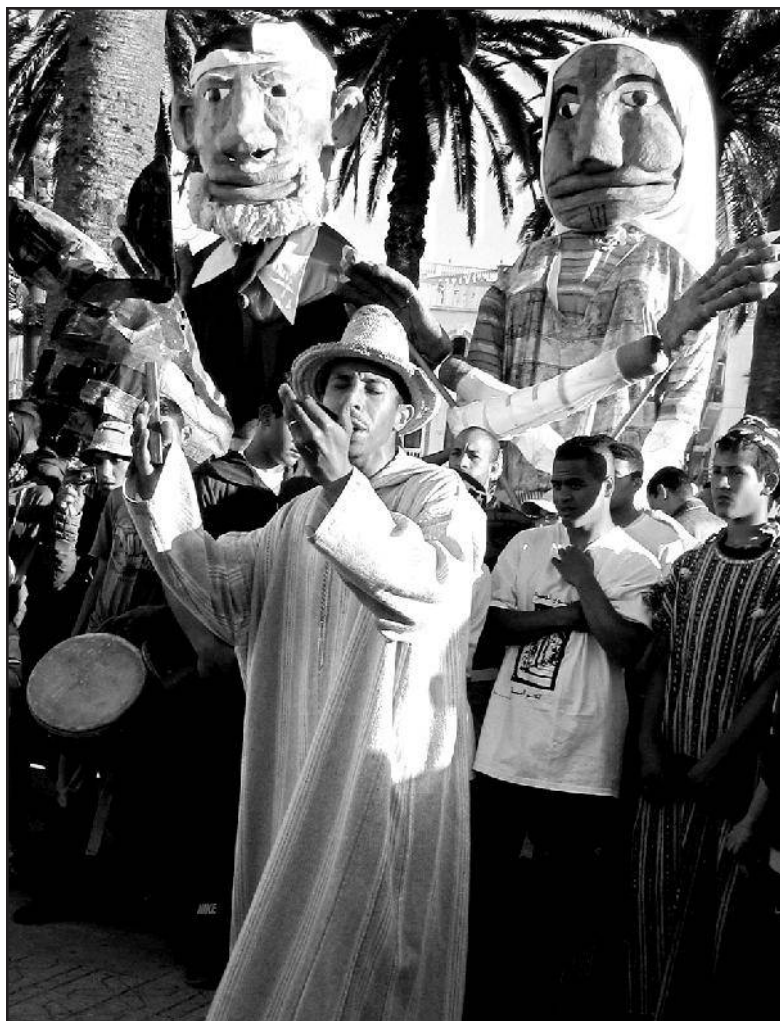


Folk Dancer

The Magazine of World Dance and Culture



*Street theatre with giant puppets (from Tangier) in the festival of Larache.
Photo: Judith Cohen. See article on p. 5.*

PUBLISHED BY THE ONTARIO FOLK DANCE ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 44 NUMBER 5

December 2013

Warming Up – Sounds Like a Plan

by Dorothy Archer

Lately I've been attending rehearsals of a concert band. From 30 minutes before the rehearsal people are arriving and "warming up" with their instrument. Maybe some haven't practised much since the last rehearsal but on the whole it is to get both body and instrument ready for a good session. It makes me think of folk dance sessions where people seldom warm up and yet it is so important for enjoying yourself and protecting your body from injury. Some teachers do a little workout at the beginning of a session but I don't think it is the responsibility of the teacher. It is your responsibility to see you are prepared in body, mind and soul. There are many articles on the internet suggesting exercises for warm ups. However, remember to warm up slowly – do leg swings or heel raises before starting to stretch calf muscles. Fethi Karakeçili recommends working head to toe or toe to head for five to ten minutes and then five minutes of stretching at the end of the session. Yes, warm-ups can be boring. In my case, I started doing warm-ups and then I would forget or I'd arrive when there was a dance on I wanted to do and so I am delinquent. Maybe if a few of us started, we could keep each other company and spread the idea.

English Country Dancers will enjoy the sign above right that Marylyn Peringer and I spotted in Malta in September this year. The photo also shows the narrow streets and a typical Maltese balcony. The buildings in Malta are limestone from local quarries. One quarry no longer used has been converted to a venue for an evening folklore show



Photo: Dorothy Archer

called Limestone Heritage. There was Maltese music, a dance presentation and a buffet of traditional food. Maltese music is described in the guidebook "as a mixture of the Sicilian ballad and the rhythmic wail of an Arabic tune." It sounded far more lively than that to me. The dances were similar to other European couple dances. There was also a display of how men worked the quarry and the tools used.

We took a tour to Marsaxlokk hoping to see the harbour, the much advertised market, and the uniquely decorated fishing boats. Marsaxlokk Bay was used by the Turks to anchor their ships when they fought the Knights of St. John in the 16th century; by Napoleon in 1798 on his way to Egypt; the British during World War II; and in 1989 for a meeting between Gorbachev and Bush Senior. We were disappointed to find that two smaller bays are part of the harbour and we

IN THIS ISSUE

REGULAR

<i>Editorial</i>	.... 3
<i>Our California Correspondent</i>	.... 9
<i>Dance Calendar</i>	.... 11
<i>Dance Classes</i>	.... 14
<i>The Grapevine</i>	.... 26

FEATURES

<i>April in Morocco</i>	.... 5
<i>French Dancing</i>	.... 16
<i>OFDA's Belarus Café</i>	.... 20
<i>Olga & Don Heights Dancers</i>	.... 22
<i>Mainewoods Camp, 2013</i>	.... 24



The OFDA has 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: ontariofolk dancers@gmail.com



Please do let us know about special events!

were on one of them so we didn't get the full view. The fishing boats were tied up so it was difficult to see the graceful lines that have been used since the Phoenicians lived in Malta but we could see their distinctive bright colours and the eyes painted on the bow to ward off evil. The market turned out to be like a flea market but then we came to rows and rows of finely worked tablecloths. It was quite breathtaking but the thought of ironing one made the purchase of a cushion cover more reasonable. Malta's other arts are ceramics, silver filigree, blown glass, and lace making. There are two craft villages, one on the main island and the other on Gozo Island. Tar'Qali, on the main island, is located on an abandoned air force base; hence, many artists are located in quonset huts and you can watch them at work. Visiting them was a feast for the eyes and a challenge to choose the most beautiful items to take home.

As promised, Judith Cohen's fascinating account of her visit to Morocco is featured in this issue. Karen Bennett has written about French dancing in Ontario this summer and fall. Except

for Cambridge, the other events were news to me but not for everyone since some folk dancers attended. Seems I can't keep up with all the events. Am I in the minority? Nancy Nies has been home in Bakersfield again and writes about being entertained at an Irish Christmas pageant including dances for The Day of the Wren, December 26. Patricia Stenton's account of the Belarus café will make you regret you weren't there, and Anita Millman writes about the enjoyment of Mainewoods. Karen also has written an account of the festivities for the 40th anniversary of the Don

Heights Folk Dancers. And don't miss the last page for interesting news. As always there are lots of photos, many taken by our indomitable photographers, Al Katz and Bev Sidney.

In addition to the photos that appear in this magazine, there are many still photos taken by Allen Katz and Beverley Sidney and videos by Leon Balaban on the website. OFDA members are fortunate to have these remembrances of enjoyable times. Thank you Al, Bev and Leon.

Leon Balaban (far left) and Allen Katz in action.



Photos: Bev Sidney



OFDA APPLICATION/RENEWAL FORM

YEARLY MEMBERSHIP INCLUDES SUBSCRIPTION TO THE *Folk Dancer* MAGAZINE

- ☐ Single \$24 Can/US funds – for all Canadian/US/Overseas
☐ Family \$30 * *Family consists of 2 adults & all children under 18*

NAME (Please Print) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ PROV/STATE _____ POSTAL CODE _____

COUNTRY _____ PHONE () _____

GROUP/AFFILIATION _____

☐ I wish to receive e-mail notices e-mail address: _____

Electronic payment can be made by e-mail transfer to ontariofolkdancers@gmail.com

April in Morocco

by Judith Cohen

Mid-April usually finds me ensconced in Aroma or Green Beanery on Bloor [Toronto], with a serious macchiato and a stack of final term papers to grade, perversely pleased that it is dreary outside, since there would be no time to enjoy fine weather in any case. But this April [2013] – after a final week of classes and a few nights’ worth of grading marathons – found me on the other side of the “pond,” in northwestern Morocco, sipping hot, sweet mint tea or freshly squeezed orange juice, in the lively little outdoor marketplace, the “Zoco Chico” or “little square” of the lovely, if somewhat dilapidated, old town of Larache.

In early January I’d received a rather laconic e-mail, in Spanish, from a Moroccan man who said he’d come across one of my CDs in Spain and would like to invite me to sing Moroccan Sephardic songs in the festival of the Zoco Chico in April, and also work with a local traditional (Muslim) women’s ensemble. This seemed a delightful, but unlikely prospect, among other reasons as there seemed to be no travel funding available, but I replied politely, saying that had it only been possible, I’d have been delighted. And so, Mohamed Laabi proceeded to make it possible. After exhausting other possibilities, at my not-very-convinced suggestion, he tried the Canadian Embassy in Rabat. My long experience with Canadian embassies abroad is that they are very friendly and will happily help publicize a Canadian’s cultural event and send a couple of people to it – but don’t actually fund anything. To my surprise, this time they decided they could manage my airfare, and wrote to me (in French) asking whether I would do a concert for the Embassy and another in the only remaining Jewish high school in Morocco.

During our increasingly active e-mail exchange, it became clear that Mohamed had thought I must myself be Sephardic, and from Larache; otherwise, why would I be singing old narrative ballads from there? I explained that in fact I was Ashkenazi, my grandparents had been from the Baltics – Lithuania and Latvia – and I was born and

raised in Canada, but that my doctoral research had focused on Moroccan (and some Greek and Turkish) Sephardic music, and that several elderly women from Larache had emigrated to Montreal. He remembered the community leaving during the second half of the 20th century, but hadn’t connected it with me – not surprising, since he’d seen my CD in one of the stores in an “ancient Jewish quarter” of a Spanish Andalusian town.

Mohamed also asked, rather hesitantly, whether I would be willing to stay in the small house he and his wife Fatima Zohra were slowly renovating in the old Jewish quarter, the *mella*, of Larache – their main



Photo: Judith Cohen

My street in Larache in the old Jewish quarter (mella). No cars can go through; the street, like many in Larache’s old town, is composed of steep, sometimes half-broken, uneven steps.

place was in Tangier, he explained, where they are both Spanish teachers, but as all the activities would be in Larache and there were no classes that week, it would be better to stay in Larache. He added that the house was a small, simple, very basic one but that they would love to have me there and be considered family. I replied that it would be an honour, as indeed it was. For my concert in Rabat, the Embassy put me up in a pleasant little hotel, a short walk from the old quarter, and I stayed a night after the high school concert in Casablanca with my friend and colleague, singer and ethnomusicologist Vanessa Paloma, who is married to someone in the remaining Jewish community there.

Both concerts, the Embassy one and the high school one, focused on Moroccan Sephardic music, at their request, but for the Embassy I also added a couple of French-Canadian and First Nations songs (with spoons and clogging), a Yiddish one to represent my family, and also the only Arabic song I can sing with acceptable pronunciation. The husband of the Ambassador – a delightful woman from Alberta – asked me whether I could sing a song from Bosnia, where he is from. He didn't expect me to immediately launch into a beautiful old *sevdalinka*! He was quite astonished, and said it was the kind of

song his grandmother sang. For the school concert, I invited the students to add ululations for the Moroccan Sephardic wedding songs, and, as it turned out there was a sizeable number of Muslim students, so at their request I did the Arabic song as well.

For the rest of the two weeks, Larache was my home. Everyone knew I was staying with Mohamed and Fatima Zohra, who are well-known and much loved in the town, and I was welcome everywhere. We spent a day in Tangier – standing at the top of the old walls, I texted my daughter Tamar, who was completing a three-month flamenco stint in Seville across the Strait of Gibraltar. “Hey,” my SMS [short message service] said, “I’m looking toward Seville – go up the Giralda tower, look south and wave at me.” She texted back, “Don’t you see me waving?”

I also spent a day in nearby Ksar-el-Kebir, also home to a now-disappeared Jewish community. There I looked for, and easily found, a Muslim family I’d met by chance 21 years earlier, when the youngest child of the family, a bright-eyed little girl called



Three of the frame drums I bought in Larache; they are actually from the south of Morocco, near Marrakech. The women's designs are a relatively recent trend; traditionally the drums are unadorned, and these days are likely to have plastic heads.

Folk Dancer



The last frame drum I found, making its debut at OFDA/IFDC's International Dance Day in April 2013 as I filled in for an absent drummer in Irene Markoff's Balkan band, shortly after I returned from Morocco.

Photos: Judith Cohen

Meryam, came up to me on the narrow, lively little medina street, asked who I was, and took me to her mother. Meryam now has three small, bright-eyed children of her own, and I spent an enchanted day with the family. Meryam's talented niece painted intricate henna designs on my hands – as I type, over a month later, only my fingernails retain traces of henna.



Meanwhile, the week-long festival of the Zoco Chico went on every evening – poetry (in Arabic) evenings, Andalusian and Sufi music groups, street theatre with giant dancing puppets... One night when there was no concert we were walking back from the Zoco Chico – still lively at 11 p.m. – to the steep, uneven stone stairs which constitute the street our house was on, and there was a wedding henna party, women only, going on in a ground-level room at the top of the street. Mohamed requested permission for me to go in, and they said, “Sure, come on in”, and even gave me permission to film. The only men were a few male musicians playing shawms and hand percussion; they came in a few times to play a set, and some of the younger women danced in the back of the room. The bride, heavily veiled, sat immobile on a specially prepared low dais, as her sister painted her hands with henna... and they invited me to come back the next evening for, they said, “the big party – you’ll see, we’ll wear our REALLY special kaftans.” Indeed, for that evening, Fatima Zohra loaned me one of her dress-up kaftans to wear, and my recently henna’d hands were much admired.

Most afternoons, I worked with the women’s group Mohamed had told me about. “Lalla Menanna” is named for the 16th-century woman patron saint (Muslim) of Larache. Its nine members are all very young – between 13 and 23 – and are directed

by Zahrâa Al-Bouanâni, herself only a little over 30. She is a highly accomplished singer and hand percussion player, and since January has taught them an impressive repertoire. The idea was for me to re-inject some of the old Sephardic songs of the town into its musical texture. I chose lively wedding songs whose rhythms are typical of the area, and, as well, a song which mirrors a Moroccan Muslim practice of visiting the graves of revered religious leaders – in the Sephardic song, it is the graves of revered rabbis. Each town has one or more people – usually, but not always, men – associated with it. Zahrâa does not consider herself an *oud* player, but in fact she plays it well, and I persuaded her to accompany me for a couple of the songs, rather than ask one of the town’s male *oud* players to do so – this way, we kept the entire concert a women’s performance. I began the evening, with the first Sephardic song I ever collected in fieldwork, a narrative ballad from Larache itself, some anecdotes (I used French, the second official language of the



Photo: Judith Cohen

The bride at her henna evening. She remained veiled all evening, but her face was visible at the party the next night.

evening after Arabic) of my work with Sephardic women from the town, and a number of other related songs. Then Lalla Menanna and I did our joint set, and they finished the evening – and the festival – with an impressive set of the Sufi *hadra* songs they had worked on since January. The concert was dedicated to André Azoulay, a highly respected Jewish elder from the town of Eassouaira, who is a senior adviser to none other than the King of Morocco. To complete the goal of mutual respect among religions, this final concert of the festival was held in the town's remaining (Spanish) Catholic church.

I suppose I should mention that this two-week idyll – for an idyll it was – was slightly interrupted most nights, alone in my little room, when my hosts were sleeping, by incursions into reality – grading the term papers that even my long marathon before the trip had not managed to deal with. If not for this modest dose of reality, I might have forgotten altogether that I was not living in a fabulous tale from the Thousand and One Nights. I had been to Morocco several times, first as a clueless hippie type back in 1972, and then several times over the years to carry out fieldwork with the ever-dwindling Sephardic community. But I

had never stayed so long in a small town, and never with a local Muslim family, interacting with everyone on a daily basis. It was not only thoroughly enjoyable and endlessly fascinating; it was a real privilege to be invited and welcomed, and to be able to contribute my small offering, through music and friendship, to the slow but, I hope, steady progress toward peace.

Coda

A few years ago, I wrote in the *Folk Dancer* [September 2009 issue, p. 9] about my cellphone ring tone, Sedi Donka, and how a group of women in northeastern Spain who had just taken my dance workshop asked me to share it with them, so we all sat on the floor and Bluetoothed Sedi Donka back and forth till everyone had it. Just before I left Morocco, Mohamed and Fatima heard my phone ring and both immediately asked me to put the same tune on their phones. Soon after I returned to Toronto, they wrote me saying they miss me and often sit side by side phoning each other just to hear the ringtone and reminisce about our time together – a Moroccan Muslim couple listening to a Bulgarian dance tune ringtone to remind them of their Canadian Jewish friend.



Photo: by Judith Cohen

Local Gnawa musicians asked to play for the end of the festival, at the top of my street, as I was walking to give my concert.

La an Dreoilín, the Day of the Wren

by Nancy Nies

In December 2012, at our historic Fox theatre here in Bakersfield, Paul and I were treated to “An Irish Christmas,” a rousing evening of Irish music, song, dance and storytelling performed by the Kerry Dance Troupe. Along with carols and impressive step-dancing—some performers were alumni of “Riverdance”—there were numbers involving Irish myths and customs. We were especially intrigued by dances depicting the Day of the Wren, December 26.

The origins of this Irish national holiday—also known as Boxing Day and St. Stephen’s Day—appear to date to the pre-Christian era. The wren was sacred to the Druids, and the Irish word for the bird is Dreoilín (Druid’s bird). In midwinter, the ancient Celts sacrificed the bird, as the wren represented the old year and the robin, the new. In more recent centuries, a group of costumed boys would hunt for a wren, go from house to house asking for money to bury it, and use the proceeds to put on a village dance. Observance of Wren Day had nearly died out in the 1990s, but is now being revived.

An example of this revival is the town of Dingle, in County Kerry. The “Wrenboys,” dressed in straw suits or brightly-coloured clothing, are out parading in the streets by 6 a.m., accompanied by musicians playing lively traditional music on the accordion and tin whistle. At midday, children go door-to-door, in costume, collecting candy. By

mid-afternoon, costumed adults retire to the pubs to celebrate into the night with music and dancing. To watch a three-minute video of the West Clare Wrenboys celebrating Wren Day 1979, go to youtube .com/watch?v=4WvhPtiaRW4.



Photo: Wikimedia Commons

Parade of straw-clad “Wrenboys” on the Day of the Wren in Dingle, County Kerry, Ireland, late 20th century.



The OFDA wishes to acknowledge Olga Sandolowich and Carole & Nate Greenberg for donations in memory of Denis Bowman, and to Olga Sandolowich for her donation in memory of Maurice Strauss.



And thank you to Carl Toushan for his recent donation to OFDA.

French Dancing, In and Out of Bal Folk Style

by Karen Bennett

On the August long weekend In 2012, the Toronto-Hamilton band called *Bourrée à Trois* first played the Mill Race Festival in Cambridge, Ontario (see article in October 2012 issue). The band was called “à Trois” as a double play on words: It had three members – Andrea Haddad, Sandra Spencer and Robin Aggus – and in its repertoire was the “*Bourrée à trois temps*” from central France. I was unable to dance with *Bourrée à Trois* in 2012 as I was out of town, but in 2013 Andrea asked me if I could not only get a performance group together but lead/teach a Bal Folk – about which, more in a moment – as she’d pitched to the Mill Race organizers the notion of *showing and teaching* the dances that went with the music the band was playing, and the idea had been approved. (What had not been approved was a budget to properly support this activity.)

As an aside, I’d worked with Andrea and Sandra to present French dance around Ontario since at least 1998. At that point, Andrea and Sandra had called themselves *Bourrée à Deux*. (There is also a “*Bourrée à deux temps*” rhythm in central France. Pretty good with monikers, is Andrea.)

Run by the all-volunteer Mill Race Folk Society (www.millracefolksociety.com), the Mill Race Festival of Traditional Folk Music festival has been going since 1993 but is still under the radar for most international folk dancers, in part because there’s so little dancing. The festival is held about an hour’s driving west of Toronto, in the charming downtown core of the former city of Galt, now part of Cambridge. Galt was founded in the 19th century as a Scottish community, as the numerous Presbyterian churches attest.

Andrea Haddad and Sandra Spencer of Toronto play the thousand-year-old instrument we call the hurdy-gurdy (the French term is *vielle à roue*), while Robin Aggus of Hamilton plays the traditional French bagpipe (cabrette). They also do excursions on button accordion, flute and saxophone. Guitar and percussion player Brandon Besharah, who swells the number of musicians in the ensemble to four when he’s available, was unexpectedly *not* available for Mill Race owing to

a family emergency. But Yann Falquet, a member of the Quebec folk group Genticorum (www.genticorum.com), kindly filled in for Brandon when approached by Andrea, an old friend. (The other members of Genticorum are Alexandre de Grosbois-Garand and Pascal Gemme.) I first encountered Genticorum at the festival Chants de vieilles in Calixa Lavallée, Quebec, many years ago, and I’m a great admirer.

The one dancer who regularly works with Andrea is me. If I need other dancers, I call on friends or put out appeals. To accompany me at Mill Race, I asked an international folk dancer friend, Cornelia Nita; a volunteer was Marilyn Baxter, a friend of Robin Aggus’s who dances with an Irish group in Hamilton run by Maureen Mulvey-O’Leary (and also plays the tin whistle); and the product of an appeal was



Bourrée à Trois, in a photo taken considerably in advance of Mill Race (note snow on ground) and provided to the festival for publicity purposes: Andrea Haddad with hurdy-gurdy, Robin Aggus with bagpipe, and Sandra Spencer with hurdy-gurdy.

Brad Peterson, who dances with the Guelph contra group Relative Harmony, run by Rick Avery and Judy Greenhill. I now had three women and one man, so I had to learn how to lead – couple dances done in ballroom position, such as waltzes and schottisches, require a leader – in a hurry. I started training myself by observing good male leaders in YouTube videos. With the aid of Andrea, I was able to give Cornelia and Marilyn one lesson in advance of Mill Race. But Brad, who lived in Guelph, was not available for our rehearsal, so on Saturday 3 August I snatched some time to teach him, about four hours before our first performance at 6 p.m. What we presented was dictated by (a) what melodies Bourrée à Trois already knew, and (b) the size of the surfaces we'd be dancing on in Cambridge. (The *quality* of the dance surface was soon to play an additional role.)

Our very first performance was impromptu. At 3 o'clock, Genticorum and Bourrée à Trois had a joint gig in the basement of the Naval Vets Hall. It was very small and very crowded and very hot, so I sat on the stairs to listen. Near the end of the set, Andrea announced that they would play the Breton dance An Dro, and inquired whether I was in the room. I propelled myself down the steps and soon found myself at the head of a line of about five people (one of them a woman from the audience who appeared delighted to join us; I'll have more to say about her later), leading a simple An Dro (meaning, no slow walking part or combination with Hanter Dro) in just the sort of tiny space that it would have been originally done in Brittany.

For our performance at 6 p.m., we donned costumes from the central French province of Berry. Parts of the ensemble had been bought from the folklore group Les Gâs du Berry by Andrea when she was in France in July; the rest of it had been completed by me. (Les Gâs du Berry – which means "The Boys from Berry" – had also offered Andrea something she declined: *culottes fendue*, which are women's underwear designed for easy peeing!) The Mill Race venue we then discovered we were to dance in gave us an "uh-oh" moment: rough flagstones in a location called the Amphitheatre (originally a mill), which overlooked the Grand River. Nothing in this musical set, lasting half an hour, happened to be a line dance from Brittany; everything was a turning dance, done

on a rough and uneven and completely unyielding surface. It was quite the challenge, but nobody fell and it appeared that no injuries were sustained.

At 8 p.m., it was time for me to shine at the three-hour-long Bal Folk, which is a term whose meaning is easy to infer by folk dancers who've had some exposure to ballroom dancing. Bal Folk is popular social dancing from Western Europe that's a recent revival of traditional, mostly French, folk dances. It's popular not only in Europe but increasingly in North America.

Cornelia, Marilyn and Brad were with me, out of costume and, as it turned out, underdressed for the cold wind that was blowing off the river. (We had progressed some dozens of metres downriver, from the Amphitheatre to the far end of a parking lot that had been covered by a tent.) The wind could be countered by dancing hard, but it was more of a challenge to prevail against the sloping, cracked asphalt of the parking lot, a surface that is also not conducive to turning dances. However, we could do circle and line dances as well to give our abused knees and ankles a break, and it turned into a great, high-energy evening. Lots of mothers and daughters and other people of all ages and ethnicities showed up, as did a man and woman who'd had plenty of dance



Photo: Karen Bennett

Genticorum plays a separate gig at Mill Race, August 4, 2013. Yann Falquet, who helped out Bourrée à Trois when we needed him, is on the left.

experience, it was clear, because they took to the Bourrée à deux temps (my favourite dance) and the polka like nobody's business. But the icing on the cake for me was that woman with the delighted face who'd joined us at the 3 p.m. gig, because when I sat down and talked with her (the band was taking a break), I discovered that she was a French immigrant who'd been born in the same city in eastern France – Metz – where I'd lived with my family in the mid-1960s. She was married to an English Canadian. We talked in English; my French is not fluent enough to conduct an entire social conversation. In the excitement of what felt like a reunion with an old friend (yet a friend I'd never met and may never see again), I forgot to ask where she'd learned dances from Brittany. A dance I taught at the Bal Folk that was unfamiliar to her and that she loved was the mixer La Chapelloise (it did not originate in France but has been done there for about a century).

Yes, some festival-goers were following us around from venue to venue. We had fans! And the mothers and daughters showed up on Sunday 4 August at 6 p.m. (this time, we were dancing on cement) and asked us to autograph their program! One mother asked me if I taught, and I had to say that I wasn't local and didn't have my own class anyway, which was a disappointment, I could see.

Dancing on asphalt or cement is only a small step up from dancing on Velcro, but it's still safer than on the flagstones in the Amphitheatre, where, for the Sunday 3 p.m. half-hour performance, Robin suggested that we not dance at all. However, I did get up for the Israeli dance Zemer Atik, played by the band that preceded us, The Light of East Ensemble (www.lightofeastensemble.com), but they terminated the music before we got well into the dance (first I had to persuade people to get up with me, 'cause I sure wasn't doing it alone and besides, it's *not a solo*). The Light of East hadn't seen us dancing on the side, the leader later apologized to us. The band was doing a set of what they called Eastern European Music; I recognized a Yiddish tune as well as Erev Shel Shoshanim and could have improvised something to the music from Moldavia, Turkey and Greece had I not been so wary of those flagstones. But we couldn't risk injuring more dancers; our strength was down 50% as it was (Marilyn couldn't dance without a

partner: Brad had suffered a bruised foot on Saturday), and we still had a 45-minute set to do later that day, so our musicians played without us. Oh, and Cornelia wrecked the heel on a pair of shoes, but fortunately she had a backup pair, because it was just her and me for that long set at 6, done in a tent with huge supporting poles, set at quite an angle, in front of the music stage. We danced on the side, because another thing I didn't want to risk was hitting a tentpole while spinning.

Earlier I mentioned that, over the course of the weekend, there was not much dancing at the Mill Race. Five Morris sides had two hours in total, and I've yet to observe that Morris dancing allows for audience participation. A young woman in a flamenco costume briefly shared a washroom with us; I later saw her do belly dancing for The Light of East on a stage that was just large enough for her and the band. The rest of the tent was filled with chairs for the spectators and had no room for dancing by the audience, even had the musicians been expecting us to get up. (Aside: The Light of East, which has performed on the CBC many times and twice before at Mill Race, is terrific. Their violinist in particular is a virtuoso-level player.)

At various venues and on the streets I spotted or encountered international folk dancers, including Judy Bourke, Roz Katz, Gary McIntosh and Gloria Mostyn.

There was lots more French dancing for me last summer. A Dutch band called Té (www.temusic.nl) arrived on tour, and one of its specialties is playing for Bal Folk. When it's at home, Té has three members, but when it's in Canada it has four, because Emilyn Stam (www.emilynstam.com) plays fiddle for it. (Emilyn is also a member of the Lemon Bucket Orchestra.) In addition to playing at a festival outside Toronto on the same long weekend that Bourrée à Trois was in Cambridge, Té did many events inside Toronto in July. At their music and dance workshop and concert on July 27, I ran into musician Jan Hogg (formerly a member of Kevin Budd's now-defunct band), whom I'd not seen for many years. The dances (taught by Té members) were for beginners, and included Cercle Circassien (Circassian Circle), La Chapelloise (they called it a Gigue, which is the tempo), and An Dro.

I saw Té at one more event before they returned to Europe: at a regular "Balfolk Toronto" evening on

a Monday in early August at El Cafecito's Espresso Bar (Bloor/Dovercourt area). Lemon Bucket is the usual host of Balfolk Toronto (musicians are invited to come learn tunes anytime after 7 p.m., and dancing begins around 8), and with the addition of the Té musicians, the night was rockin'. However, the same dances were taught as on July 27, plus easy versions of a waltz, mazurka and schottische, so I learned nothing new. I was able to go once more (and guess which dances were taught), but with the addition of a Rond and of An Dro Retourné. Tangi Ropars, who is from Brittany and plays accordion for Lemon Bucket, did some of the teaching, and Emilyn did the rest. For a little variety, I asked for a Laridé à huit temps and a Gavotte des Montagnes (both from Brittany), and got them. Also in attendance at Monday nights in August were Fred Slater, Lisa Marie Krause and Raul Selberg, the Swedish teacher from the March 2012 OFDA café. Many young Ukrainian dancers habitually attended. It's a pity that just as I was learning people's names (Hi, Fernán! Hi, Ellen!) and the group started to feel like a family, I had to stop going as my work hours changed from days to evenings, and the only Monday nights I had off were statutory holidays, when there was usually no dancing.

Andrea attended Balfolk Toronto on Monday 24 September, and reported, "There were about 20 people there including the musicians: a couple of

fiddles, accordion, guitar, cello and a great clarinet. And me. The musicians arrived ... around 7:30 and played a bit. I taught them a few tunes. Then the dancers started coming. It was in full swing by 9 and we went till 11."

Sunday 29 September was "Not Just Your Average Balfolk Night" at the Monarch Tavern and included the three-member Montage dance band (montagedanceband.com) from Buffalo/Rochester. Montage also plays contras and has a teacher, Werner Ceusters, attached for Bal Folk, and has often appeared at The Flurry festival in Saratoga Springs, New York. (Fred Slater wrote about The Flurry for the October 2012 issue.) In 2013, Montage took part in French dance events in Buffalo on February 8, April 26 and November 2. Including the Lemon Bucket Orchestra, it's one of three local (i.e., Greater Toronto-Hamilton Area/Buffalo) bands capable of playing Bal Folk/Fest Noz (the Breton name for the same kind of event). Andrea and I have talked to Montage accordionist Rachel Bell, who would love to do a joint event with us sometime, and we'd like it as well.

In early October, Balfolk Toronto lost the El Cafecito location, and there was a temporary hiatus until new space was found: the Hogtown Cure Deli and Café at 1484 Dundas W. (at Dufferin). I haven't been to the new location. Dancing starts around 8 and goes till 10:30 or 11; admission is "pay what you can." A problem with Balfolk Toronto is inadequate publicity; it has a Facebook page (www.facebook.com/balfolktoronto) that is not updated frequently or much in advance of events, and neither is Emilyn Stam's website. So if Balfolk Toronto is cancelled due to, say, not enough musicians available (as it was, once), participants may not find out until they show up at the venue.

To return to the month of August for a moment: Before the Sunday-at-6 set at the Mill Race festival, Andrea was asked by a fan how many of us were French. The answer? None. So why were we interested? Why were we playing French music, singing French songs, performing French dances? Andrea had a reply that can't be bettered: "Because we hold France in our hearts."



Andrea, me, Cornelia, and Sandra on 4 August, with the walls of a now-defunct mill and the Grand River behind us.

Photo: Andrea Haddad

OFDA's Belarus Dance Café

A Great Start to a New Season of Folk Dancing

by Patricia Stenton



OFDA got its 2013–14 season off to a great start with a very entertaining Belarus Dance Café on October 5.

As usual, the evening began with some international dancing. Our potluck that night was particularly colourful, with tasty contributions from everyone. Prominently featured were traditional Belarusian dishes prepared by members of the folk group “Javarovy Ludzi” (“Maple Folk”), who were our guests and teachers for this café. We enjoyed eggs stuffed with mushrooms, traditional potato pancakes called “Draniki,” “Babka” (a baked potato pie), plus a typical apple cake from Belarus.

After such tasty treats, Violetta Kovaleva, the artistic director of Javarovy Ludzi, introduced us to Belarus and its folk dance traditions. We learned that the country is essentially a low plain surrounded by several other, mostly Slavic, countries. This geographical situation has allowed a great diversity of ethnic influences to shape the Belarus culture. This became especially evident when Violetta’s ensemble presented a colourful medley of nine traditional dances, most of which could be traced back to various ethnic origins such as Bohemian, Polish, Jewish, Russian and even Spanish.

The folk group’s teacher, Alexandra Salenik, then taught us the following four dances:

—**Polka Matilok** (“Polka Butterfly”; a.k.a. “the heel and toe dance”), the most popular of Belarusian dances, of Bohemian origin;

—**Padespan** (Pas d’Espan), choreographed by a member of the Bolshoi Theatre in Russia who incorporated Spanish elements into the dance;

—**Bazaar**, a dance featuring Jewish elements; and

—**Oyra**, a fun mixer well known to Belarusians as well as to the people of Latvia and Lithuania.

We also joined Javarovy Ludzi in a dance game in which a lonely dancer in the middle of the circle has to try to find a partner. The live accordion and drum music provided by Violetta and Igor Filyushkin made this game a lot of fun.

The folk group then joined us in some international dancing. Inspired by the joyful atmosphere of the evening, they even spontaneously taught us a couple more simple dances, to the delight of all.

Great people! Delicious food! Lots of fun learning and dancing! Thank you, OFDA, for an enjoyable dance café!

[Aside from the Editor (KB): The group invited us to join them at rehearsals. Violetta Kovaleva later said in an e-mail, “We are rehearsing at the Belarusian Community Centre. The address is 524 St. Clarendon Ave., Toronto, ON, M6H 3W7. We are there every Wednesday, 6–9 p.m. Usually the first half of the rehearsal is singing (Belarusian folk songs); the second half is dancing. Everyone is welcome to join! If the visitors are interested in dancing only, I would suggest that they come at approximately 7:30 p.m. It is always better if people who would like to come to our rehearsal write to me to this email (vkovaleva@hotmail.com) or call me at 416-503-9527 first.”]



Javarovy Ludzi, introducing us to Belarus and its folk dance traditions.

Photo: Bev Sidney

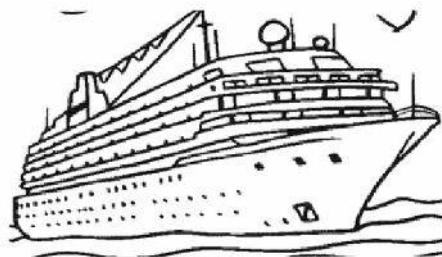
In 2014, Yves and France Moreau invite you to join them on
TWO more exciting Folk Dance Cruises

January 25 to February 8, 2014
14-night Exotic Cruise to the Southern Caribbean

with special guest teachers
Cristian Florescu and Sonia Dion (Romanian Dances)
on board the luxurious *Celebrity Eclipse*

Ports of Call: Departing and returning Fort Lauderdale. Oranjestad (Aruba);
Willemstad (Curacao); St. George's (Grenada); Bridgetown (Barbados); Castries (St. Lucia);
St. John's (Antigua); Philipsburg (St. Maarten); Charlotte Amalie (U.S. Virgin Islands).
including 5 days at sea!

Daily dance classes and parties with Yves, France, Cristian and Sonia
Cruise-only rates starting at USD 2399. (dbl occupancy)
Limited to 40 participants



November 15-27, 2014
12-night New Zealand and Australia Cruise

with **Yves and France** teaching Balkan & International Dances
on board the luxurious *Celebrity Solstice*

Ports of Call: Departing Auckland (New Zealand); Bay of Islands (NZ); Tauranga (NZ);
Wellington (NZ); Akaroa (NZ); Dunedin (NZ); Dusky Sound (NZ); Doubtful Sound (NZ);
Milford Sound (NZ); Hobart, Tasmania (Australia); disembarking in Sydney (Australia).
including 4 days at sea!

Discover New Zealand's majestic beauty and Maori culture.
Daily dance classes and parties with Yves and France
Cruise-only rates starting at USD 1874. (dbl occupancy)
Limited to 40 participants

Don't wait too long to register. Send in your deposit now!

All details to be found at: **www.folkdancecruise.com**

E-mail: info@bourque-moreau.com • Phone: (450) 659-9271

Olga and Don Heights Folk Dancers, 1973–2013

by Karen Bennett

Photo: Bev Sidney



The Banbury Community Centre in North Toronto, where Olga Sandolowich's Don Heights recreational group has been meeting on Thursdays for many years, was the site for the 40th anniversary of the group, whose name derives from its first meeting place, the Don Heights Unitarian Church (long since demolished).

Over 100 dancers, many of whom I hadn't set eyes on for years (Jack Geddes! Janet Hart! Al and Karen Garcia! Sandy Whitehouse [John Macdonald's mother]!), ingathered from as far away as Kitchener on the afternoon of Sunday, October 20 to help Olga celebrate. Ably DJing were Judy Silver and Sandy Starkman, as they have for past Don Heights anniversaries; Stefania Miller was unable to be present as DJ due to a medical emergency of a friend's husband. It wasn't always easy to dance because it meant tearing ourselves away from conversations with so many beloved people, but as Olga said, the dancing wasn't the important thing; it was the opportunity to socialize within a community of like-minded friends. (The one thing I wished for was that a few more of the attendees were under 30—or even 40.)

Folk Dancer

Performing three dances for our delectation, in gorgeous Mariovo costumes, were the Selyani Macedonian Folklore Group, led by Jim and Dena Nicoloff—whom Olga first met when they were 12, or something like that. Then we were invited to join in two easy participation dances: a Pravo and Devetorka.

Asked, several times, why I wasn't in costume too, I replied that the only Macedonian costume I owned was also from Mariovo, and I didn't want to take any attention away from where

it should be: on Selyani—and on Olga, who was wearing something delightful from Central America. (Oh, and Mariovo was too hot and heavy to wear for three-or-so hours!)

Lavish refreshments, including a large chocolate cake by the Harbord Bakery, were heartily partaken of. (Ask me how much I love lemon poppyseed cake. Yum.)

Another presentation was of a different heart-warming sort: a quilt, hand-made by the Hamilton group, whose motifs (including hearts; birds; the stitches representing all the steps taken in all the dances) were explained by quilt designers Joan Tressel and Helena Adamczyk. Joan's 14-year-old granddaughter had done some of the work as well. All present at the celebration were invited to inscribe big paper hearts that would later be sewn onto the quilt.

It was a crisp, classic Toronto fall day outside but an even more beautiful and memorable day inside. As Olga also said, "Let's do it again—maybe in five years, not 10."

Whittamore's Your Farm in the City!



FUN FARM YARD

- Wagon Rides
- Farm Animals
- Farm Bouncer
- Tree Fort
- Giant Slide
- Horse Swings
- Playhouses
- Climbers & more!



PICK-YOUR-OWN

- Strawberries
- Raspberries
- Green Peas
- Snow Peas
- Sugar Snap Peas
- Green & Yellow Beans
- New Potatoes
- Tomatoes & more!



FARM-SHOP

- Fresh Produce
- Baked Goods
- Preserves

Book your
**Barnyard
Birthday Bash**
online today!



8100 Steeles Ave. E., Markham, ON | WhittamoresFarm.com | 905.294.3275

HARBORD BAKERY

115 Harbord Street
922-5767



View more photos of Dance Events at
www.ofda.ca/photos.html

Folk Dancer

SOCIETY OF FOLK DANCE HISTORIANS
transforming information into movement
since 1987

Archiving and disseminating the history
and practice of international folk dancing

Publishing each year (free to members):

Folk Dance Phone Book & Group Directory

Folk Dance Problem Solver

Report to Members

Contact us:

SFDH

2100 Rio Grande St

Austin TX 78705

sfdh@yahoo.com

SFDH.org



Mainewoods Dance Camp August 18–24, 2013

by Anita Millman

Have you ever wanted to stop time? This is what we wanted to do during this year's session one at Mainewoods Dance Camp. The teachers – Jaap Leegwater (Bulgarian), Danny Pollock (Israeli) and the lovely Lucia Cordeiro (Brazilian) – made sure the week was filled with learning fun dances. George Fogg (English) and Riki Adivi (Beginners) added to the program by providing workshops for interested dancers.

Every day of the week was filled with ethnic themes and activities, dances, music and food. Waking up to Hawaiian music on Monday, we knew our exciting week had started. The dance workshops took place in the mornings. The afternoons were dedicated to preparing for our cultural days, additional workshops, culture corner and helping in the kitchen with food preparation. Other activities included relaxing with Qui Gong, practising with the musicians and decorating the dance hall for the evening parties. If these were too strenuous you could simply socialize, have a swim in the pool or the Saco River or put up your feet to be ready for the evening parties. Instrumental to our well-being was the delicious food, planned and often even prepared by Riki and Stav Adivi from Toronto.

We were lucky to have two members of the Pinewoods Band (Barbara Pixton and Julia Poirier), who attracted other instrumentalists, including Jaap on his flute, to form a great band. They provided us with delightful live music during our request and review program in the evening.

This session's customary "Binge Night" set a new camp record for the latest ending time (3:17 a.m.) and the most "survivors" (20 dancers), amongst them five (out of 16) enduring Canadians. The auction raised over \$1,300 (US) for the scholarship fund, with Ping's 18-pound Hawaiian honeybear bringing in a bid of \$275. Participants contributed their

various talents during Friday's talent show, to the enjoyment of the audience.

Friday evening ended with a tasty smorgasbord supper followed by an energetic dance party and the traditional camp closing dance, the Kanonwalzer.

Time could not be stopped, but there will be other camps to enjoy, to learn new dances and to meet up with old and new friends.



Photo: Anita Millman

At left, Ping Chun prepares to release a Thai fire balloon on Brazilian Carnival day, and below Carnival-costumed campers follow the balloon on its ascent.



Photo: Bev Sidney



The Canadian presence at Mainewoods Week 1, 2013. Missing from photo are Thelma Feldman and Lynn Whelan.



DANCE ON THE WATER 2014 CRUISES

**JUNE 20 – JULY 5: SLOVENIA, CROATIA,
and the ADRIATIC COAST**

See Ljubljana, Bled, Opatija, Split, Korcula, Trogir, Brac, Omis & Dubrovnik.

Explore the Postojna Caves, Plitvice Lakes and Mljet Nat'l Parks,
swim in the splendid Adriatic Sea, and meet history!

Dancing led by Marija Hillis, a native of Slovenia!

(from \$3198_dbl occ + air)

OCT 5 – 16: MADRID, MOORISH SPAIN and PORTUGAL

Tour Madrid, Toledo, Sevilla, Granada, Faro, Cadiz and Jerez.

Visit a bull ranch, see an equestrian show & experience the Alhambra!

Optional trip to Gibraltar and extension to Barcelona

(from \$3198_cbl occ + air)

For more information and enrollment forms:

Email: folkdanceonthewater@gmail.com

Website: www.folkdanceonthewater.org

A joint production of Mel Mann and new owners David & Marija Hillis

\$150 DISCOUNT for enrollments received by December 31st



The Grapevine

The teachers for the 2014 Ontario Folk Dance Camp in Waterloo have been announced: Lucia Cordeiro (a great hit at Stockton and Mainwoods 2013 camps) for Brazilian, Sheila Scott for Scottish and English, and Demetri Tashie for Greek. There will be three teachers instead of the usual two because 2014 will be an anniversary (possibly the 55th; opinion is divided) of OFDC. Demetri's previous appearance at OFDC was in 2007.

Best wishes for a speedy recovery from surgery to Teme Kernerman, and to Tamar Berman, who was in hospital for several days in October.



We can now say, "We knew him when...": Conrad Stenton had a (non-dancing) role in *Big News from Grand Rock*, a feature comedy filmed in September and October 2013. The movie concerns a small-town newspaper editor who boosts circulation by making up

hoaxes... but one of the stories just might be true after all. Standing in for Grand Rock was Midland, Ontario, the home of Conrad and his wife, Patricia, both avid folk dancers. Conrad, a retired optical engineer, was one of about a dozen local residents cast in the film. He said, "It's the first chance I've had to be on the other side of the camera. I'm usually shooting test footage through the lenses we designed and made here in Midland." His role was as the proprietor of a roadside stand selling fruit, vegetables, jams, etc. out in the country. (Standing in for the countryside was Tiny township, named in 1822 after a dog belonging to the wife of Upper Canada's Lieutenant Governor. The other dogs were Tay and Flos.) *Big News from Grand Rock* stars Gordon Pinsent and is scheduled for release in the fall of 2014.

Arlington, Virginia folk dance leader Sam Stulberg passed away peacefully on September 7. With his wife, Sarah, he led a dance class in Arlington on Tuesday evenings for more than 40 years. He was central to many dance camps and events both locally



and across the US, and also led international trips and cruises

Welcome back, Walter Zagorski, who spent three weeks in October touring New Zealand.

In October, Hamilton folk dancers Judy Bourke, Shelagh Beattie and Anita Millman went on a sightseeing and folk dancing trip to Albania and to the island of Corfu, Greece. Aside from visiting various castles, UNESCO world heritage sights and interesting cities, they danced every night with different local teachers and musicians. The tour was led by Jim Gold and Lee Otterholt.



Photo: Anita Millman

Members of the Albanian National Ensemble of Folk Songs and Dances perform for the Jim Gold/Lee Otterholt tour in a Tirana restaurant on October 16.



Travel
broadens
one!

Jim Gold Folk Tours :2014

Travel with International Folk Dance Specialists:
Jim Gold, Lee Otterholt, Adam Molnar, Joe Freedman,
Tineke van Geel, and Richard Schmidt

Exciting adventures in fascinating cultures.
Meet the people. Folk dance with local groups. And more!



2014 Tours

ISRAEL! March 8-21, 2014. Led by Jim Gold and Joe Freedman.

Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Galilee, Haifa, Tiberias, Safed, Golan Heights!

ARMENIA! May 4-15, 2014. Led by Tineke van Geel.

Yerevan, Lake Sevan, Zvartnots, Edsmiadzin, Mt. Aragats!

POLAND! June 9-23, 2014. Led by Richard Schmidt. Kraków,

Zakopane, Łódź, Toruń, Gdańsk, Olsztyn, Warsaw!

NORWAY! June 7-17, 2014. Led by Lee Otterholt.

Oslo, Bergen, Hovin (Telemark), Fjord Cruise, Voss!

IRELAND! (New!) July 25-August 6, 2014. Led by Jim Gold.

Galway, Connemara, Aran islands, Doolin, Killarney, Kerry, Belfast, Dublin!

GREECE & its ISLANDS! June 29-July 11, 2014. Led by Otterholt.

Athens, Olympia, Delphi, Meteora, Mycenae, Epidaurus, Greek cruise to
Mykonos, Crete, Rhodes, Patmos, Santorini, Kusadasi, and Ephesus!

HUNGARY! July 31-August 11, 2014. Led by Adam Molnar

Budapest, Eger, Mezőkovác Folk Festival, Jászberény Folk Dance Camp!

FRENCH CANADA! (New!) Sept. 10-20, 2014.

Led by Richard Schmidt Montreal, Quebec, Mont Tremblant!

BALKAN SPLENDOR! (New!) Oct 4-16, 2014.

Led by Jim Gold and Lee Otterholt

Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia/Herzegovina, Montenegro: Oct. 4- 16.

Belgrade, Novi Sad, Osijek, Djakovo, Sarajevo, Mostar, Kotor, Budva, Dubrovnik!

2015 Tours

ALBANIA! May 3-16, 2015: Led by Jim Gold and Lee Otterholt

BULGARIA! August 1-15, 2015: Led by Jim Gold/ Big Koprivshitsa Festival!

Visit www.jimgold.com for itineraries, details, and Youtube videos.

TOUR REGISTRATION: Can't wait to go? Reserve your place. Mail your \$200 per person deposit. Or register with credit card: Click on Folk Tours at: www.jimgold.com

Tour(s) desired _____

Name _____ Address _____

No. of people _____ Phone(_____) _____ Email _____

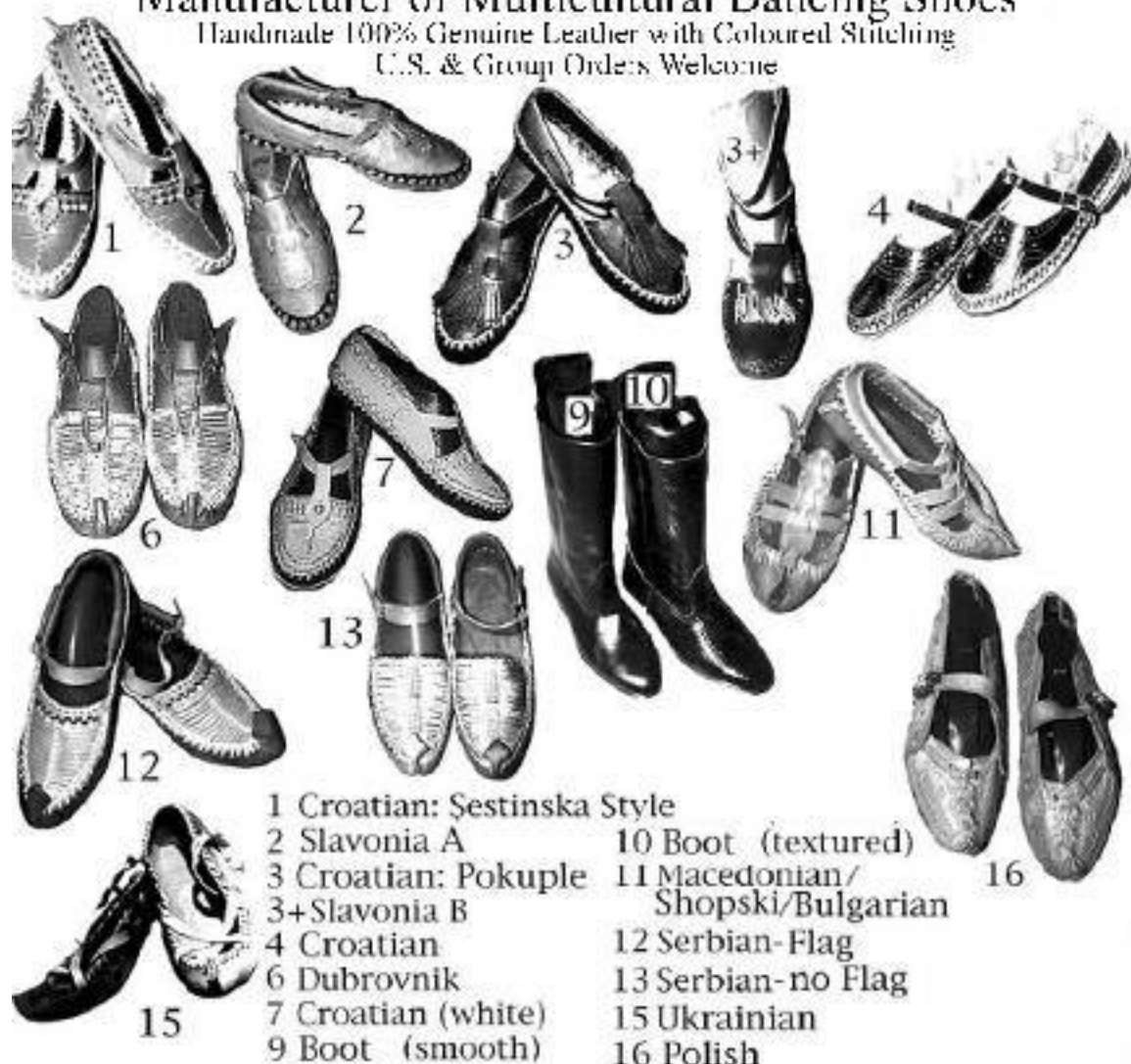
Jim Gold International, Inc. 497 Cumberland Avenue, Teaneck, NJ 07666 U.S.A.
(201) 836-0362 www.jimgold.com Email: jimgold@jimgold.com



SIHAN SHOES Manufacturer of Multicultural Dancing Shoes

Handmade 100% Genuine Leather with Coloured Stitching

U.S. & Group Orders Welcome



1 Croatian: Sestinska Style

2 Slavonia A

3 Croatian: Pokuplje

3+ Slavonia B

4 Croatian

6 Dubrovnik

7 Croatian (white)

9 Boot (smooth)

10 Boot (textured)

11 Macedonian/
Shopski/Bulgarian

12 Serbian-Flag

13 Serbian-no Flag

15 Ukrainian

16 Polish

Inquiries/Cheques payable to:

SIHAN NICESKI

1560 Meldron Drive

Pickering, ON CANADA M1V 6Y7

Bus: 416-693-4039 Fax: 905-509-4246

e-mail: sniceski@hotmail.com

website: www.shanshoes.com

Prices:

European sizes: 24-30, \$40C

31-36, \$50C

37-40, \$60C

Plus handling/postage charge.
Refer to website for other sizes