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Cover Image: *The Peasants' Wedding, 1637-1638, painting by Pieter Brueghel the Younger.*

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[RETURN TO OFDA WEBSITE.](#)

Topics For Discussion? We Hope So.

by Dorothy Archer

It was bound to happen – a skinny issue. So skinny that it made me dig out my notes on Vlachs that I had long intended to make into an article. Now I know why I put the notes aside – there are too many theories and hypotheses about the origin of the Vlachs and related groups. For instance, one source says Eugène Ionesco is of Aromanian descent, presumably through his mother who was Greek, while another source says she was Jewish. For what I present here, I am indebted to Olga Sandolowich who lent me a great deal of information about Vlachs, especially in Greece. I also have used the internet. I take responsibility for any mistakes you might find.

In search of further material for this issue, I got the box of past issues from Kevin Budd, a former editor, and started reading at volume 1, number 1. Recently Jerry Bleiwas asked me how I thought folk dancing originated and when I came upon the two reprints included in this issue, I was delighted to have an answer. I hope you enjoy reading about the Vlachs and the origins of folk dancing and that they will provide food for thought.

As always, Nancy Nies has sent an interesting story, on this occasion about Shen Yun. Maybe you saw them when they were in your city but, if not, Nancy gives a preview. The recipe this month is for cherry cheesecake tarts which I first had at Ruth Ostrower's home. They are delicious and I hope you will try them.

The café with Dale Hyde was a great hit, but then Dale always is. We wish him well in his U.K. teaching assignments but have no doubt he will be a raving success. The New Year's Eve party was lots of fun. Riki and Stav Adivi are first-class hosts and their home lends itself to parties.

The Grapevine brings you up to date on those who have been ill and, happily, all are recovering. If we're going to live to be 100 years, which seems to be the bent of folk dancers, then we have to pay attention to our health and welfare.

Note that some people (not to mention names and not the proof readers) seem to have had too much summer holidays and there are two corrections from two previous issues. We've tried to do better this time.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

The following is excerpted from an article written by Walter Bye in the May 1983 OFDA magazine, a review of Ontario Folk Dance Camp on its 25th year:

“May 20–23, 1983 marks the 25th Ontario Folk Dance Camp. The first camp was held in May, 1959 at Geneva Park on Lake Couchiching commencing with supper on Friday evening and ending after lunch on Sunday.

The second camp became the 3-day Victoria Day Weekend extravaganza which it now is, and was held at Camp Pinecrest near Gravenhurst, from what I hear a somewhat rustic (Spartan?) setting. For the next four years, Ontario Folk Dance Camp was again held at Geneva Park. From 1965–1967 it took place at Westminster College, London and from 1968–1975 and 1977 and 1978 at Huron College in London. In 1976, Wilfred Laurier University in Waterloo was the setting, and since 1979, our camp has found its home at the University of Waterloo.

Dances from 56 countries or regions have been taught so far with the largest number (41) being square dances. In fact, for the first few years the camp was called the Ontario Folk and Square Dance Camp. Other countries with a high representation are Bulgaria (30), Poland, Turkey and New England (26 each), Mexico and Serbia (24 each) and Hungary and Israel (20 each)”

And now you can start thinking about 2017's Camp. May 19–22, in Waterloo with teachers Sonia Dion and Cristian Florescu (Romanian) and Anne Leach (International). Check www.ontariofolkdancecamp.ca for updated information.

Errata

The big Lisbon earthquake referred to at the top of page 23 in the October 2016 issue, was in 1755, not 1775.

In the December 2016 issue article, Dancing Around the Christmas Tree (Nancy Nies), the Danish Christmas tree photo credit--Herbert Hoover Presidential Library-Museum--was inadvertently left out.



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

OTEA SCHOLARSHIP

Each Year, OFDA offers the OTEA Scholarship to support a member who wishes to attend a course or workshop or other enrichment activity related to folk dancing.

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[2017 OTEA Scholarship Ad](#) and
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Divine Beings Dancing

by Nancy Nies



Never before, in my memory, had a dance performance in Bakersfield been heralded by full-page advertisements in our local newspaper and a beautiful 20-page booklet in our mailbox. Intrigued, Paul and I went one evening last April to see Shen Yun 2016, The Arts Connecting Heaven and Earth.

Founded in 2006 by expatriate Chinese artists in New York—members of the Falun Gong faith, now persecuted in China—its goal is to revive Chinese classical dance, dance stories, ethnic dance and folk dance, and its message is at once cultural, spiritual and political.

It is likely that some readers of this column have seen Shen Yun perform. In the past decade, Shen Yun Performing Arts has grown from one to four large touring dance companies, each with its own singers and full orchestra. It has toured throughout the world, presenting a new show each year.

The classical Chinese dance segments depicted an ancient legend about sea fairies, a Buddhist scripture about a mystical flower, a story of fourth century poets, and scenes from the Sui Dynasty (581-618), the Tang Dynasty (618-907), and the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911).

The dance stories also spanned many centuries and topics. Deities descend to Earth to form China's first imperial court; a young emperor defends his throne; a monkey king searches for a weapon; a woman becomes a moon goddess; monks with supernatural skills fight the Red Guard in the 1960s; Falun Gong practitioners are persecuted in modern-day China, but their faith gives them hope.

Ethnic dances presented were an energetic Tibetan women's dance and a powerful Mongolian horsemen's dance. One folk dance celebrated a good harvest, and the other was a handkerchief dance.

Expressive postures and impressive gymnastics made the dancing very dramatic, an effect intensified by the vibrant costumes. The vivid backdrop for each dance, projected in interactive video on a big screen, gave the illusion that dancers moved between the background and the stage.

The words shen yun translate as "the beauty of divine beings dancing." And Shen Yun's dancing was indeed divine! To view a short promotional video for the Shen Yun 2016 World Tour, go to www.youtube.com/watch?v=tC35DjhLml8. The trailer for the 2017 show is available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=e9232B5IMlg.



What is folklore and what purpose does it serve?

by Lucile Armstrong

Talk given at San Sebastian, Spain in September 1974 before the
International Folklore Conference.

Reprinted, in part, from Ontario Folkdancer Newsletter volume 6, number 5, May 1975.

There are several answers to these questions. One answer is, as Miss Theo Brown (a folklorist of Devon, southern England) put it: "All folklore is conditioned by inner myth patterns and outward circumstances. The first (the inner myth patterns) does not change, but may develop and appear in disguised forms. The second, (the outward circumstances) does change, according to the variations forced on society by invasion, catastrophes and many other factors. That is, history. This means that folklore is NOT fossilised, except in very cut-off isolated tribes. It is a living element in all human life and therefore does change subtly over the years." So much then for one person's idea of folklore.

But folklore comprises many aspects of human activity, and the ones I am chiefly concerned with are folk dance, folk music, and folk costume or what I prefer to call "regional costume". I shall refer to these separately. At the moment I shall confine my remarks to folk dance, how to appreciate its values, how to study folk dance, and why it should be preserved.

A short definition of folk dance presents problems. We may recognise that the term covers dances in the life of a community as practised by a people of a particular region, for a particular and fundamental

purpose, at a given period in time and because they believe in its message. This is so whether they are people in the mountains or in the plains, a maritime community or a pastoral one; whether in a hunting district or in an agricultural community; be it in a cold climate or a hot country. I mean by this that each type of economy required a style and content of dance adapted to its needs, right back in archaic times. For instance, a fishing economy required dances that would assure a good catch of fish; a hunting community needed a plentiful supply of game, birds or wild animals; the shepherd or herdsman of pastoral times evolved dances that would ensure large herds and the regular cycle of reappearance of sun and moon for the increase of pasture for the animals he depended on for sustenance for himself and his family. When agriculture was



Goatherds and shepherds making music and dancing, detail from "The Journey of Moses", c.1481-3. Pietro Perugino.

Photo of artwork in the public domain: Wikigallery.org.



A traditional Bulgarian all-male horo dance in ice-cold water on Epiphany in Kalofer, Bulgaria.

introduced, man created (or adapted) dances that would bring forth good crops. In short, we could say that a folk dance was created by the leaders of the community with the collaboration of many for the well-being of all, for all believed in the power and the necessity of the dance. In other words, folk dance of the ritual type is the fixing in movement, rhythm and figures of the needs and beliefs of man at a particular period of his evolution. A folk dance is therefore part of the religion of a community, of every member of that community.

But there are various types of folk dance. I mentioned this often, but will repeat it, if you will bear with me, for the sake of clarification.

There were seasonal ritual folk dances to preserve and promote the cycle of the year, thus ensuring its food supply. There were gymnastic or practice dances for young men to keep agile for the hunt or for the defence of the tribe (these are often referred to as Pyrrhic dances). There were therapeutic dances to cure the sick; teaching dances for the initiation of the young into the practices and beliefs of the tribe; courting dances to give youth an opportunity of meeting and obtaining a mate; and community dances in which all took part, and these were (and still are) most important, for they brought together every member of the community and united them



Courtship in dance; costume of Lima. Artist unknown, ca. 1860.

into a conglomerate whole, or entity.

Archaic man was observant – far more than we are – and he knew that a good cure for psychological disturbances was dancing, either through ecstasy dances, through constant rhythm or religious dances. [There] were also folk dances during the performance of which many disturbing spirits were able to regain their normal equanimity. Feuds and resentments also disappeared.

These, then, are some of the different kinds of folk dances that were evolved and some still exist.

But whatever definition we give to folk dance, it remains a “living whole” if we keep to the constituent parts. These parts are meaning, context and form. They are not really separate; they blend into a “whole” that shows the authenticity of the dance.

For example the context is the occasion on which a dance is performed, that which gives it the propriety. Prescribed occasions for example are; rites of passage, carnival (I mean here the old spring rites), thanksgiving, preparation for the hunt, fishing, gathering, grape or wine gathering or making, the changes of season, the rotation for crops, for the well-being of the herds, and for the community, the healing of the sick, the teaching of the young, celebrating occasions like weddings and events such as births, or important visits, and not least for the liberation from natural catastrophes. The context, then, is the occasion on which it is performed. The meaning is the purpose for which the dance was



Photo of artwork in the public domain: Wikimedia Commons.

Peasants Dancing Harvest Celebration, Karoly Lotz (1833–1904).



Photo: Wikimedia Commons. Public Domain..

Drumming accompanies Inuit dancing near Nome, Alaska in 1900.

created: ritual, social, etc.

The third fact is form. The form is the arrangement of the important elements of the dance which symbolically show the purpose. The underlying meaning of the dance, performed within the appropriate context, is conveyed to participants and onlookers alike. The form comprises the resources, the realization, and the accompaniment.

By resources I mean the dress and props (sticks, swords, maypole, masks, hobby horse, etc.), the dividing into groups by number, by sex, or age-group, or by all of these. By realization I mean the shape: that is the steps and figures. The third element is the accompaniment. The accompaniment is provided by music, vocal or instrumental, by percussion, clapping of hands, or the dancers' own feet. All these belong to the realization of a folk dance, for they provide the "atmosphere" that is, the feeling, or emotion engendered by the dance. Accompaniment and dance belong together. The steps and figures symbolize the origin, the meaning or purpose of the dance

There a problem arises: How does one learn about folklore?

There are several ways , complementary to one another. One that I would recommend is by looking around one's own surroundings, noting any seasonal festivals or feasts, finding out from books and by asking the performers or participants, why they exist, who started them, what they represent, what the beliefs are connected with these festivals. Also whether a particular costume is used and why. Noting everything however irrelevant it may appear is all important. There will be different answers but all must be noted until experience tells you which are the likely explanations and which may be discarded. In studying folklore one must be prepared to discard a lot and not take

assertions for granted. Reading will help here. But at first, note down everything then sift data through commonsense and through the logic exercised by the mentality of the performers.

When the experience is gained it will become imperative to compare with other regions, other countries, other continents, because otherwise it will not be possible to understand customs fully unless balanced by information from other regions and other periods. By studying comparative anthropology, pre-history, beliefs, dances, music, costume and religions, we can better understand our own past and the meaning and purpose of our folk dances.

What is the purpose of preserving folk dances as they were handed down to us? And what purpose does folklore serve?

When you build a house you must have foundations. When you plant a tree you must know the soil it requires, the size it is likely to attain, what habitat is favourable to its development. So with man. Man needs to refresh his psyche and get inspiration from his own past. Not only from written history but from his (at times) forgotten customs. Man needs sound foundations to refresh the spring of his inspiration. Perspective is as necessary in studies as it is in life, and in inspiration for the future course of action. Without perspective man has no roots. Folklore is one way of providing a sound foundation for the future. In other words, when you study, study for future generations as well as for yourself. Preserve folk dances as you learnt them because they serve a useful purpose in more ways than one. They show you how early man solved his problems. This may help to solve some of the future.



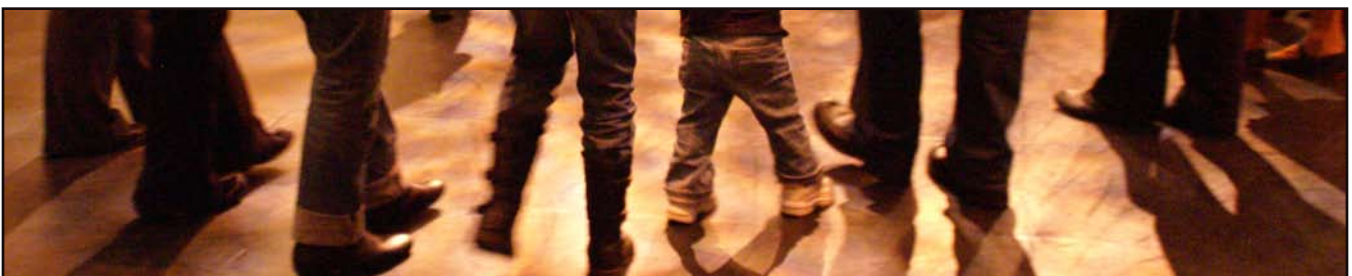
Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program.

Henri Rousseau (French, 1844–1910), *A Centennial of Independence, French, 1892*

Wherever we search, we find that dance has been part of man's ritual for his aspirations and his religion. Dance has been part of his life as a means of teaching, of curing and of conveying his wishes to the forces of nature, as well as a means of endeavouring to control these forces for his own benefit. For example, the Emperor of China, until the beginning of this century, danced at the New Year festival with his court. Without these sacred dances they believed the New Year might not come. He also ploughed the first furrow.

From what we have seen so far, ritual dance was an integral part of the beliefs of man. Religion was evolved through the necessity of ensuring food and general prosperity of a community. Many thousands of years have elapsed since those remote times so man has learnt a great deal. He has become more sophisticated with easier living conditions. Material progress has helped him to get "outside himself" and given him leisure to study his own past and that of his world. But we must not forget that hard-earned experience of man through the millennia. He learned to consider the cosmos, or all this earth, the planets and stars, as one creation by one God, whatever name was given to this creator. Ancient man understood the importance of dance in its many aspects, and of religion as a vital necessity for his own well-being. Our religion has changed, but in spite of that we must not forget that nearly everything we have today, we owe to the past, for what we have now was founded on past experience. Therefore, we should preserve what we have inherited in the way of folk dance, folk music and customs, folk tales and sayings, for these facets of folk memory are at the heart of our traditional culture. We must not alter the dances. We must note and photograph what we can of the dances still preserved to pass on our knowledge to future generations. They will need this information for guidelines to shape their future. I am convinced that folk dances and the symbols they contain are a key to the human psyche. The modern intellect cannot invent symbols which are connected only with the conscious mind. Symbols become active in releasing psychic forces only when the unconscious has accepted them and made them its own.

So my message is: "Don't invent folk dances. Keep the ones we have, faithfully. If new dances are invented they will be "community dances", or "social dances" or "stage dances", but they cannot be "folk dances", for these are folk only when they are accepted by all, as part of the life of the community."



Photos: Bev Sidney

English Ritual Dances

by Lucile Armstrong

Excerpted from What is Folklore and What Purpose does it Serve? Talk given at San Sebastian, Spain, in September 1974 before the International Folklore Conference and reprinted here from Ontario Folkdancer Newsletter volume 6, number 5, May 1975

In 1973 I attended a festival of Morris dances at Thaxted in Essex (eastern England). This festival takes place yearly. Thaxted is an old hilly town and its chief church is perched on top of the highest hill. Morris teams (or sets, or sides) come from all parts of England and perform all day and the following night in that charming centre.

In the afternoon we waited near the ancient townhall for the dancers to come. They poured down from two opposite directions along the main street, all dancing together, each team to its own band. When they met near the townhall they danced as one body – several hundred men – then each team separately.

The teams consisted of six or eight men, in two rows facing one way. The figures were similar: moving forward and back in place, crossing over sides to opposite place, crossing over diagonally, like a cross, moving in circles or in figures of eight. They all pivoted on themselves on the spot, they leapt high, waved their arms, etc. Some dance required handkerchieves, twisting them in the air in mark time, other dances needed sticks to strike across to partner, while some were used for hitting the ground (as in Basque dance). All these are of a ritual nature.

In ancient days the circle represented the sun, but it also was a protective figure to prevent evil influences from entering the community, or good ones from escaping. The crossing over diagonally represented the four points of the compass, or the cross, which meant the cosmos. Hitting the ground with sticks may have meant two things, either imitating the sowing of the seed with a sowing stick, or waking the spirits of the earth in spring time, to entice them to make the seed grow. The figure of “8” meant eternity or infinity – as it still does today. It is obvious from these



Fifty years of Morris—the Icknield Morris Men celebrated the side's half century with dancing atop the White Horse Hill, July 4, 2009.

Photo: Des Blenkinsopp via Wikimedia Commons.



Costumes of white trousers and shirts with red and green baldricks.

figures that the dances were created in early agricultural times. Six or eight men meant the duality of life. Early man understood the duality of life such as: male-female; summer and winter; youth and old-age; good and bad, etc.

Some teams wore white trousers and shirts, some wore dark breeches to the knee, some wore purple breeches with jackets to match, red waistcoats and stocking, but all wore baldricks (criss-cross over the breast and back) with flowers or ribbons attached. Some wore quantities or ribbons of different colours all over the jacket (like the stilt dancers of Anguiano in Soria, Spain). Some teams wore straw hats or black felt hats, or purple or red ones but most of them wore flowers on their hats and some wore coloured ribbons down their back. (Their ritual brothers on the Continent also do the same.) Some wore black boots, others, from the centre of England where the weather is wet, wore wooden clogs.

In general the costume became fixed at a period when a certain fashion prevailed, so the costume followed that fashion. But the fact of wearing flowers on the hat meant that the men were “bringers of the flower season” that is, spring. These dancers were messengers of a New Year to the community and by going from farm to farm, they brought prosperity to the inhabitants. In their own villages the men would sing and dance before a house and in return for bringing “luck” householders gave them refreshments or money. It was believed in olden times that good crops would surely come if the Morris men came to dance at a farmstead; so crops would fail if they failed to dance.

Streamers, or coloured ribbons, hanging down the backs of the men represented the unification of the cosmos. White for purity, clouds and rain; blue for the sky, happiness



Costumes of multi-coloured ribbons and blackface.

Photos: Tim Green from Bradford (Morris dancers at York) via Wikimedia Commons.

and purity; yellow for the sun; red for life and love; green for new vegetation; black for the underworld. The dead were believed to take part in the living world, and would influence the growing of the seed. The symbolism of colour is still very important at the present day.

Clogs or boots would enable the dancers to stamp louder and wake the spirits of the earth, indicating to them that they must help the seed to grow. Many agricultural regions possess stamping dances, in most parts of the world.

The act of leaping high during a dance may have been inherited from ancient customs. It is well known, for example, that the Roman priests, the Salii, leapt high to indicate how high they required the corn to grow.

Let us now cast a glance at other types of ritual dances in England. There are of course various types. One important archaic group in English ritual dance come from Bacup, Lancashire. The men dress in black breeches and shirts with a short white skirt edged with red, a red and white cap, baldrick across the breast and back decorated with rosettes, and black wooden clogs. They blacken their faces (a sure indication of masks worn at some remote time) and are believed to have represented the spirits of vegetation. They carry half coconuts fixed to their hand, waist and knees, and rub them in complicated rhythms during the dance as they lean forward to do so. Frequently they bend forward and “listen” to the spirits or to a call, “cupping” their hands to



Morris dancers in York, demonstrating fine leaping form.

their ears, and look to right and to left as they do so, as if expecting an answer. This gesture is very telling. They dance in two sets of four, or together forming an eightsome circle. Their stamping is important. They are called the “Coconut Dancers.”

www.youtube.com/watch?v=SI58rIDNdWA

Another group, from Staffordshire, comes from Abbots Bromley.



The Britannia Coconut Dancers, a folk dance troupe from Bacup in Lancashire, England.

Photo: Kezka Danza Taldea Eibar via Wikimedia Commons.

Photo: Tim Green from Bradford (Morris dancers at York) via Wikimedia Commons.

This part of the country was once heavily wooded hence hunting was the traditional economy – until man cut down the forests. They wear a costume obviously meant to represent deer. They carry reindeer's antlers throughout the dance and their formation is snake-like; they follow one another in single file treading silently as they go, imitating the walk of deer. Evidently a hunting dance that has been kept up because of its strong tradition. Note that their formation is totally different from that of an agricultural dance.

Another type of ritual performance in England is that of the mummers who perform a "death and resurrection" drama. One character – usually called St. George, or King George – fights a bad knight (often a "Turkish" knight). The Good Knight dies but a "doctor" from a distant land is brought in and brings the dead knight back to life. The Good Knight is then rejuvenated. www.youtube.com/watch?v=KYJ6Tp6MQIo There are many versions of this theme, some bringing in a hobby-horse (symbol of fertility), some Betty – or Betay – the Man-Woman who may be the wife or mother (or both) of one of the characters. At times she carries a baby in her arms. This drama is widely spread in Europe and its origins are attributed to the death of the Old Year and the birth of the New Year, or representations of the equivalent. Europe has several interesting versions of the same theme, including some dances, such as the fiddle, or bagpipe, or pipe and drum or shawm and drum. Other characters accompany these companies of ritual performers, such as a story teller, an announcer, who also collects money for refreshments.

There are of course other types of ritual dances in Britain, but they would take us too far. Suffice it to add that some of our Morris men carry sticks (like their ritual brothers in Europe), swords or handkerchieves. Violet Alford believes that sticks preceded swords because they represented the ancient sowing sticks, and that swords only came in with the metal age, some thousands of years later, turning the dance into a weapon dance instead of an agricultural rite which it once was.*

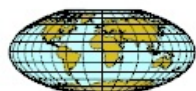
*H. Jeanmaire, *Courois et Couretes*, Bibliothèque Universitaire, Lills, France, 1939.



Morris Men.

Photo: Jim Champion via Wikimedia Commons.

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



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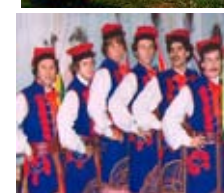
Led by Jim Gold

Bucharest, Sibiu, Cluj, Sighetu Marmatiei,
Piatra Neamt, Brasov

BALKAN SPLENDOR October 15-28

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Looking Ahead: 2018-2019

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From the Folk Dance Cookbooks

Cherry Cheesecake Tarts

Submitted by Paula Ralph
to Ontario Folk Dancer Cookbook vol. II



2 - 8 oz. packages of cream cheese

3/4 cup sugar

2 eggs

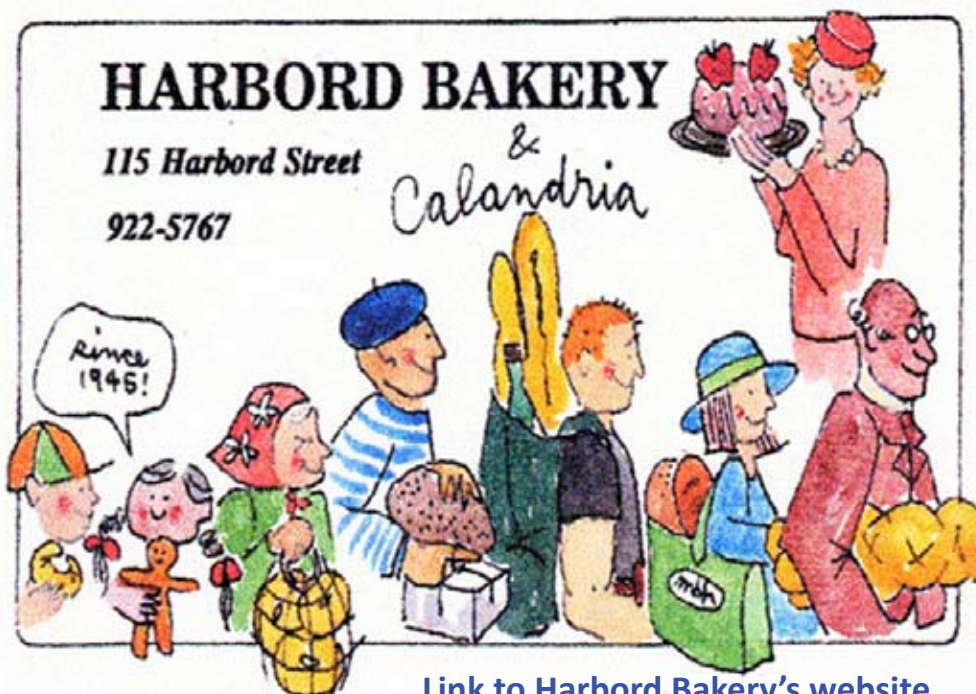
1 tsp. vanilla

30 vanilla wafers

Cherry pie filling



Mix together cream cheese, sugar, eggs, and vanilla. Put paper liners into muffin tins. Put vanilla wafer on bottom and pour cheese mixture in on top. – about halfway up. Bake at 350 degrees F. for 12–15 minutes. Remove from oven and cool. Top with cherry pie filling. You also may top with other fruit pie filling or fresh fruit. Makes 30.



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

The Vlachs

by Dorothy Archer



Traditional Clothes of the Vlachs, 1840s.

Some of the nicest music we dance to comes from the Vlachs. The origin of the Vlachs cannot be documented and varies in the telling but they appear to be descendents of the aboriginal people who lived in the province of Dacia in present day Romania. The Romans, who occupied this area from the 2nd century BCE to the 3rd century CE, married with the indigenous people and from here came a new group. They were dispersed due to migrations of other groups after the Romans left and took refuge in mountainous areas of Greece, Albania and Macedonia. Traditionally they were shepherds and woodworkers although some farmed. Mary Triantafillou, who dances with the Don Heights Group, told us her father was Vlach and came to northern Greece from Yugoslavia when a young man. He referred to himself as Vlachos and his culture as Vlachi. He followed in his father's footsteps and had a shoe repair business.

Vlach is a name of Germanic origin adapted by the Slavs which is used generally only in Serbia and Bulgaria. Other groups call themselves Români, Rumâni, Rumâri, Aromâni, Arumâni. Furthermore, the Aromâni, who live in Greece, use the name of the dialectal group to which they belong. They are not a nationalistic group, therefore, many have disappeared into other cultures but there are still identifiable groups

Image via Wikimedia Commons.

mainly in Romania, Macedonia, central and southern Albania, central and northern Greece and smaller groups in Croatia, Hungary, Ukraine, and Serbia. There are also Vlach communities in France and Germany and North America.

In the mid-1980s, the Pan-Hellenic Union of Vlach Associations www.farsarotul.org/nl31_6.htm was formed and organizes an annual cultural reunion festival. This Association has also influenced the launch of a monthly newspaper and the publishing of books and CDs. A movie entitled *I'm not Famous but I'm Aromanian* has also been released. It can be downloaded at www.downloaddes.com/download-I-m-Not-Famous-But-I-m-Aromanian-Dvdrip-movie-9200700.html.

Despite having their own language and traditions, Vlachs are assimilating into the larger Balkan groups. This means that their music and dances are often credited to other communities of the Balkans. Goran Ćirić, who dances with the University of Toronto IFDC group, recognized Homoljanka and other tunes as ones he heard from a Vlach community in Eastern Serbia. While we are all aware that Ini Vitui Ni Feata Moi is Aromanian, other dances that just might be Vlach are Lea Musat Armina, Olahos, Vidinsko Horo, and Maica. Researchers in the Pindos Mountains observed Vlach dances in two or more circles, with the women on the

outside. They also saw couple dances with partners of the same sex. And, of course, there are the circle dances www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dqt2QMoMgDE.

Their songs, while usually danced to, are also sung sitting around a table or a living room. They might use the instruments of their adopted country but their main instrument is their voice. Listening to the singer for Ini Vitui, it is a beautiful instrument.

◀ This image was created by two pioneers of photography and cinema – Aromanian brothers Yanaki and Milton Manaki – and was used by a company in the US to advertise cheese.

“The National Archive of the Republic of Macedonia preserves more than 17,000 photos and over 2000 meters of movie film from the brothers Manaki. They left a rich legacy of important documentary value of the historical and cultural development of Eastern Europe. In their honor the Manaki Brothers Film Festival is held every year.” (Source: *Wikipedia*)



Vlach shepherd in traditional clothes (1899).

Photo: Manaki Brothers, via Wikimedia Commons.



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[Link to the Dance on the Water website.](http://www.folkdanceonthewater.org)

New Year's Eve Party 2016

See more photos on the OFDA website: www.ofda.ca/photos.html.

The OFDA New Year's celebration party was again generously hosted this year by Riki and Stav Adivi, and the weather co-operated for the approximately 50 people who made the trip to King City.

Photos: Allen Katz.



A plentiful spread of Potluck offerings.

◀ New Year's Eve coincided with the last evening of Chanukah this year, and Riki lit the eighth candle on two menorahs, with the assistance of her youngest folk dance pupil.



▲ The dance hall quickly transforms into a dining hall, comfortable for potluck munching and mingling.



The traditional and delicious Harbord Bakery layer cake appeared, thanks to Roz Katz. The cake says it all...

Dale Hyde's International Dance Café, November 26, 2016

by Karen Bennett

See more photos on the OFDA website: www.ofda.ca/photos.html.



Photo: Allen Katz.

*Dale demonstrating with the assistance of Helga Hyde;
she'll be helping him similarly for his UK workshops.*

The flyer for this dance café read, "Dale was the recipient last year of the OTEA Scholarship award, which he used towards attending the Society for International Folk Dancing summer school in Wales, 2015. Although he wasn't one of the invited faculty, he was asked to teach a Canadian workshop. As a result, he was invited to return to the UK in early 2017 to teach two workshops. Two workshops quickly became five in several locations, with teaching requests for dances from Canada, Latin America and Eastern Europe! At this café we'll be getting a preview — expect dances from Canada, Russia and Latin America."

The dates for Dale's tour are March 18 to 28, 2017. He announced during the café that (a) requests to teach workshops in the UK were currently up to six, and (b) Helga Hyde was going as his partner.

In 2015 (September 26, to be precise), OFDA held a dance café with Dale that consisted of six dances Dale *brought back* from the UK; the 2016 version contained five of the dances he might be *taking across* in 2017—"might be" because Dale was still receiving names of dances already known in the UK. So his presentation list at this café was a work in progress.

First was a Canadian partner non-mixer dance, Garde la Tienne (Keep Your Own). Second was Leana (a woman's name), a gentle circle dance from Oltenia, Romania that Dale learned from Marius Ursu. Our third dance was familiar to those of us who'd attended 2014 Ontario Folk Dance Camp with Lucia Cordeiro or any of her subsequent workshops in Toronto, as it was the Brazilian mixer Dona de Mim (Owner of Myself). For our fourth dance, we went to Russia for the partner non-mixer Posadila Rozu (I Planted a Rose), choreographed by Hennie Konings around 2005. When I located the notes for this demure women's dance—Radboud Koop had taught it at Stockton camp in 2008—I read, "A man may join if he dances with appropriate modesty"!



Grand Chain during Canadian dance The Thief: prepare to lose your partner!

Finally, we returned to Canada for another French-Canadian dance, the partner mixer The Thief, which Dale had learned in Northern Ontario. If the dance had a French name, it would be something like *Le Voleur*, but Dale said that only the English name was in use where he learned it. Four days after the café, he told me via e-mail: “I learned The Thief in Corbeil (just outside of North Bay). [There are] many French [sur]names in the area but I

don’t recall hearing much French spoken. People gave me other names for the dance in English. As far as the melody used, I just hunted around through my collection of Canadian fiddle LPs and CDs until I found something that would fit. We really don’t have any specific tunes for our Canadian dances.” The Thief in question is an extra person who jumps in during the grand chain and steals someone else’s partner, engendering much chaos and laughter.

The mixers—whether one kept one’s partner or not—rendered the café even more sociable than usual, and I found myself having an exceptionally good time.

Dale attended summer school at the University of Wales in Swansea in 2010 (his article on it appeared in the *Folk Dancer* in December 2010) and in 2015 (article: December 2015). Two teachers Dale met at Swansea have subsequently taught at Waterloo camp: Christina Casarini in 2011 and Karin Bellaart in 2016. The cross-fertilization between the UK and Canada has indeed been notable, and I look forward to reading a report on Dale’s UK tour in a future issue of the *Folk Dancer Online*.



Author Karen Bennett dancing with Dale Hyde.



The Grapevine

Photos: Dorothy Archer.



Cecille with Raphie and Nate Sussman.



Cecille still dances!



Happy Birthday, Cecille.

The Wednesday evening dance group at Prosserman JCC celebrated Cecille Ratney's 100 years at their last session for 2016. Her birthday is December 28th but the official celebration is deferred until April. A special guest was Nate Sussman, a dancer for 40 years, who came with his son Raphie.

Marco Betancur, the teacher of the Colombian students who have joined in the dancing at Camp the last two years, wrote, "I wanted to thank you again for the great experience you gave us during our last trip to Canada. Our families are really thankful for how you treated us. I hope that we can see you next year and enjoy your presence. The pictures are awesome and we have really enjoyed them! Please give great hug to everyone there!"

Adam and Shirley Kossowski and Terri Taggart attended Belco Stanev's Bulgarian weekend workshop in Montreal last November. Adam reports that Belco taught some great dances to beautiful, exhilarating music. Over 100 attended the workshop. Adam plans to present one or two of Belco's dances at a workshop in Hamilton in March.

Rainer von Konigslow developed what appeared to be pneumonia in November which left him with side effects requiring rest and no dancing. With luck he will already have been on the dance floor when you read this. Sandy Starkman has a new knee and is recuperating nicely. Nora Brett has recovered from her hip operation but has developed other complications so is out of commission for a while. Susan Samila is out of her wheelchair and looking forward to dancing in Ottawa.

Sandy Starkman recommends the Belle Restaurant and Bar in Northview Centre, 4949 Bathurst St. (northeast corner of Bathurst and Finch). She and Thelma Feldman were there recently and a musician played all kinds of music on an electric piano and then got up and wandered around playing the accordion. Sandy says, "When he was behind us he played some folk music and we started singing - things like Erev Ba and Mayim. He loved it as much as we did. He has a Roma band with a singer and dancer and they play at some restaurant in Richmond Hill. The food is marvelous also."