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Cover Image: *Members of the Hungarian State Folk Ensemble perform the suite of Transylvanian turning dances called Mezősegi at the George Weston Hall, Toronto, Oct. 16, 2016. Photo: Conrad Stenton. ...See article p.28.*

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[RETURN TO OFDA WEBSITE.](#)

Dancing with Style

by Dorothy Archer

Does style matter in recreational folk dancing? Presenters of dances write detailed instructions how to do the dance, presumably with background knowledge. Does it matter if those are ignored? Some will say it's ok, it isn't a performance. Others will feel the spirit of the dance is lost. Lerikos, for instance, is a lively dance calling for light steps and holding arms in "W" position. Danced with arms down and a shuffle, it has lost its spirit. Debka Oud has taken on a style of its own clicking heels and doing the debka step on each foot. Kurdish dancing is often confused with Turkish but not if one knows that Kurdish style is to lean forward. And so it goes: Joc Batrinesc, Čobankat, Orijent, etc. No doubt more styling will surface as people learn dances in the circle, rather than from a teacher, and once learnt they might be tempted to do a bit of embellishment themselves. Meanwhile, I'll try to enjoy holding little fingers when dancing.

Another question often raised: Does it matter if men do women's dances and vice versa? Probably it does if styling matters so much but then we would be denied some nice dances and would have to watch with envy while the other half enjoyed themselves. And, you ask, do these things matter? That could be a long debate.

As promised, here is part two of Murray and Lavinia's trip to India and Mirdza has written about folk dancing on the Atlantic Ocean. Lots of nice photos accompany the pieces and I hope you enjoy the armchair travelling to these places.

The recipe this issue is for wassail. This is a traditional drink that was made in mid-January for a ritual to ensure the crops would be good. Today it turns up at various events over the holiday season. Nancy Nies has written about a Danish Christmas tree and its ornaments and, what seems a very nice custom, dancing around the tree.

Just in case you haven't been able to get out to all the exciting events taking place, there are articles about Mainewoods Camp, OFDA's Azerbaijani café, and the Hungarian National Dance Ensemble performance in Toronto. It would be nice to have more reviews of concerts people attend, not only to make those of us who stayed home jealous, but also so that we could attend should the group tour again. So should you be so lucky to attend something you enjoy, please remember us.

Happy Hanukkah, Merry Christmas, Happy Kwanzaa,
and Happy New Year!

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Dancing around the Christmas Tree

by Nancy Nies

Although I have never spent Christmas in Denmark, I did get close once, when Paul and I lived in the country from August through November of 1997. As December approached, I learned about Danish holiday traditions, including that of dancing around the Christmas tree on December 24. I was also enthralled with the made-in-Denmark ornaments and decorations I saw—many of them handmade—and returned home with quite a collection. So, I've chosen to focus here on the Danish Christmas tree (*Juletræ*), touching on its connections to holiday customs, handicrafts, food, singing and dancing.

Each year many families spend time together making new tree decorations, since a traditional *Juletræ* has many handmade ornaments (*Julepynte*). The most well known are the woven hearts (*Julehjerter*) made of red and white paper, which function as little baskets for holding walnuts, marzipan candies, or spice cookies called *pebernødder*. Decorative paper cornets (*kræmmerhuse*) are also made to hang on the tree, filled with nuts and sweets. Also much in evidence are ornaments depicting the Danish Christmas elves (*nisser*) with their long red caps. At a Christmas craft show, I found elves made by hand from a variety of materials.

Other tree decorations include garlands of little Danish flags, since the flag (the red-and-white *Dannebrog*) plays a role in all Danish celebrations, including birthdays. Many Danes eschew electric lights, believing that only real candles can create the right ambiance. My favourite decorations are the beautiful, detailed, cut-paper mobiles made in Denmark for all occasions, the Christmas-themed ones featuring elves, trees, hearts, and winter scenes. And every year the Georg Jensen company produces an elegant, gold-plated collectible ornament. I splurged and purchased 1997's "Christmas Joy"—elves and animals dancing around a Christmas tree.

The *Juletræ*, sitting in the center of the room, is an integral part of Danish Christmas Eve festivities. After the traditional dinner, the family lights the candles on the tree. They then join hands and dance around the tree, singing carols and hymns. (See a short video here: https://www.google.com/?gws_rd=ssl#q=danish+traditional+dancing+around+the+christmas+tree.) Afterwards, the children hand out the gifts waiting under the tree's branches.



India – February 2016, Part II

by Murray Forbes

Having fattened up nicely on our beach, we decided to put some stress back into our lives by visiting real India. When arranging this part of the trip I had not read Rohinton Mistry's *A Fine Balance* that a friend had given to me and which might have led to a less ambitious plan such as another beach in Goa. So with our excess of luggage we made our way to Mapusa to pick up an all-night sleeper bus direct to Hampi to see the remains of the Vijayanagara Empire which was razed by the Deccan sultanates in the 16th century. At its height it had a population of about half a million inhabitants making it the second largest city in the world next to Peking. In fact the direct bus turned out to be indirect insofar as those of us in Mapusa were shuttled unceremoniously to Panaji where we waited like spare parts for about an hour for our sleeper bus to turn up. I suppose it is my fault but the allocated sleeper space was shorter than my body and the two of us, with carry on luggage, had to fit on an upper bunk without steps to it in which the only position possible was flat as the roof of the bus was so low. The bus then bumped and swerved and hooted and stopped and started, the way normal driving occurs in India, throughout the night without any remote possibility of sleep.

At some point during the night the bus pulled into a roadside - for want of a better word - café where a young bull took a shine to Lavinia or maybe what she was eating and it was only by luck that it did not get into the bus with us. On arrival, we were greeted by a battalion of screaming rickshaw drivers, touts and guides who were so eager for business that it was almost impossible to get off the bus. Our hotel had arranged one

of these to pick us up but that did not spare us the hard sell. "No thank you" means try harder in India.

Hampi itself is magnificent, not only for its ancient monuments but also for its setting amidst enormous boulders and slabs of rock with an attractive river running below – that is at least if one filters out



Murray looking out from a massive structure built into stone.

Photos: Murray and Lavinia Forbes.



The Virupaksha carved rock temple.

of consciousness the garbage that is liberally distributed over all surfaces. While waiting for our basic but clean room to become ready we thought that we would check out the Virupaksha carved rock temple next door to the hotel. In the rapidly mounting heat we approached the ticket office whereupon the shoe guardian at the other side of the courtyard started yelling at us to pay him twice the entrance fee for each pair of shoes. I ignored him and tucked our shoes into my rucksack conceding for the moment that the Hindu gods prefer dirty bare feet to shoes. Apparently, however, they are also offended by shoes entering their presence heavily camouflaged in a rucksack so we decided to wander up the rock behind it to more ruins from where we got an ample view of the interior fully-shod. By now, oppressively hot though it was, this site was magnificent and we just kept walking reaching unpopular or

undeveloped parts left ignored by the guides and their followers.

Cleanliness conceded, the other merit of our hotel was the view from the small rooftop café directly above the temple to the anti-shoe gods. The non-functioning wifi, the occasionally lukewarm water that flooded the bathroom floor and the character forming beds notwithstanding, this was the top-rated hotel in Hampi. Later we discovered that across the river, when the ferryman is not taking lunch and once the boat is loaded to sinking, Goa beach is alive and well with syncretic restaurants specializing in world cuisine and tourist shops, yoga, cures of all sorts, snake oil merchants and so on.

In the afternoon fed and rested we ventured out in the other direction and, possibly because of the blistering heat, we were the only visitors to some



Lavinia on the base of a stone chariot at the Vittala ruins.

more magnificent ruins and a very fine walk through the boulders. Exhausted and semi-poached we stumbled on a superb path by the river through the rocks back to the village whereupon we collapsed into two nights sleep in one.

Next day was our main outing and as the pleasant path from the previous afternoon continued on to the Vittala ruins, which are the main attraction, we decided to walk there setting out before it got too hot. This was a brilliant stroke as not only did we enjoy a most lovely and solitary walk we also arrived at the stone chariot and superb temples before the throng.



Elephant stables at the Lotus Temple.

No rickshaws in sight, we then walked in increasing heat out to the road as the vehicles laden with tourists were coming the other way. There we were able to commandeer one to take us to the Queen's Bath. Now very hot without shade we walked through a series of sites all to ourselves until we reached the Lotus Temple and elephant stables where we were unmistakably not on

our own. According to my map, from there a path led back to where we were the previous afternoon. The first sortie was a bit off track but took us to some very interesting other ruins ending up within clear view of the road we needed but with impenetrable barbed wire preventing us from getting there. Nor was it possible along a side path nearby. We returned and I realized that I had got a slightly wrong trajectory preferring the well-demarcated path to the smaller one with an obscured entrance. This also ended at the barbed wire and as it was exactly the one marked on the map they must have decided to bar it off without correcting the maps. Very weary and hot we returned to the popular Lotus Temple and found a rickshaw the other side of it to take us back.

Later, revived and washed, we took the ferry across to a restaurant overlooking the river and had a very nice meal trying to lounge empathetically on the floor cushions and look a third of our age to blend in with the other clientele. As floor cushions make eating a rather painful process, I am not sure that we completely succeeded but surely it is the empathy that counts.



Gol Gumbaz mausoleum.

The onward trip was problematic. We definitely did not want to risk another bus marathon, the nearest airport was a long journey in the wrong direction and the distances were enormous. Bus connections with Hampi are difficult anyway and we would have had to take a rattletrap local bus to Bigapur and try to get somehow from there to Aurangabad. Finally, at considerable cost, I managed to negotiate a taxi directly there with a brief stop at Bigapur to see the impressive dome of the Gol Gumbaz mausoleum (mid-17th century) claiming second in size to St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. What I did not appreciate was that it would take 14 hours across parched and desolate plains, along horrendous roads absolutely choked with trucks and buses and scooters and farm vehicles billowing out pollution, and bullock-drawn carts providing alternative forms of pollution, all providing our gladiator driver death-defying charges into oncoming traffic, overtaking one after the other with the horn in perpetual motion. This is yet another experience never to be repeated. There were brief passages of dual carriageway but smaller vehicles had no compunction about driving the wrong way along them and the trucks frantically tried to overtake each other while our driver went into a horn blazing fury at the delay. Then again, in the middle of a clear stretch, one is quite likely to come upon a gigantic double-headed sleeping policeman or a series of small ones in a row rattling one to a milkshake and people wandering across the road and, of course, livestock, unwatched cows and enormous potholes. India is terribly overpopulated and one saw some very sorry sights in this remote area of Maharashtra.

Warmed to suffocation and evaporating visibly, we arrived at our hotel, the driver having had some serious difficulty locating it. Thanks

to the intermittent wifi at our hotel in Hampi, by the time I managed to get through to the booking website, the hotel I had identified had sold out so we took a rapid stab at something that sounded reasonably comfortable albeit on the pricier side. It, in fact, turned out to be a most inspired choice notwithstanding its location well away from the centre on the way to the airport. With very few exceptions the clientele were all Indian and the hotel was thoroughly Indian which became graphically evident in the choices in the excellent breakfast buffet. Large comfortable rooms and exquisite food, however, came with challenges. One first had to get through some intense intimidation, bungling and punctilious bureaucracy – the muddle stage. Then there was the language barrier. But the greatest challenge was purely cultural. Indians, when they are paying a bit more for their hotel, expect, and presumably enjoy, an army of waiters hovering over them to help replenish plates and generally being fussed over. For us it induced paranoia and indigestion.

An oasis though the hotel was, around it was a wasteland and a busy highway. This would not have been significant but for the fact that I decided to take local buses to the Ellora and Ajanta Buddhist caves - the prime reason why foreigners come to Aurangabad. We had built in three days, giving us an opportunity to discover the wonders of Aurangabad which, needless to say, we were unable to uncover. It is amazing how quickly one learns to fix a price - probably well above market but still very inexpensive - with a rickshaw driver and if one sinks into a meditative coma to control the terror (possibly chanting om repetitively) and either surrenders to fatalism or shuts one's eyes, one arrives at one's destination suffocated with the pollution but still sort of alive. Tranquilizers also help. Then entering the local buses is a competitive physical sport in which we were lucky enough to get seats although on one occasion it was at the back from which we were dramatically jettisoned into the stratosphere by the combination of disintegrated road surface, speed bumps, destroyed shock absorbers and the leverage effect. Whereas Ellora was about an hour away Ajanta was two and a half each way. In response to my critics I point out that the posher and much more expensive tourist buses, tours and taxis had to take the same roads and as we sailed past some of them with the horn in full throttle their drivers were obviously far less motivated than ours.

Neither sets of caves are undiscovered attracting large numbers of Indian as well as foreign tourists. Each has its own specially trained army of tenacious itinerant sellers - everything from porters carrying people up stairs, to guides, books, trinkets and so on. Having ruthlessly defended our independence at both, one has to say that these are incredible ruins and in the case of the Ajanta caves worth permanent spinal injury from the bus trips there and back.

The Ellora caves fall into three sets scattered around an attractive

hillside. A master of contrary thinking (except in the stock markets) I made straight for the furthest of the caves thereby getting to see these in some tranquility. We started with the Buddhist caves dating about CE 600 – 900 (great temperament – he is always smiling), and then some of the Hindu ones (CE 800 – 1000) before breaking for a very good lunch at the restaurant on site. Unfortunately, by the time we got to the remaining and the best preserved of the caves, the Indian tourists were out in force all over the place making noise and bumping into us and each other and taking pictures of everything. Tranquil it was no longer but the ruins are indeed spectacular. As the Jain caves were some considerable distance away and we were exhausted having clambered up and down innumerable steps in very hot weather we did not go and see these but according to the guidebook they are not as grand in scale and, lets face it, we are not Jain scholars.

Dating from BCE 2 to CE 6, thus much earlier than the Ellora caves and set around a spectacular curve in a river way up on a cliff face, the Ajanta caves are very popular and the infrastructure, including tourist-milking, more intense. Remarkable, given their age, some of the murals still have impressive colour. At many of the caves one had to abandon one's shoes (in Hindi and English "at one's own risk" but no one wanted mine anyway). The initial caves were rather crowded and we noted that guards limited the numbers entering and the amount of time people could stay in them. We have no particular knowledge or interest in Hindu and Buddhist mythology and were able to push along getting to less crowded sites ahead of the groups who enjoyed in depth lectures on the "important" details in a babble of tongues.



Bibi-qa-Maqbara, a mini Taj Mahal.

Our final day included only half a night because the only train tickets we could get to Mumbai were on an overnight sleeper train. This left us the day to try and relax as much as is possible in frantic India. There is a sort of miniature Taj Mahal called Bibi-qa-Maqbara built in the 17th century so we commandeered an electric rickshaw (*tuktuk*) to take us there. The driver was most insistent that he wait for us and we use his services all day but as he talked incessantly, most of which we could not understand and that which we could be total nonsense, we were equally insistent on not. Wandering around this mausoleum was most relaxing and low key set in some pleasant gardens. There are also some Buddhist caves of a much lesser order than Ellora and Ajanta but charming and quiet. We found another *tuktuk* to take us there and he was equally insistent that he wait for us which would cost us 50 rupees (about 60 centimos). We gladly accepted not least because we had no language in common so babble was out of the question. As there were no other vehicles there anyway and only one quiet Indian couple visiting the caves it was worth all of the 60 centimos. Finally there was a park next to the caves where some famous Sufi is buried. I could, but didn't, visit but Lavinia, having the impediment of being a woman, needed to be tied up outside. It was a most relaxing prelude to our overnight train ride especially after we discovered that although the hotel's credit card machine rejected North American credit cards it took my American Express one.

The travel agent in Hampi had got us two berths in the air-conditioned section of the night train. To the chagrin of our hotel, as witnessed by the rapidly fading fake smiles, I rejected their overpriced taxi in favour of a *tuktuk* that I managed to commandeer on the road outside of the hotel and with our luggage on top of us we made our way in questionable style to the chaos of the local Indian railway station. There were no instructions anywhere (unless in Hindi which we could not read). We managed to step over and around the sleeping bodies, who sort of live there, to the correct platform where we were the only pale faces. We waited impatiently for about an hour until the announcement in Hindi, and I think English, gave us enough hints to get on the gigantic train. Our tickets had #1 on them under coach number which I took to be carriage number one to which we rushed only to find out that the carriage number one that we needed was the air-conditioned one at the other end of the train. A marathon later we managed to get on a carriage claiming to be number one where a great amount of confusion was taking place. Apparently we were not the only ones to not understand the system. In fact, it eventually took the ticket collector some time to unravel it. At that point we found ourselves in a double bunk with a young Indian man in the lower one opposite and a full bodied Indian lady of a certain age allocated to the one above him while her husband or friend was in an upper berth further down the corridor. Thereupon a great drama transpired in Hindi the gist of which was fairly clear.

There was no way the lady was going to clamber up onto the upper bunk and there was no way the young man was going to relinquish his lower one. Eventually, assisted by her husband, she did maneuver into it in an awkward and ungainly way and continued to fuss throughout the night making intermittent loud phone calls and at one point being noisily sick. Luckily she disembarked well before Mumbai. Surprisingly we both managed to conk out from time to time and, possibly because we were the only tourists on the train, our luggage was not stolen and we arrived in Mumbai shortly after 8:00 a.m. next morning where we joined the rush hour torrent to make a relatively hassle free exit to the prepaid taxi stand.

Even I have to admit to an error in judgment in our choice of accommodation in Mumbai. We have done very well recently with holiday apartments and everything that I had read about Mumbai, including its 22 million population, 60 per cent of which live in slums, led me to conclude that the suburbs might be a slight respite. Bandra is meant to be a nice quiet residential suburb. The online description was convincingly creative and it was not far from the airport for our 4:00 a.m. start on the last day. Traffic confusion and pollution reaches a new level in Mumbai and it didn't help that we had no language in common with the taxi driver and that the apartment was hidden in a commercial building on a service road off a swarming highway. Around the corner was a street of multiple lanes (in India lanes are irrelevant as cars edge into any space they are able to as long as they can avoid actually scraping the paint off each other while honking energetically in a competitive sort of way) where the only commerce was directly out of Dickens. Cheek by jowl the legal profession had their stalls in which some sold registrations, others stamped documents, photocopying and so on - some selling their wares in a highly theatrical manner, waving their arms in the throws of high drama. The four levels of security into our apartment was sufficient to dispel any thought of a quiet neighbourhood although I must say our apartment, which was one of four sharing a lounge, dining room and kitchen, was surprisingly quiet. Then, of course, we were some many miles away from the downtown sights and so reliant totally on the running of the taxis in their demolition derby thus spending quality hours appreciating the filth and pollution and traffic chaos and stench from the slums.

Once we had broken into our building and located the office, it transpired that these apartments were entirely occupied by Indian business people in Mumbai for corporate events and courses and not at all oriented to tourists. Furthermore, no one spoke any English rendering all communication rather approximate. Arriving at about 9:30 a.m., when checkout time is midday, we looked forward with dread to nodding off on the couch outside of the office for half a day. I managed to persuade the office manager that, as we were going to be missing breakfast on the

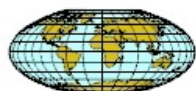
last day, we should be eligible for breakfast on arrival and our apartment was vacated early so we were able to at least recuperate for the rest of the morning.

So in the heat of the day we located a taxi to battle our way back down town to the tip of Colaba - the Gateway to India. We got to look at the outside of the Taj Mahal Palace hotel where our friends reckoned we should stay in grand style starting at €250 a night and where a bunch of tourists got blown up in a terrorist attack in 2008. In fact I detest these places even though I am sure that someone would probably have been there to relieve me of the arduous task of picking up my fork to eat as well as refilling my plate after every bite. Having no map, we then wandered which is not easy to do as the roads are more or less uncrossable without serious risk of instant death by crushing – and we did in fact see a taxi collide into three girls one of whom looked pretty badly injured As more and more pollution drove through to our lungs and after braving the shopping streets fending off proposed purchases and viewing some of the spectacular colonial buildings, we finally gave up and taxied back. To add insult to injury we managed to get a mediocre meal, which is almost impossible to do in India where the food is usually so good and at tourist prices.

Day two went a bit better. We taxied into the market area which was hectic and noisy but most interesting. There is a linen and clothes market which is hassle free - one gets perpetually hassled for free - and a gigantic food market in a magnificent old building that was under repair. Later we took another cab to the beach which was relaxing even if no one can actually swim in the toxic waters. Another cab to a very good tandoori restaurant near to Haji Ali Dargah, Photo a spectacular 19th century mosque off the coast. We then gave up and hid in our apartment trying to clear some of the pollution from our lungs. Then our 4:00 a.m. start for the airport and one of those days which never ends because time keeps winding back on one finally terminating by car in Valdepeñas around 8:30 p.m. or 1:00 a.m. Mumbai time and the horror of two-and-a-half flakes of snow.

Although this trip went better than the previous one to India, this country has enormous problems. The overpopulation and poverty are very hard to accept and the frenzy and chaos, not to mention the constant hassling and trickery, are nerve-wrenching. It is true that one can afford to buy and eat and lodge very well for much less than in Europe for example, but one must consider that this is possible only because so much of the population is desperate and living below any acceptable level of poverty.

[Link to Jim Gold's website.](#)



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Led by Richard Schmidt
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Inverness, Fort William, Glen Coe, Loch Lomond

ROMANIA! August 5-17

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Dancing at Mainewoods in 2016

by Martina Freitag

We struggled with various Scandinavian hambos on the coffee-strewn dance floor. Teacher, Roo Lester, explained that both partners must work equally to hold each firmly together, especially in the turns. So we progressed on to new partners, some very proficient, and some learning, each somehow helping the other. This considerate and encouraging aspect of dance etiquette is something worth appreciating in our social dancing. By the week's end, all the hambo dancers had improved. (Although one camper confessed he had been learning the hambo for fifteen years. Surely not typical? Or?) But it was said that Roo, with her dance partner Harry Khamis, could teach a moose to dance the hambo. Believe it.



*Roo Lester
in Scandinavian costume.*



*Cristian Florescu and Sonia Dion
in Romanian costumes.*

There were other memorable moments for the eight Canadian campers: Marcia Wolter, Devi Caussy, Thelma Feldman, Helga Hyde, Mirdza Jaunzemis, Anita Millman, Lynda Vuurman, and myself. Other Canuck staffers and teachers were also in attendance. Cristian Florescu and Sonia Dion, of Montreal, taught an advanced group Tuche Tuche, (pronounced 'tsukee') a fast Romanian dance from Transylvania, with leg slapping, clapping, twists, and turns, and finally, with large toothy grins and high fives from the triumphant performers. For us, their appreciative audience, there were other lively dances and much cultural education. We learned Hora Gospodarilor, a dance to thank great hosts, and a rain dance that I'm certain was the reason my Guelph lawn greened over during my American sojourn.

Our Ontario instructor, Miroslav Marčetić ('Bata' or 'Uncle', as he asked us to call him) taught Serbian dances. Tiny, light steps are his trademark, and his precise teaching style helped many of us understand the finer points of Serbian styling. Many also applied them.



*Miroslav and Rodika Marčetić
in Serbian costumes.*

Photos: Mirdza Jaunzemis.

Teachers, Jaap Leegwater and Ercüment Kiliç, stayed on for a few extra days after their official instructional week ended. Jaap joined the Mainwoods camp band, which included Susan Anderson, Carol and Bill Wadlinger, and Anne Ehrhart. Ercüment performed, in black toe shoes, (boots), an Azerbaijani dance which culminated in knife tossing - from his upper lip - to stand upright in the wooden floorboards! And part of his dance was done on the knuckles of his toes.

I will remember the delectable bread baked by one Serbian camper and served with salt by her daughter, another camper. When three masked Mosus and Babas (Grandpas and Grandmas) infiltrated the eponymous Romanian dance, they were bought off by Bata and wife Rodika's quick servings of slivovitz (plum brandy).

There was appreciation of the breakfast herring provided as part of Roo's Scandinavian influence. All food was well-prepared, culturally appropriate, and plentiful, thanks to Riki and Stav Adivi's recipes and efforts, and Walter Zagorski's efficient kitchen organization. Sandy Starkman's reminder about seconds, with serving spoon in hand, was sadly recalled by many in her absence this year. (Though no one dared to actually speak the phrase themselves.) Next year, hopefully, Sandy will rejoin us.



Ercüment Kiliç.



Masked Mosus and Babas flanked by Miroslav, Cristian, Rodika and Sonia.

Still, despite the food opportunities, one is wise to consider Cristian's strigaturi, a rhyme declaimed loudly, rhythmically and often during Romanian dancing. He created one for English speakers:

"If you eat but you don't dance,
Popo* won't fit in your pants."

One hopes always to retain at least a few such international phrases and dances from a successful dance camp.

**Popo is your rear end.*

From the Folk Dance Cookbooks

Wassail Bowl

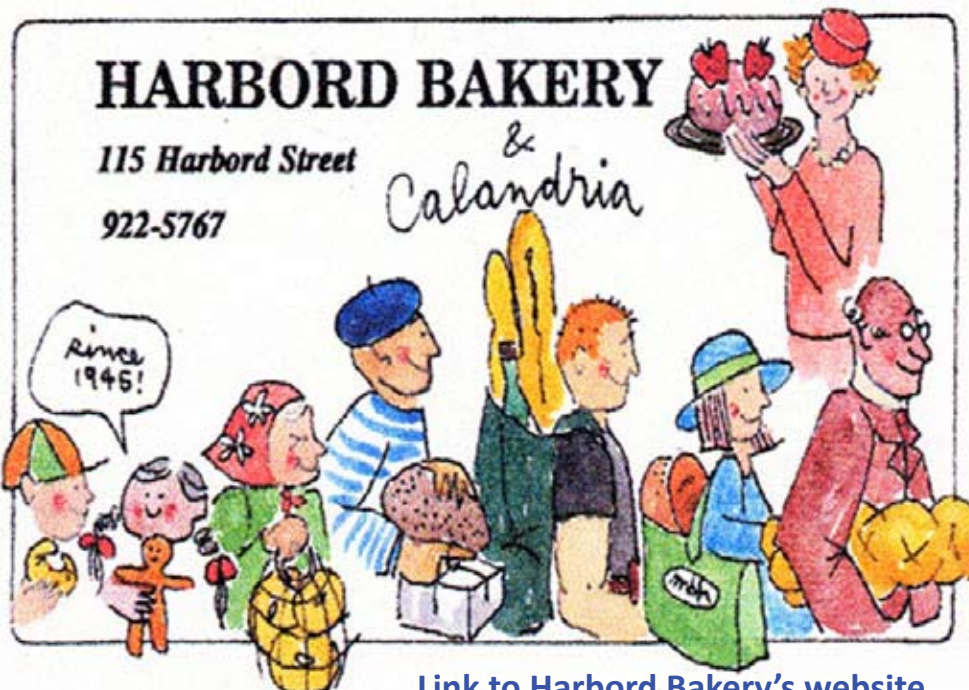
*Submitted by Walter Bye
to Ontario Folk Dancer Cookbook vol. I*



Whole cloves
10 – 2 inch cinnamon sticks
6 oranges
1 gal. apple cider (non-alcoholic)
1 ½ cups lemon juice
2 cups vodka
½ cup brandy



Insert cloves in oranges about 1 inch apart. Bake oranges in shallow pan for 30 minutes at 350 degrees F. Heat cider in a large pot until bubbles appear around the edge. Remove cider from heat and add lemon juice, cinnamon sticks and oranges.



Link to Harbord Bakery's website.



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Dancing Across the Atlantic

by Mirdza Jaunzemis



*Front row: Susan, Mirdza and Yves.
Back row: France and Steve.*

In mid-April 2016, I flew to Fort Lauderdale to join a group of 32 folk dancers for a trip across the Atlantic Ocean. This voyage had been on my bucket list, so now was the perfect opportunity to dance across the ocean. The ship was the *Celebrity Equinox*, and it carried 2860 passengers and 1100 crew members. My roommate was Shulamit Locker (Shula) from Jackson Heights, New York. She was 89 years old and had been dancing for many years – a true role model. Full of energy, she was always ready to have a good

time. She was amazing! Most of the other dancers were from the U.S.A., but two of our instructors were from Quebec, Yves and France Moreau. The other two were from the States, Steve and Susan Kotansky. The plan was to dance for two hours every morning and two hours every evening while at sea. This worked most of the time but one day the ocean was just too rocky. Also, on “dress-up” nights we did not dance.

We had a room assigned to us for dancing; it was carpeted, so some of us danced barefoot. We invited staff members, many of whom were from the Balkan countries, to join us, and some did and enjoyed themselves thoroughly. Yves taught mainly Bulgarian dances, some familiar to me, some not; and other Balkan numbers. France taught a mixture of international and French-Canadian dances. Steve taught mainly Balkan, but also Armenian, Turkish, Roma and Susan always helped to demonstrate the dances. In the mornings we learned the new dances and in the evenings we reviewed them, but also had request dancing. In the end we were treated to 25 new dances.

The ship had 15 decks, with a lovely sun deck at the top. There were many windy days but one could find a quiet sunny spot most of the time. There were two pools, a spa and a library, games room, casino, 14 lounges, and shops. Lessons in various types of dancing, besides folk, were offered: ballroom, bachata, rumba, merengue, and salsa. Lectures were offered, also movies, karaoke,



trivia games, and workshops. I discovered another bridge player among the dancers, Judy Krafchik, and we played bridge every afternoon while at sea. Helen Blum was also on this trip, so the four of us (with Shula) often chummed around together. I had met both Judy and Helen previously at Mainewoods Dance Camp, and it was nice to get to know them better. There also was very good entertainment every evening -two shows. We tried to squeeze in as many of these activities as we could, in addition to our dancing.



Helen Blum, Mirdza, Judy Krafchik and Shula Locker.

We were assigned to four tables in the dining room and we could sit at any of these on any given evening, thus getting to know the other folk dancers. The food was varied and excellent, with a huge buffet area on the 12th deck, and eight other dining areas in addition to the main one. We were given a tour of the galley - a huge space, all gleaming stainless steel. Since we were at sea for a total of eight days (six plus two after Ponta Delgada), the food all had to be on board ship right from the outset. It was stocked with 13,290 pounds of meat, 3,500 pounds of seafood, 2,300 dozen eggs, 12,300 pounds of potatoes, 75,000 pounds of fresh fruit, and so on. All food waste was composted and kept on board until the first port of call and other non-food items were also stored within the ship, so this cruise line did its utmost to refrain from polluting the ocean.

Our first port of call was the Azores: Ponta Delgada on Sao Miguel Island. Yves and France had arranged an excursion for us: first we stopped at a small pineapple plantation which grows a unique variety of pineapple in greenhouses because there is not a tropical sun. They are quite small, but have an intense flavour. We were then taken to Sete Cidades, the Lagoon of the Seven Cities. According to legend, there were seven towns that sank after an eruption of the volcano in the area. Twin lakes are joined by a land bridge in the crater of this volcano; one is blue, the other green, influenced by the angle of the sunlight on the water. We visited the small town in Lagoa and had a pleasant Azorean meal. The downside of this trip - lots of fog, typical of the Azores.

After two more days at sea, we arrived in Lisbon, Portugal. Many of us took the shuttle into town and explored the old district. Since I had been to Lisbon a few years earlier, I passed on the organized tour and I visited the ruins of the monastery within Lisbon that was destroyed

during the 1775 earthquake. Only the facade and the skeleton of the building remain, and some of the chapel rooms at one side are like a mini-museum containing artifacts and mementos that remained after the destruction. It is like an open-air cathedral - a quiet and peacefulness can be found in its interior.

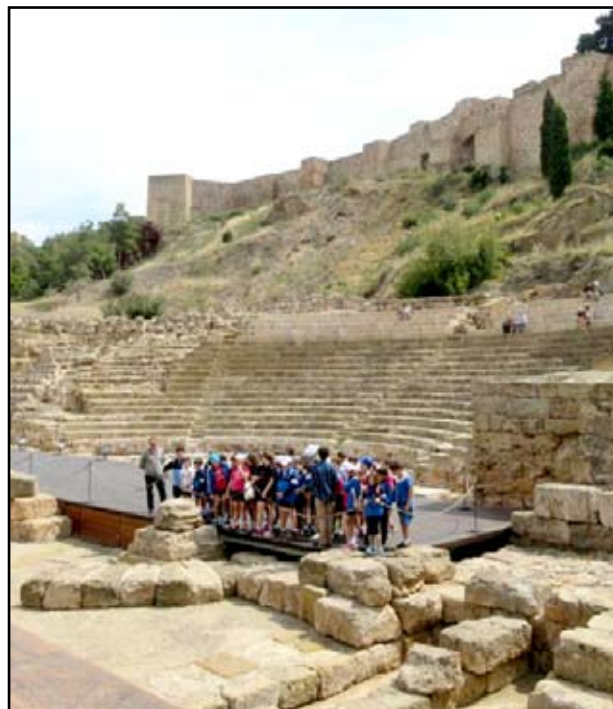


Flamenco performance in Cádiz.

Our next port of call was Cádiz, the oldest city in Spain. It is also one of the oldest cities in all of Europe, and has been the main home of the Spanish navy since the eighteenth century. The picturesque old city sits on a narrow peninsula surrounded by the sea, and has a mediaeval and Moorish feel to it. Some of its ancient walls are still intact. We took a walking tour through the old town, and then had a bus tour through the more modern part which lies outside of this spit of land.

We were treated to a flamenco show and some sangria inside a very small intimate venue, La Cava Taberna Flamenco. We were about ten feet away from the dancers – very intense and dramatic.

Then we went on to Málaga, the gateway to Andalusia and part of the Costa del Sol (Spain's Riviera). One of its claims to fame is that it is the birthplaces of Pablo Picasso and Antonio Banderas. I toured the city with some others and went to sample some *tapas* (snacks); I then explored the Alcazaba – a Moorish fortress, and the Cathedral which dominates the old town. An interesting feature in the old town was El Teatro Roman. It was an amphitheatre built in the first century CE and used until the third century, when it was allowed to fall into ruin. In 1951 it was rediscovered when archeologists began work on preparations for a garden and a Casa de la Cultura on this site. These plans were abandoned and, instead, the amphitheatre was unearthed which



First century Roman amphitheatre in Málaga.

was remarkably well-preserved. . Now the plan is to use it as an open-air venue for concerts. On the way back to the ship we could see the Pompidou Centre, the only branch of the art gallery in Paris that is found outside of France.

Alicante on the Costa Blanca was our next port of call. Instead of exploring this city, the four of us joined the excursion to Guadalest, an inland village, to visit San Jose Castle, once a Muslim stronghold, which sits strategically at the top of the highest cliff. On the way there we passed Benidorm, a seaside village, now all the rage with international tourists. This area is known for its olive, orange, almond and loquat groves. From the eagle's nest Castle, the view is magnificent, and within its walls are some historical buildings as well as a parish church. The Moors were ousted from Spain in 1492, and in 1644 there was a great earthquake which damaged the castle. Afterwards a Basque family, the Orduñas, administered the region from this fortress for many years.



View from San Jose Castle in Guadalest.



Català de Dansaires, the oldest Catalan folklore troupe.

We then arrived in Barcelona, our final destination. Shula and I were to stay here for a few days, so after we settled into our hotel we explored our new neighbourhood. We had dinner with the other folk dancers that night, and afterwards went to view the group, Esbart Català de Dansaires, the oldest Catalan folklore troupe. They demonstrated traditional Catalan



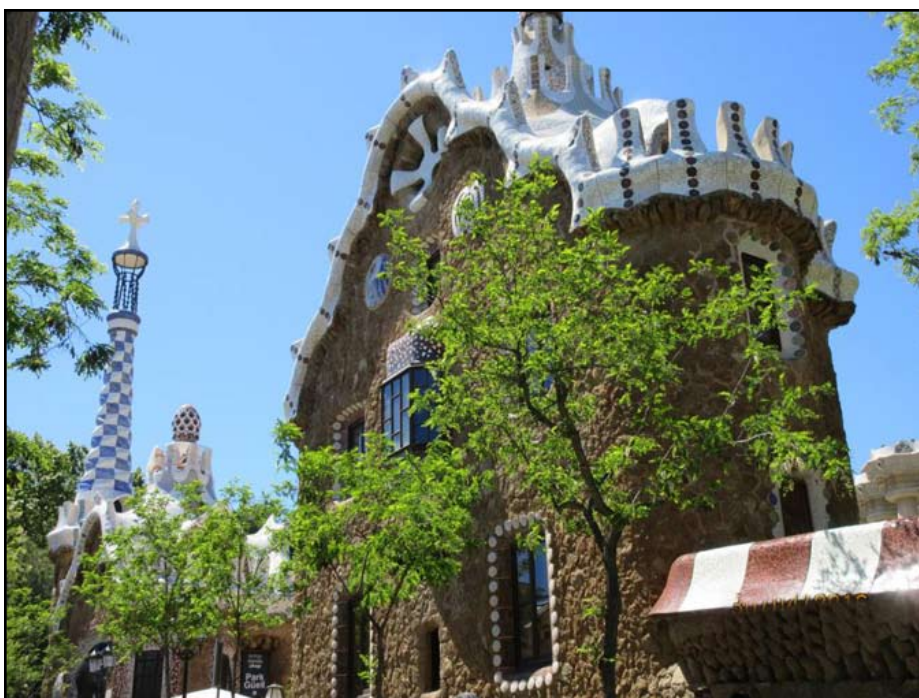
Balcony in the Palace of Music.

dances, accompanied by live music, and had us up dancing with them for one number. Their costumes were quite varied and interesting, especially the men's headgear.

One highlight of this stay in Barcelona was to visit the Palace of Music (*Palau de la Música*) in the old city - a magnificent concert hall reflecting Gaudí's style of architecture. It is a UNESCO world heritage site, and a "must see". We were able to tour it, and also to enjoy a flamenco and guitar concert the next evening. During our stay we took a hop-on-hop-off bus to see the sights;. We visited La Rambla, Barcelona's famous shopping street, strolled through the old town, and toured the huge cathedral in its centre. We were hoping to see La Sardana being danced in the square in front of the cathedral, but since it was May Day, other things were going on there. Of course we stopped to look

at Gaudí's Sagrada Família (still not finished), and toured La Pedrera, one of his surrealistic houses. Our final visit was to Parc Guell, a park designed by him, with dragons, drunken columns and interesting mosaics.

The next day we left Barcelona: I returned home, but Shula continued on to Cologne to visit friends. It was an interesting and enjoyable trip, and the folk dancing and meeting other folk dancers was, of course, a bonus.



Gaudí's presence in Parc Guell.

OFDA Azerbaijani Café

by Dorothy Archer

To view more photos of this event: ofda.ca/wp/photos/

At 6:00 p.m., a few folk dancers had arrived to the first café of the 2016/17 season and two tables were overflowing with Azerbaijani dancers, musicians and their friends. As usual, the potluck supper was enjoyed by all and toward the end of it, the musicians started to play – a keyboard, a caval, a naghare (drum), and a tar (similar to a guitar). Later two singers joined them and Leon Balaban played guitar.



After a few warm up exercises, Samad Pourmusavim, asked people to form a circle and he began teaching some basic steps to the dance, Yalli. There were many steps which became progressively more demanding. After a break for the door prize draw, five members of the Araz Dance and Music Ensemble performed, accompanied by the musicians and singers. Here we were treated to the very intricate and vigorous dancing of Azerbaijan. Yalli was danced again followed by another performance by the Dance Ensemble. The session ended with clapping rhythms.

The Azerbaijanis stayed on, many until the end of the evening and some joined in the request dancing. The energy generated by the lively spirit of the evening carried over for the rest of the time and it would not be a stretch to say that everyone went home happy.



Photos: Allen Katz.



The Spirit of Hungary

by Patricia Stenton

Photo: Conrad Stenton.



In the OFDA event calendar for this fall, my husband, Conrad, and I had spotted the performance by the Hungarian National Dance Ensemble on October 16. The title *Spirit of Hungary – Revolution and Roots in Dance and Music* intrigued us and we decided to get tickets.

Arriving at the Toronto Centre for the Arts was an experience in itself with the happy buzz in the vestibule. There was a lot of Hungarian spoken among the patrons. Some people were in traditional dress, and we even managed to spot Olga Sandolowich, who had told us she would be there.

From the program notes, as well as from the welcoming comments of dignitaries of the Hungarian-Canadian community, we learned that this dance performance had been especially created to honour the 60th anniversary of the 1956 Revolution and Freedom Fight in Hungary; the Magyar people's response to their oppression by the Soviet regime. It was apparent that a number of those in the audience had themselves experienced this uprising and some had emigrated to Canada that very year.

Part I of the dance program was called Spirit of Freedom. It began, very unlike any traditional Hungarian dance performance, with a 1950s radio at centre stage broadcasting Sándor Petőfi's poem, "Nemzeti Dal" ("Song

of the Nations”), well-known to Hungarians for capturing the spirit of revolution throughout Hungarian history. Dancers entered in earth tone street clothes, portraying the distress among the people during this 1956 uprising, but also the spirit of national strength and determination to defend the national heritage against foreign oppression. Powerful dance sections reminiscent of modern story ballets were interwoven with segments from traditional dances to make visible how the deep ethnic roots of the Hungarian people fueled their desire to fight back.

Titles of the choreographies included Uprising, during which ordinary black umbrellas were used in a number of creative ways, as weapons or standards or to provide shelters for the dancers. On the Street of Pest showed men and women arm-in-arm in ever changing marching formations that alternated with national dance patterns. A lyrical scene called Prayer showed the women of the families praying for their imprisoned fathers, husbands and sons, while the men interpreted through dance the harshness of their living conditions in jail. Emigration evoked the journey to a foreign land with its hopes and challenges, a very moving choreography.

After one more dance reminiscent of the efforts of students and young workers to fight for freedom and justice, the final piece before intermission erupted in a vibrant national dance emphasizing unity, solidarity and especially hope for the future expressed through mostly white costumes.

The second portion of the program intended to showcase the great variety of Hungarian folk music and dance. For Conrad and me this provided an enjoyable trip down memory lane. We first met in Hungary in 1981, attending “Hungarian Experience”, a two-part vacation in Hungary. The first week was a Hungarian culture seminar north of Budapest. We studied dance cycles from the Sárköz region of Southern Hungary with Sándor and Böske Tímár, who at the time were the directors of the Hungarian State Folk Ensemble. Csaba Pálfi was also one of the teachers that year. Besides dance we were offered lessons in Hungarian singing, costume history and embroidery, delightful excursions and dance performances.

Week two of this vacation was a bus tour of the Sárköz region, with cultural outings during the day. Each night there was a fabulous dinner and Táncház (dance party) prepared for us. Local dancers and musicians would perform in costume the very dances we had worked so hard to learn the previous week. Later the dancers would change into street clothes and invite us to dance their dances with them.

The beautiful scenery of the villages and the great hospitality of the locals made these experiences truly magical, with countless memories still vivid in our minds, even more than 30 years later.

You can imagine that it was very hard for us to sit still, as the second half of the program opened with Dances from Sárköz, accompanied by a group of gifted musicians. Over an hour of highly energetic dancing from various regions of Hungary followed, showcasing great dance technique throughout in very intricate choreographies by Zoltán Zsuráfsky, which demanded sophisticated musicality, impeccable rhythms and often split second timing. The musical arrangements by István Papp played on traditional instruments were delightful. The costume designers deserve our praise as well for the great variety of costumes depicting the various regions of the country.

The Hungarian National Dance Ensemble well deserved the standing ovation and thunderous applause for which they rewarded the audience with several encores. The Toronto performance was the only Canadian show on the ensemble's ten day North American Tour. A heartfelt "thank you" to the National Alliance of Hungarians in Canada for making this possible.



First National Symposium on Dance and Well-Being

In early November, this event was held in Toronto, with a focus on research related to dance for well-being. We hope to have a review of the symposium in our next issue.

<http://www.cda-acd.ca/announcements/first-national-symposium-for-dance-and-well-being>

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

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The Grapevine

Cecille Ratney will turn 100 years on December 28th. Cecille has been a dancer, a teacher, and a performer in the folk dance community and has served on many committees in Canada and the U.S.A. – OFDA, Ontario Folk Dance Camp, Maine Folk Dance Camp, and Mainewoods. Since she is a chartered accountant, the role of treasurer was always hers.

Kitty Cohen will be 104 on December 28th. She recently did her dream dance with choreographer Blake McGrath dancing cheek-to-cheek in front of fans and some of the world's top dancers at the Toronto International Centre. See www.ctvnews.ca/lifestyle/103-year-old-kitty-cohen-gets-her-dream-dance-1.3117622.

OFDA collaborated with the newly renovated Frank O'Connor Heritage House in Toronto. The home, which was once the mansion of the founder of Laura Secord Chocolates, is intended as a community hub and participated on this occasion in Toronto's Culture Days festival. OFDA was invited to participate and Riki Adivi led a session of international dancing for the event.

Maxine Louie and Gary McIntosh toured Portugal and Spain in September and October. Goran Ćirić spent the first week of October in Venice before going to Vienna. Dorothy Archer toured Italy from Venice to the Amalfi Coast. Shortly after her return to Toronto in early October, Sheryl Demetro and her sister, Lynn Morrison, left for Sorrento and hiked around Capri and the Amalfi Coast. Of interest was a tarantella show depicting the region's 500 years of history.

Ruth Belick fell and broke her hip when she was waiting for Wheeltrans to take her to the Azerbaijan café. After time in Toronto Rehab, she is recuperating at home and thanks OFDA members for their good wishes.



Photo: Gary McIntosh.

Maxine Louie in Spain, on the path to Santiago de Compostela.

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