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for local information and links to other
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Cover Image: *International Dance Day (April 29) at IFDC. Photo: Leon Balaban.*

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[RETURN TO OFDA WEBSITE.](#)

Why OFDA?

by Dorothy Archer

Sheryl Demetro reports on another enjoyable café in this issue and ends the article with a salute to the OFDA Executive. But the Executive can only arrange these evenings if there is support through interest as well as fees from the membership. The Executive doesn't only present cafés, it supports Dancing in the Park, sends out notices of upcoming events and issues this magazine. Beyond trying to arrange for enjoyable dance events for its members, it is always on the outlook for ways to further folk dancing. So when your reminder of dues comes in, don't file it away, pay up so you don't forget. And if you have forgotten, now is the time to make amends. If you haven't joined, think about it. Yes, you can access the benefits without belonging but you won't have that personal satisfaction of belonging to a group of people that have the same interest as you.

I hope you enjoy this issue. It has been rather onerous preparing it because we got into a discussion about copyright. It is not as simple as most people like to think and Bev and I read and discussed at some length. However, we are now satisfied that we are squeaky clean.

In April, we had two parties in two weeks. What a letdown the third week! Naomi Fromstein has written about the Balkan Party put on by IFDC. The band, who were mostly immigrants from Serbia, played all night without taking the usual break – thank you. It isn't enough for the Adivis to party here, they plan their annual holiday to Israel to party there too. Riki has written a most interesting account of this annual event. Patricia Stenton has brought folk dancing to Midland, with a side trip to Mexico, and reports on progress and Nancy Nies describes a concert of Spanish music and dance which she attended in Los Angeles.

Murray and Lavinia Forbes went to a Greek dance workshop in Prague and Murray writes, in his usual fashion, about their journey from Spain to Prague via Poland. Thelma Feldman and Vita Baron were at the other side of the globe cruising in the South China Sea and tell us about the ports of call. They don't mention any sea life but we found a delightful story about a dolphin in New Zealand, and its link to folk dance.

I quite enjoy this recipe for gazpacho, perfect for the summer. May it fit in with a perfect summer for you – dancing in the park, and just doing what pleases you.

.

VIDEOS WORTH WATCHING

Did you know that the OFDA website has a “Links” page containing interesting, informative, or amusing links related to dance? If you haven’t checked them out, here’s one to whet your interest:

Dancers from around the world dance a Shim Sham as a tribute to Frankie Manning on what would have been his 95th birthday. The video was screened during the Frankie95 celebration held in New York City over the 2009 Memorial Day weekend. It features over 5,000 dancers from 22 countries in four and a half minutes of pure joy.

Frankie Manning (May 26, 1914 – April 27, 2009) was an American dancer, instructor and choreographer. Manning is considered one of the founding fathers of Lindy Hop.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=g_k_BIA_unl&feature=fvw



Thanks to
Terri Taggart
and
Glyn Webber
for their
generous
donations to
the OFDA!



We’re happy to announce that Dancing in the Park, Toronto, will continue this summer in Sir Winston Churchill Park, where it has been occurring for many years.

The proposed closure of the park will happen in the summers of 2017 and 2018, so if you are aware of a good alternative, please let us know.

[Link to Anna Todorovich’ website.](#)

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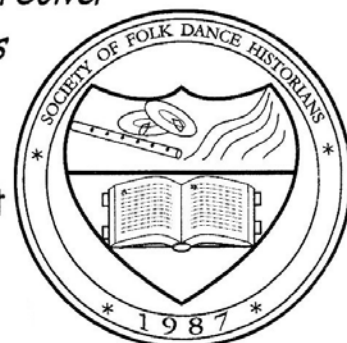
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Falla & Flamenco in Los Angeles

by Nancy Nies

Photo: Jorge Lozada.



Siudy Garrido and company perform *The Ritual of Fire*, a memorable flamenco scene from Falla's *El amor brujo*, with the L.A. Philharmonic in May 2015.

On 23 May 2015, Paul and I attended our first concert at the decade-old, Frank Gehry-designed Walt Disney Concert Hall in downtown Los Angeles—an unforgettable experience, combining the considerable talents of the Los Angeles Philharmonic musicians, conductor Gustavo Dudamel, classical guitarist Angel Romero, and the Siudy Garrido Flamenco Dance Company.

The program spotlighted the work of two early 20th century Spanish composers, Manuel de Falla and Joaquín Rodrigo. The first half, light and lively, brought a suite from Falla's "The Three-Cornered Hat," followed by Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez* with soloist Angel Romero on classical guitar. The program's dark, dramatic second half was made all the more powerful by the performance of Venezuelan dancer/choreographer Siudy Garrido and her company, who used flamenco song and dance to act out the story of Falla's composition *El amor brujo* ("Love Bewitched") as the musicians played.

Between 1914 and 1925, Falla composed and rearranged *El amor brujo*, a 45-minute composition for two flutes, oboe, two clarinets, bassoon, two horns, two trumpets, tympani, bells, piano and strings, accompanied by dances, songs and spoken texts. Based on an old Andalusian legend, it shows the influence of Spanish folk and classical arts on Falla's work, and illustrates the fact that his most important compositions were for the theatre.

Siudy Garrido, who created the stirring flamenco version we saw, is quoted in the program notes: "Falla was able to bring flamenco into a classical context, establishing a roadmap for orchestral flamenco. . . . This has been a wonderful challenge to dive inside Falla's music, in its layers and details, for six months, identifying true Spanish elements." Paul and I were moved and mesmerized by the result.

For more photos and information on the production we saw, see the following article: <http://www.billboard.com/articles/columns/latin/6575921/siudy-garrido-falla-flamenco-with-dudamel-los-angeles-philharmonic>. And for a short video of Siudy Garrido dancing in another 2015 production, *Flamenco intimo*, go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3BN9FmkL6xA>.

Pelorus Jack

by Sidney Messer

This article was originally printed in Let's Dance! in 2004 and reprinted in January 2016. Northwest Folkdancer reprinted it in March 2016 and we read it there. It is printed here with permission from Let's Dance!

To begin with, we must get a few facts straight. A pelorus is a navigational instrument. It gives bearings of objects relative to magnetic north. The handheld compass has rendered the pelorus obsolete, but it's still a neat instrument. Also, there once was a Mr. Pelorus. He was the local guide, who in 218 BC led Hannibal and his elephants across the Alps from Spain so as to treat the Romans to a surprise party of sorts. And lastly, the pelorus is not to be confused with a pyloras, which is the first part of the lower intestine that sits between the stomach and the duodenum. I don't believe anyone has ever been that confused, but you never know.

Now I can begin. There is a body of water in New Zealand known as Cook Strait. It is an area full of treacherous currents and ragged rocks, the likes of which you have to see to believe. It was a dark and stormy morning in 1871. A sailing vessel, the Brindle, was having trouble getting through the strait when a strange white Risso's dolphin leaped out of the water and proceeded to keep up with the vessel. The crew on board wanted to harpoon it, but the captain's wife suggested they follow it instead, because it seemed to know where it was going, while they didn't. It turned out the dolphin knew a lot more about where the rocks and currents were than they did.



Photo: Institute for Marine Mammal Studies.

On the return trip the dolphin was there again, showing them the way, this time in the opposite direction. Word spread quickly, and it wasn't long before ships trying to navigate those wild waters would actually wait for the dolphin to arrive so they could follow him through the pass. They named him Pelorus Jack, after their most useful navigational instrument. And so began a most remarkable relationship between man and beast that lasted some forty years.

Pelorus Jack seemed to prefer steam ships; they moved faster. Within a year or two, he became famous and was eventually seen by thousands of people. It wasn't unusual for tourists to take the ferry trip between Wellington and Nelson just to watch him frolicking around the boat. He was described widely in newspapers and on postcards. There was never a single recorded instance of a mishap to any vessel guided by Pelorus Jack. On one notable occasion, however, a drunken and armed passenger aboard the ship named the Penguin took a shot at Pelorus Jack and hit

him. The crew became furious as they saw Jack moving away with blood pouring from his body. A lynching was very narrowly avoided. Vessels, meanwhile, had to navigate the channel on their own for the next few weeks, until one day, Pelorus Jack reappeared, apparently recovered from his wound.

On September 26, 1904, the New Zealand government passed an Order in Council under the Sea Fisheries Act, officially protecting Jack's life - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AgFQul3rILk> He is probably the first individual sea creature ever to be protected in this way.

Jack returned to the area, continuing to meet and escort every steamer that approached, except if and when the Penguin appeared, he was nowhere to be found. Some years later (1909), the Penguin sank with a loss of 75 lives, which makes one wonder about the prevailing belief that misfortune comes to anyone who harms a dolphin.

Jack disappeared in 1912, hopefully due to old age, but his memory remains to this day. His story has been told in more than one song. A reel titled Pelorus Jack, written by Auklander Barry Skelton in 1993, was recognized by the Royal Society of Scottish Country Dancing and has become a popular dance in many parts of the world. The dance is composed of four couples, three of whom do not move, but rather maintain a stationary position. They represent the rocks off Cook Strait. The fourth couple, however, is moving, one behind the other. They represent Pelorus Jack leading a ship around these "treacherous rocks." Until the dance is properly learned, there are many near misses, some collisions, and occasionally a dreadful sinking. You don't want to be there when that happens. Watch the dance at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QXHwVvHghio&ebc=ANyPxKqP7BmbnUEy7So_d1t0BA0VjQ1_T3LjU_JrRhxeVt-wblQ1KeNPOofXSKqnNj7_rOjeqG1Y&nohtml5=False.



[Ed. note]

Seems some people described the light-coloured Rizzo's Dolphin – which guided ships through a dangerous passage in New Zealand – as a whitefish. We prefer to think dolphin.

If you'd like to read even more about this remarkable animal, here's another resource:

<http://captivecetaceans-tragicallysad.blogspot.ca/2014/10/pelorus-jack-only-fish-in-world.html>.

Folk Dancing Finds New Enthusiasts in Midland – and Beyond

by Patricia Stenton



Photo: reproduced with permission of The Mirror.

Folk Dancing made front page of Midland's local paper. (Patricia, centre front.)

When I retired from directing my ballet school last summer, one of my hopes was that there would be more opportunity to share folk dancing. Lately, so it seems, I'm getting my wish.

Last fall, over coffee with a good friend, I learned that our local Midland Cultural Centre (MCC) was willing to make some of their space available for free programming that could be enjoyed by many members of our town. Right away I proposed, "We could offer folk dancing."

The idea was welcomed and our first session was advertised for December 29, 2015. That unfortunately happened to be the day of the first heavy snowfall after a green Christmas. So we just had about a dozen people, including a few children from an arts program taking place at MCC at the same time. We were small, but had a good time.

We scheduled a second "Join Hands – Family Folk Dance Circle", as we now called ourselves, for the Tuesday afternoon of March Break. This time over 60 people of all ages attended. We had a mixture: children, teens and adults, parents with their children, grandparents with grandchildren, even a group of four young moms with babies in their Snugglies. We danced for two hours with only a short break. At the end, many were



Photo: Conrad Stenton.

The second "Join Hands – Family Folk Dance Circle" event.

asking when we could do this again. We are wondering this, too, and hope we'll get another chance soon. As a bonus, we were featured on the front page of our local paper, *The Mirror*, with a photo that captured the joy of this March Break event.

Photo: Brenda Coombs.



Dancing with the Girl Guides in Midland.

In between these two folk dance events there were other opportunities, one of them being an evening spent dancing with our local Girl Guides, a fun group of girls ages 7 to 11 with their leaders. It happened just before March Break and a few of the girls joined us at MCC, so they could dance again.

The most surprising invitation to dance happened during a stay in a small community in Mexico.

My husband, Conrad, and I had found a small dance school where we could study Mexican social dance which we enjoyed very much. When the teacher learned of my ballet background, she invited me to do a Master class for her senior ballet students, and I gladly agreed. In addition, so that her younger ballerinas would not be left out, I offered a folk dance class for them. I had great fun looking up the basic dance directions, like “to the right/left”, “take a partner”, “form a line”, etc. in Spanish, before meeting the girls, as my Spanish is less than rudimentary. Conrad was most helpful demonstrating the dances with me, so really the language barriers were minimal. Instead there were just lots of smiles.



Photo: Conrad Stenton.

Saying good-bye to the children and their teacher in Mexico.

This experience with local children in Mexico sparked further ideas. In the Nayarit region, where we were, there are a number of Canadian-founded charities that have the goal to provide funds and or services to improve the lives of the local residents. One group, “Amigos de Jaltemba”, is really interested in using folk dancing events next year as part of their fundraising. If all goes well, we are hoping to offer free folk dance evenings in the local town square next January, free of charge, but inviting donations from the participants. We hope that folk dance will serve to bring local residents and visitors together in a joyful experience, and at the same time raise funds for other great projects that serve this community. To find out more about these projects, visit www.amigosdejaltamba.com.

IFDC's Balkan Party

by Naomi Fromstein

See more photos of this event at <http://ofda.ca/wp/photos/>.



Photo: Conrad Stenton.

Members of the TO Balkan Folk Ensemble (L to R) Dušan Suvajac, Jovan Suvajac, Pavle Suvajac, Dragan Šain, Leon Balaban, joined here by Judith Cohen.

It was cool outside, but inside the 60 some eager dancers and talented, versatile musicians who attended IFDC's Balkan Folk Dance Party on Friday April 8th were hot, hot, hot, with a gentle breeze blowing in through the windows. The idea for this event came from Leon Balaban, whom we know as a dancer, musician and photographer. Leon thought it might be nice if the Serbian band he has been playing with would play for IFDC. They play for Miroslav Marcetic's dancers as well as for celebrations in the Serbian community. The musicians were joined by Judith Cohen on a frame drum.

They went to a lot of trouble for us. Leon said that many of the dances that international folk dancers do are not done in the Serbian community at this time so some of the music we dance to is quite different from what the band is used to playing. Our dances are much slower and some of the melodies are different as well. (However, Goran Ćirić, who dances with IFDC and is Serbian, recalls the dances we do from his growing up years.) In preparation for the party, the band took the time to listen to all the mp3 files that Helen Winkler sent to them, and they transcribed each song so that the versions played would match the musical arrangements that are usually danced to at IFDC.

Joining us on the dance floor was a couple visiting from Quebec City, and Leon also invited dancers from the Azerbaijan community. Leon participates in their monthly workshops at the United Steelworkers Hall.

(Their Facebook page is Azerbaijani Dance Class in Toronto.) I was able to chat with Mahboob, Lale and Samad as they were leaving. They enjoyed the inviting atmosphere and energy in the room and they felt welcomed and comfortable dancing with us. All three of them experienced a



Photo: Bev Sidney.

Visiting dancers from the Azerbaijani community.

cultural connection as they found the movements similar to what they are used to, so the dances were easy for them to pick up. Hopefully they will dance and sing for and with us at a café next year. In the meantime, you can catch The Araz Dance and Music Ensemble on July 17th at 2:00 p.m. (free admission) at the Shaw Festival in Simcoe Park, Niagara. Check out the site at <http://www.musicniagara.org/azeri-afternoon.html>.

The evening was rounded off with tasty treats, especially those from Harbord Bakery, in our usual pot luck fashion.

Thank you, IFDC, for being such a great host. We look forward to your next party.



The Ontario Folk Dance Association's AGM and Camp Review

Sat. June 11, 2016 from 6–10 p.m.

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A Visit To Southeast Asia

by Thelma Feldman and Vita Baron



Map: used with consent of the Nations Online Project via <http://www.nationsonline.org>.

On February 12, we joined a group from Bernard Betel, a seniors' community centre in Toronto, on a two-week cruise to Southeast Asia. We flew to Hong Kong and then on to Singapore. The first evening we visited the Underwater World, one of the largest oceanariums in the world with an 83 metre acrylic sea floor tunnel and thousands of unique creatures. Images can be viewed at https://www.google.ca/search?q=underwater+world+singapore&gws_rd=cr,ssl&ei=smEfV6asH8Hn-QHq86eoBw. Then we were treated to an amazing show, a synchronized display of pyrotechnics and laser beams, with music, staged next to a splendid beach. We finished off the night on a 40-minute tram journey in a park designed with seven geographical regions, from the foothills to the jungles of Southeast Asia. This allowed us to come up close and personal to more than 2500 nocturnal creatures. The following two days were spent sightseeing in beautiful and very clean and neat Singapore. We visited cultural sites, the heart of modern Singapore, and wandered along the colorful streets of little



Photo: Sarah Sidney.

Bangkok, view from the water.



Street food vendors in Bangkok.

India and Chinatown. After this, we started our cruise by boarding the *Celebrity Millennium*, a beautiful, refurbished ship.

The first port of call was Bangkok, Thailand. We visited the Grand Palace, the Emerald Buddha and the Royal Grand Palace dedicated to the Thai Royal Family. The Nong Nooch Tropical Garden, which houses intricately sculpted, knotted gardens, creates a world of beauty. For views of the Garden, visit https://www.google.ca/?gfe_rd=cr&ei=-18fV6v9DqOi8weksYGgBw&gws_rd=ssl#q=noon+noch+garden. Elephant and Thai cultural shows are held in these gardens. We were treated to a show of dancing docile elephants, and were allowed to come up close enough to pet them.

Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam, was our next port. We strolled through narrow streets in the Old Quarter and visited art galleries. In one gallery, we observed how plaques depicting scenes of Vietnam are made and many of us purchased them as gifts. Then we took a four-hour cruise around famous Halong Bay, recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site in 1994, which included visits to some marvelous caves and sites. The Bay is surrounded by sculptured stone mountains seeming to grow out from the water. Images are available at https://www.google.ca/?gfe_rd=cr&ei=EmMfV57hD6yi8weOrYHIBw&gws_rd=ssl#q=halong+bay. Our last stop in Vietnam was to a collective village, Yen Duc, where we were entertained with a water puppet show performed by local artists. We were given a tour of the rice paddies, and given explanations of how rice is planted and when is the time to harvest the grown rice. Later, we were served a lovely



Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam.



Vietnam, puppet show.



Costumes of Southeast Asia.

lunch, which, of course, included rice and we were entertained with music and dance by costumed dancers. After all this, we were given silk scarves, each one a different color.

The day before our return to Hong Kong and our flight home, we visited Macau, China, which used to be governed by Portugal. It is a one-of-a-kind tourist destination, attracting many people to the gambling sites in the many beautiful and brightly lit hotels. Old pastel-colored buildings line the sides of the old Portuguese square, and a church is at the back. Everywhere one can find gilded statues of Buddha. In the centre of a large pond there is a display of colorful, dancing waters. Entertainment offerings include numerous concerts, industry trade shows and art fairs.

Our last day was in Hong Kong and we spent it sightseeing. The tour allowed us to discover the bustling city with one of the most advanced and largest economic growth in the world. We also took an escalator to the top of a tall building to see the panoramic view of Hong Kong Harbor.



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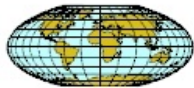
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NORWAY/SWEDEN/DENMARK! June 7-19: Led by Lee Otterholt

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Sing Along and Dance in Israel

by Riki Adivi

On a Saturday night, when the moon disappears or becomes a tiny line, it is the sign that this is the first Saturday of a new Hebrew month. On these nights, people from all over Israel gather at 6 p.m. for a very special evening in the village of Ein Iron. My husband's aunt, Yael Freidman, started this tradition in her back yard, and today there are at least two hundred people who gather every month at the community centre in Ein Iron.

When Stav and I visit Israel every year, we make sure to include this celebration in our plans. Every year I have promised to write about the event for the OFDA magazine, and this year it will finally happen.

This event is an opportunity for people to experience the folk music and culture of Israel from the '40s and '50s, and the people that attend usually know all the songs. The crowd is full of musicians. On the stage there is a band comprised of all the guests who have musical



Stav's aunt Yael Freidman holding mike for the clarinet.



The evening's band is formed of musicians who have brought their instruments along so that they can play for the party.

instruments and are ready to play. In the audience there are singers that used to sing professionally, and Yael will make sure that real singers will have solos in the program. In this video the performer is the composer Shoshia Be'eri-Dotan <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L03fnWV04kE>.

A month before our visit in January this year, the group had lost one of its friends, Yudke, who was a

Photo: Riki Adivi.

great musician. The theme of the evening that we attended was in commemoration of Yudke and his favorite music. Here is a video of him singing: www.youtube.com/watch?v=b-SVPnzRcIM.

Shortly before we left for Israel this year, Yael sent me a list of all the songs that were planned and asked me to find out if there were folk dances to them. I didn't recognize any of the songs but searched the web and found some dances that were easy enough for me to learn within a week. As usual the event started, according to the plan, with Jewish songs and blessings. Every time a new song started, there was a minute or two of some chaos with the band and with the singing, but very quickly the music became really beautiful. It was never similar to a well-tuned choir, but the sound was loud and very rich.



The formerly professional singers that come for the party are given opportunities to perform solos.

Early in the evening, a group of dancers formed a circle between the stage and the audience and we danced the old Israeli dances to the live music. The only problem that we dancers had with this live music was that the speed was too slow. There were a few dances that I felt as if it were a slow motion recording of the actual dance. It was fun, though, and near the end of the evening, one of the dancers convinced some of the musicians to play much quicker and that created a new chaos of different speeds.

I'm not sure why Yael asked me to lead the dances, as there were other leaders in the crowd. I met a legendary dance teacher and choreographer, Moshe Telem, and we had a lot to talk about. Apparently he knows Teme Kernerman and I have sent her his regards.

On the first Saturday of a new Hebrew month, there is magic in the community centre in the village of Ein Iron. There is music, dancing, friends, food and enormous energy.

OFDA Turkish Roma Café

by Sheryl Demetro

See more photos of this event at <http://ofda.ca/wp/photos/>.



Photo: Allen Katz.

Iana Komamytska in centre-circle.

Saturday, April 2, 2016, was a snowy but not too cold day, and we had a folk dance café to look forward to. This evening took place at Kimbourn Park United Church, a cozy venue in Toronto's east end. There was a particularly sumptuous array of entrées and sweets with which to fill our tummies.

Our guest teacher, Iana Komamytska, is a charming young dancer with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in dance from York University. She has trained in Ukraine, Egypt, Turkey and Canada, and been involved in various forms of dance:

North African, Central Asian, Ishtar Dance Company (Ukraine) and Arabesque Dance Company (Canada). Her interest turned to Turkish Roma dance in 2011. Iana was studying belly dance and saw a video about Turkish Roma dance. Sufficiently intrigued, she went to Istanbul to study and has made several trips to learn the dance form. At first the teachers didn't speak much English and simply showed students the movements expecting them to follow. As time went on their English improved and they broke down the dances, which Iana found much more helpful. And we folk dancers can certainly empathize with that.

Thankfully, Iana broke down the movements for us. The steps are not so difficult but putting them together with the forward hip thrust was a challenge—it looked beautiful when she did it. As drums are a predominant feature in the exotic music she played, one could imagine it might be hard to talk while you dance, so there are hand movements used as a form of communication. The arm movements might indicate making baklava or showing how many bracelets your husband gave you.

Folk dancers were up on the floor making an effort to learn as much as they could and Iana was a patient and talented teacher.

The evening was rounded out with high-energy request dancing. Thank you to the OFDA Committee for your continued work in presenting cafés and introducing us to teachers whose dances we aspire to imitate.

Greek Dancing in Prague, December 2015

by Murray “Indiana Jones” Forbes

For some unaccountable reason flying from Spain to Prague requires at least one stopover and horrible connections in places that one does not want to be. Nevertheless, my wife, Lavinia, and I decided that this was the year to go again to Lenka Harmon’s annual Greek dance workshop with Kyriakos Moisidis.

Dangerously impacting my clandestine addiction – I am a member of Sudokuholics Anonymous – I spent many hours working on this dilemma. The solution was without question the functioning of a sane and rational mind although some of my friends seemed slightly uncertain about this. As Europe, and indeed the world, becomes more and more unsafe, travel becomes likewise more and more disagreeable especially by air. Well, in fact, Ryanair, the winner of the most disagreeable airline on earth award, partially makes up for it by having very cost effective flights, cattle class, around Europe including a direct flight from Madrid to Kraków. What, one may ask, has this got to do with a trip from Malaga to Prague? It is a good question.

So, laden with everything warm in the world that we still possess from when we lived in Canada, we left almost summer conditions in our village in southern Spain for Madrid. Recalling the last time we went



Photos: Murray Forbes.

Swans on the Vltva river in Prague.

to Prague in the winter, we wondered whether we should try Siberia as a stepping stone. I had rented a student-type flat in Kraków, some 20 minutes walk from the train station, and to there we made the most attractive walk, skirting the old town, through this magnificent city in almost tolerable light drizzle.



Clock tower in Kraków's Central Square.

We had never been to Kraków and immediately fell in love with it. It is stuffed full of majestic buildings and monuments and, at least in early December, is low key and friendly. In our few days there we managed to walk ourselves into a state of total exhaustion. The relatively mild weather got better and we even had the odd hint of sun. Our apartment, which had an unnerving number of locks on the door, was about ten minutes walk from the vast and ancient market square which is meant to be the biggest in Europe, if that is a commendation. Notwithstanding the Christmas market with stalls every two inches selling all manner of dreaded Christmas stuff and various pork-centric foods with mulled wine, the square excelled in attractiveness.

Late the first evening we found ourselves in a tiny tourist restaurant right in the main square which served mediocre Polish food washed down with fantastic folk music from

south Poland played and sung by four young men and a young woman in costume. The music amply made up for the food. It was that piercing nasal type of music that one associates with Bulgaria.

A slightly longer walk took us to the Wawel Castle overlooking the Wisla (Vistula) River where we warmed up by visiting the royal private apartments in a small guided group with almost comprehensible English commentary. Then, slightly ironically, we went to the Jewish quarter in the Kazimierz district which has been recreated for commerce and is charming, if one avoids thinking about



Christmas Market at night.

what happened there. We managed a fine Jewish meal with excellent Klezmer music from staff and musicians who didn't appear to be Jewish.* This part of Kraków is slightly less touristic and we returned here again a few times exploring the back cobbled streets and looking at the old synagogues and the amusing Ethnographic Museum.

Getting to Prague from Kraków is not straightforward. There is a relatively seamless way by a connected bus and train service through Katowice which naturally I did not take. Some chap on the internet reckoned that it was more interesting and cheaper to take the regular milk run bus to Cieszyn on the border with the Czech Republic and walk across the river to the train station in Cesky Tesin on the other side through which regular trains were meant to service Prague. Three and a half hours later, having stopped in every possible village en route, we found ourselves somewhere in the outskirts of Cieszyn laden with luggage and clutching a Google map extract. The map looked nothing like this fine outskirt where all street names were carefully erased or missing. I tried waving my map and looking pathetic (it comes quite naturally really) but with no language in common the results cannot be said to have been an overwhelming success. So in light drizzle I dragged our luggage up the steep hill in front of us in the hope of seeing the famous river that we had to cross. At the top, a lady saw us huddled over our map extract and in most elegant Polish sent us off in a downward direction. Two or three choo-choo-train-type imitations later we had four or five different options offered - one no doubt being the insane asylum - so we opted for a pretty cobbled street through the lovely village centre pausing at a rather nice café en route. Somehow the wheels managed to stay attached to our suitcase but I lost the waistband buckle off my rucksack and thus we found ourselves more dead than alive at the unchecked border into the Czech Republic.

My Czech being on a par with my Polish getting train tickets became the next issue. Regular commuter trains were a bit of an exaggeration and in the end we got two incomprehensible documents requiring us to change trains somewhere and embark on a train which was listed on the computer screen as being due on platform 2 but in fact came in on platform 5. Luckily, a couple of youngsters were also caught by this deception and they spoke pretty good English thus with only a certain amount of excessive exertion we were able to make our way to beautiful but not undiscovered Prague.

We know Prague reasonably well by now and as the weather was mild

* [Ed. note] *The Last Klezmer* is a loving tribute by filmmaker Yale Strom, to Polish composer/conductor Leopold Kozlowski (born Kleinman), the last active klezmer musician trained in the original pre-war tradition. It is a wonderfully affecting look at the remnants of this tradition as it seeks to survive in a region with a still decimated Jewish population. The DVD of this documentary can be borrowed from the Toronto Public Library.

we decided to walk to our apartment. This proved to be slightly awkward given the enormous number of tourists there for the Christmas markets but probably less so than trying to get there by taxi.

When we have been to this workshop previously, the participants have been mainly Czech with a few foreign visitors. This time it was totally the reverse. There were only six Czechs, decreasing to two by day two, and about 24 visitors. Most of these were from the U.K. but also some Dutch, three Israelis, a German lady and some Greeks. Keriakos teaches extremely well and the workshop had a good mix of quite challenging dances from various parts of Greece as well as some of the Pontic Greek dances from Turkey. The workshop took place in a well-appointed dance studio with wooden floors and good facilities. There were a number of outings and dinners together but we were a large number and the crowds at the prime tourist sites were overwhelming. Lavinia and I only attended a few of these in favour of doing our own wandering off the main areas to some of our favourite spots – including an absolutely fabulous café on the river which is in effect a beautiful old house with some antique tables and furniture in various corners as in a home, a fire in the corner and laden bookshelves everywhere.

Time to move on and I had found a bus that went from Prague to Wrocław, Poland so thought we could visit this for a few days. We had seen the main bus station next to the train station on arriving and I fixed our departure for something civilized around 12:30 pm. In beautiful weather, allowing ourselves lots of time, we wandered over there through the monument-laden centre with the idea that we would check out the schedule and then go and have a bite to eat. No bus was listed for Wrocław! After some weird speculation from the misinformation counter we found the ticket counter for the bus line we were booked on. Some rather panicky conversations later it materialized that buses for Wrocław left from the other end of the city. A mad taxi rush later out in nowhere, with no infrastructure, we wandered around trying to find a bus to Wrocław. Waving our computer printouts around, we eventually joined a few elderly Russian-looking folks on a bus heading for Minsk in Belarus. Apparently it stopped in Wrocław en route. After a lengthy hop through tedious countryside on ever worsening roadways, we stopped for ten minutes where I managed, by pointing at



Lavinia posing with little sculpted figures which are sprinkled around Wrocław and found in the most unexpected places. (Inset is an enlargement.)



Unusual life-sized street sculpture in Wrocław of people walking through the sidewalk, under the road, and coming out the other side.

various objects, to commandeer what turned out to be delicious sandwiches and all was well again until we got to the border. There two burly policemen took issue with the passport of a young lady behind us and an hour later, having sat on the phone in their car for most of that time, they hauled her off the bus and harangued her over something or other. Lavinia thought she heard Chechen mentioned and I thought I heard Bulgaria but the finer points of the discussion escaped us. In any event, at the end of it all they let her continue and they did not take her luggage apart so I can only imagine that it might have been a visa issue.

Wrocław is a big city but the part that tourists visit, jammed packed with glorious buildings, can be walked easily. We rented an apartment right in the centre of the old city in the enormous market square only to find that it was

within deafening range of some ghastly musical event in the Christmas market that had infested it. This was enhanced further by a children's fair. Then we discovered that none of the appliances worked, the wifi did not connect, they had only managed one towel, and so on. No problem, we were given a massive array of keys to another apartment around the corner. The heavens had smiled on us. It was spacious and tranquil, and guarded by a very serious series of twenty-four hour ex-KGB guards.

One cannot but be impressed by the market square even if it is teeming with people but we preferred the magnificent university and the area around it. We also managed to find a particularly good French patisserie and so my wife was happy. Lovely though Kraków is, I much preferred Wrocław. For one thing it is a major city and does not rely entirely on tourism. We also managed to eat very well which always helps in one's appreciation of a place.

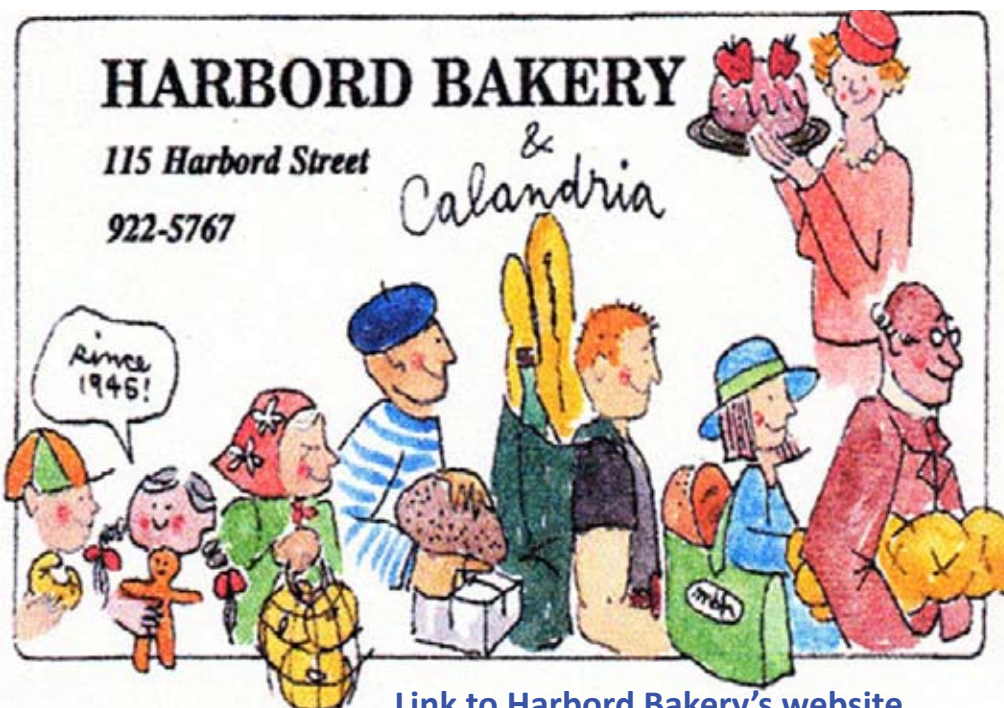
Kraków is well-served by both buses and trains from Wrocław and, partly because of the attractiveness of the old train station, we opted for the latter. One of the few things that I miss in Spain is the excellent bagels that we got in Toronto. Well, in Kraków, at most street corners, there is some elderly lady selling *obwarzane* which are in effect gigantic bagels. Of course, when one actually tries to find these there is no crone to be located but in a search for someone hungry for breakfast, I managed to find a local market with at least four excellent bakeries but



Painting in Wroclaw museum.

no *obwarzaneks*. Eventually I tracked down a vendor with the instincts of a tropical game hunter – they were New York bagels, not Montreal, but who is quibbling. On day two when I brought a stash home, they were just like day old New York bagels – character forming.

This was a most enjoyable trip and, notwithstanding the somewhat ropey travel arrangements, my marriage has survived and we have returned to our lovely mountains assured that there is a world outside of them.



[Link to Harbord Bakery's website.](#)

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Gazpacho

Submitted by Walter Bye to *Ontario Folk Dancer Cookbook*
vol. II



1 can condensed tomato soup	¼ cup olive oil
1 soup can of water	1 clove of garlic, chopped
1 cup peeled sliced cucumber	Dash of Tabasco sauce
½ cup chopped green pepper	Dash of salt and pepper
¼ cup minced onion	2 tbsp. wine vinegar

1. Combine tomato soup, water, cucumber, green pepper, onion and garlic in blender jar. Blend at high speed until smooth.
2. Pour into bowl and whip in olive oil, vinegar, Tabasco sauce, salt and pepper.
3. Cover and refrigerate for at least four hours. Serve in well-chilled bowls.
4. Soup may be garnished with croutons, finely-chopped onion, chopped cucumber or chopped green pepper. Serves 4.





The Grapevine



A lively crowd celebrated International Dance Day at IFDC on April 29th. There were dances from many countries in response to requests.

Riki Adivi advertised folk dancing at her home in King recently and had a full house. The lessons continue with a somewhat smaller group consisting of all ages.



Setting out a deliciously colourful potluck table.

Karen Walker hosted a potluck luncheon in her home in Guelph April 3rd for people attending the Tamburitzans performance that afternoon.

Carole and Nate Greenberg holidayed in Mexico, Adam and Shirley Kossowski were in Costa Rica and Mirdza Jaunzemis went on the transatlantic cruise with Yves and France Moreau and Steve and Susan Kotansky. They sailed from Fort Lauderdale and

visited Punta Delgada, Lisbon, Cadiz, Malaga, Alicante and Barcelona.

On March 11th, Adam Kossowski gave a workshop for the Hamilton Folk Dance Group and introduced Karcmaroscka – which is the only dance from the eastern Carpathian Mountain region of Europe which is done locally. He learnt it from Murray Spiegel at a workshop in Rochester in November 2015.

While there seemed to be interest in a cruise out of Midland, when it came down to paying the piper, the enthusiasm dissolved. Hence, there are no plans for a cruise at this time.

Summer Dancing in the Park

See Calendar listings at <http://ofda.ca/wp/calendar/> for full details

Tuesdays in June

Toronto Botanical Garden Scottish Country Dancing at TBG with the Toronto Scottish Country Dancers, 7:00 pm till dusk, music by Scotch Mist. Rain cancellation/other info: dancescottish.ca/The_Park

Sundays, June 19 – August 7

Richmond Hill, June 26–Aug 7 International Dancing in the Park, at the gazebo in Mill Pond Park, 7:30–9:00 p.m. weather permitting.

Tuesdays in July

International Folk Dancing on the Hamilton Waterfront: 7:30–9:30 p.m. Covered stage on the waterfront next to Williams Fresh Cafe, 47 Discovery Drive. Rain or shine. Free. Info: adamkossowski@yahoo.ca

Tuesdays, July & August

Toronto, International Dancing in Winston Churchill Park, Spadina/St. Clair, Tuesdays during July and August.

