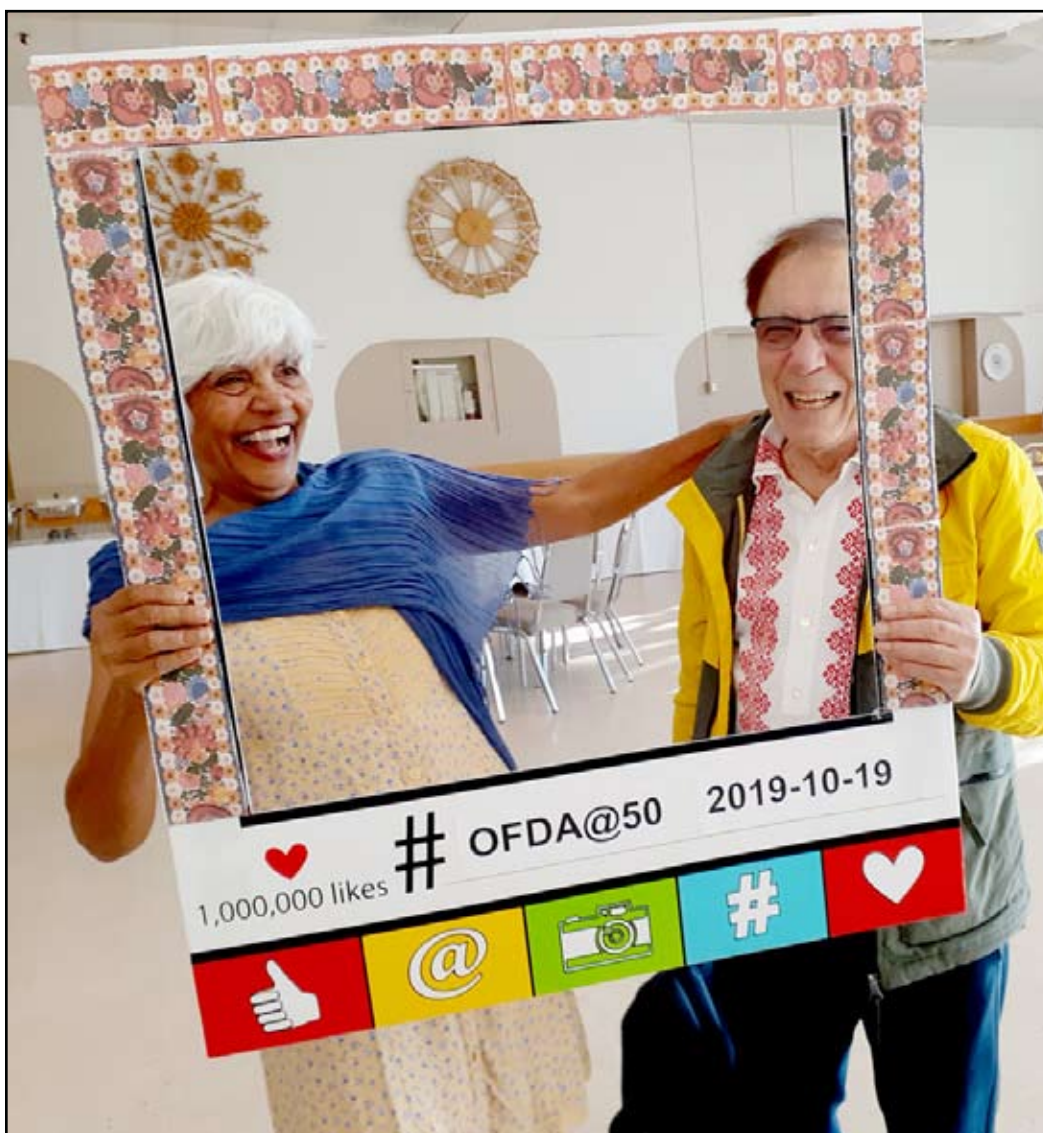


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for local information and links to other
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Cover Image: Devianée Caussy and Allen Katz trying out the 50th Anniversary Photo Frame..
Photo: Bev Sidney.

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[RETURN TO OFDA WEBSITE.](#)

And Now We are Fifty

by Dorothy Archer

This issue is mainly history but I don't think it will put you to sleep. Stefania Szlek Miller has brought her *Folk Dancing Then and Now* series up-to-date with "Folk Dancing in the Digital Age" It is a painless history lesson – the writing flows and the remembrances are interesting. We owe Stefania a debt of gratitude for all this work which is so important to our existence.

The obituary of Ernie Krehm is more history of folk dancing in Ontario. Many of us didn't know Ernie but we've all heard about him. And no wonder. He was the great innovator and we continue several events thanks to him. It was sad that he died the same week as the Celebration as we had hoped he would attend – and we'd all get to meet him..

Well, it isn't all written history. We celebrated 50 years of OFDA with music, dancing, eating, friendship. It was a wonderful party and makes us realize the camaraderie of folk dancing. As a fairly new dancer said to me "It's inclusive." I agree wholeheartedly. We've included lots of photos to mark the occasion.

The recipe is not historic but Christmas is coming and Jan Hagels are traditional Dutch Christmas cookies which are served throughout the holiday season. They are one of the traditional desserts served at the Feast of St. Nicholas and its Eve which fall on December 5th and 6th each year. (However, Annemarie Kaufman tells me that when she was young in the Netherlands, they ate them year round.) Jan Hagel was not an actual person. There are several theories for the origin of the name. One theory is that it refers to the type of people who enjoyed them most in 17th century Holland – sailors, riffraff, people on the edge of society (janhagel means unruly mob or ragtag). But according to legend, Jan Hagels are the cookies the angels serve to people who reach the gates to heaven.

I wish you all a very happy 2020.



Carl Toushan brought his collection of OFDA t-shirts to adorn the wall at the 50th Anniversary Celebration.

Photo: Allen Katz.

CONDOLENCES

to folk dancers and their families...Donations have been made by OFDA to it's Bereavement Fund in memory of the fathers of OFDA Executive members Paula Tsatsanis and Shirley Kossowski, as well as Stav Adivi's father.



For thoughtful donations:

- to Carl Toushan for his gift to OFDA.
- to Joan & Paul Tressel for their gift towards funding OFDA's 50th Anniversary Celebration.

Photos and videos of the 50th Anniversary Celebration can be viewed at
<http://ofda.ca/wp/50th-anniversary-celebration/>



This issue of the magazine is devoted to fifty years of Ontario Folk Dance Association.



Photo: Allen Katz.

O, T and A of the OTEA Scholarship Fund, Teme Kernerman, Olga Sandolowich and Al Gladstone.

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OFDA Celebrates 50 Years of Dancing

by Dorothy Archer

50



Photo: Bev Sidney.

Our 50th Anniversary Celebration mascot, Allen Katz, and wife Roz.

More than 100 people, many in ethnic blouses, dresses, shirts, or vests, gathered at the Latvian Cultural Centre in Toronto on October 19, 2019 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the OFDA. For the first hour there were joyful reunions and happy introductions while the band played and people were served wine and appetizers. Then President Ed Thompson welcomed all and introduced the Master of Ceremonies, Fred Slater. Fred's first announcement was that it was time to eat. And a delicious meal it was whether one had chosen chicken, salmon or vegetarian lasagne.

The seven-member band, Ventanas, led by Ilana Tamar, already knew some of the folk dance tunes but had made a point of learning many more. It added to the enjoyment of the evening and was much appreciated by the dancers. Ventanas is an award-winning band, a well-deserved accolade..

Throughout the evening, the



Photo: Allen Katz.

Ventanas Band in action.



Master of Ceremonies, Fred Slater.

MC reminded us of other events of 1969 when OFDA was formed and he had a few good stories about folk dancing. He kept the evening on track including the cake cutting by the "deans of OFDA folk dancing" Al Gladstone, Olga Sandolowich and Teme Kernerman. Later, friends who are no longer with us were remembered with the dance Sulam Ya'akov.

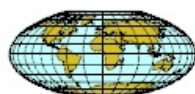
The last dance was led by members of the OFDA Executive who had organized the event. It took hours of work and dedication but, hopefully, the huge success of the party makes them feel it was all worthwhile.

If you were there, then enjoy re-living the evening through these photos, and others scattered throughout the magazine. If you missed, well, we are sorry for you, but hope the photos will be a consolation prize.



Photo: Bev Sidney.

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The following article is the sixth in the series **Folk Dancing: Then and Now**

Folk Dancing in the Digital Age: 2012 to OFDA's 50th Anniversary

By Stefania Szlek Miller

The previous five instalments of the history of OFDA and folk dancing are in the Folk Dancer, Dec. 2011 to Feb. 2013 in hard copy issues as well as online on OFDA's website.

"We are still dancing" is how I concluded my fifth instalment of this series on the history of OFDA and folk dancing. (February 2013 issue). It marked the end of Kevin Budd's long editorship of the *Folk Dancer* magazine in 2011. This sixth instalment covers the period from 2012 to OFDA's 50th Anniversary in October 2019, a major achievement. Kudos to the OFDA Executive, especially the five people in primary leadership roles during this period: Riki Adivi, Beverley (Bev) Sidney, and Helen Winkler of the Steering Committee, and Dorothy Archer and Karen Bennett, the two Editors of the *Folk Dancer* magazine. A tribute to them follows this article.

My continuation of the history of OFDA and folk dancing will again rely on the *Folk Dancer* magazine (this includes the paper and online issues after 2014). Karen Bennett's thorough *Index* of all the articles published in the magazine also has been an indispensable resource. Readers who may wish to explore some of the stories in this article can find all the issues for the 2012-2019 period on OFDA's website, and this includes the comprehensive *Index* that covers 50 years of OFDA's publications. In 2015, the *Folk Dancer Online* launched us fully into the digital age with Dorothy Archer as Editor and Bev Sidney continuing as Production Manager. Their expertise with online publishing assured a smooth transition.

OFDA also provided assistance to the Hamilton International Folk Dance Club (HIFDC) when it decided it was time to move into the 21st century. Walter Zagorski provided valuable advice on downloading music to our new laptop. Aside from his prowess dancing and acting, Walter is the techie many of us consult. Arnaud Dubois and Adam Kossowski of HIFDC provided technical support in addition to converting music from our cassettes and CDs that were not available on MP3 file downloads. That process took over a year. Halina Adamczyk arranged to list HIFDC on the web. Once done, there was no going back to the old system. Has the medium changed the nature of folk dancing?



Stefania S. Miller.

Photo: Allen Katz.

Web links make it easier to access videos of international folk dancing groups from around the world. With just a click, one can access a dance, sometimes with detailed instructions by a choreographer or creator. Easily available dance notes have made our many binders of accumulated syllabi redundant. We also exchanged our boxes of five-minute cassettes and CDs for a laptop loaded with thousands of music recordings organized by ever-changing playlists of current folk dance favourites. We have diligently transferred VHS tapes of memorable club occasions to DVDs - just as DVDs are becoming obsolescent. While digitization has its challenges, overall it has enriched our activity.

It has not eased the angst about what we do as international folk dancers. Ron Houston, the Archivist and Editor of *The Society of Folk Dance Historians* (SFDH and OFDA exchange publications) calls it the “eternal debate.” The most recent controversy is about [Jim Gold’s choreography of Ne Klepeci](#) to a hauntingly beautiful Bosnian melody sung by Nedžad Salković. The dance was notated and introduced by Lee Otterholt at the 2016 Ontario Folk Dance Camp in Waterloo. Is a dance choreographed by a non-native cultural appropriation? Is it authentic? Should we dance to a song about bereavement? (SFDH, *Report to Members*, March 2019). The June 2019 *SFDH Newsletter* also harkened that we should remove “folk” from folk dance and replace it with “the SOCIAL dance of OTHER people and Other times.” I very much doubt that changing our name will revitalize our dance groups. I offer some tips to do that in my conclusions.

Dorothy Archer gingerly broached the issue of authenticity and style in one of her editorials in the December 2016 issue, and she subsequently reprinted an article by Loui Tucker on “Why Some of My Favourite Dances are Choreographed!” (April 2018; reprinted from *Let’s Dance Magazine*, April 2014) Tucker examines the foundations of “real” folk dances with a basic figure with simple variations such as the Greek Syrtos. She points out that most of the dances in the international repertoire are not basic dances but choreographed ones with various patterns and figures taught by instructors in our international circles. This does not make them less “real” or less enjoyable as dances. Tucker’s conclusion is that instructors who teach dances in our international folk dancing circles should inform dancers about the origins or source of a dance. Excellent advice. It would also be courteous to acknowledge the musicians of recordings used for a dance.

Having dealt with the question of nomenclature and authenticity in my previous articles in this series, I would like to reiterate that what we do as international folk dancers is unique and sets us apart from other dance groups. Many of our dances are only danced by international folk dance groups. Some of our Balkan dances may not be danced by ethnic groups in or from that part of the world, but they would recognize the rhythm and movements even if not the actual choreography. Some of

our dances have also been adapted from national performance suites created by their artistic directors. While we may try to emulate the aesthetic standard set by professional dancers, we are social recreational dancers of various levels of experience. We also have sad songs (Zalna Majka) that we dance to – on some occasions we dance them in memory of colleagues who are no longer with us. Helga Hyde requested “Ne Klepeci” in our tribute to Dale Hyde who died on October 5, 2018.

What we do is challenging, and it is not for the weak-hearted unwilling to try a new dance experience. Even at its height some decades ago, international folk dancing was not a mass popular activity. We like the challenge of learning new dances and their variations. We are willing to try complicated Balkan choreographed dances as well as the many newly generated Israeli ones. We enjoy strutting to a line dance (Hamilton’s current favourite is Irish Stew), but for the most part we prefer to hold hands when we dance. We are willing to dance to set or long-ways dances from the British Isles or continental Europe. That sets us apart from many other dance groups who only focus on a certain genre of dance and are uncomfortable with a more varied programme.



Photo: Allan Katz.

Set dancing at English Pub Night, 2011.

In his reviews of Dance Flurry in Saratoga Springs, New York, Fred Slater indicates that while he was willing to try many types of dances such as contra and English country, others were reluctant to join international folk dance circles. I found the same experience with guests from English country groups to Hamilton’s Regency and other Balls led by Dale Hyde with Steve Fuller’s Band. That reticence to try something different is not evident of international folk dancers.

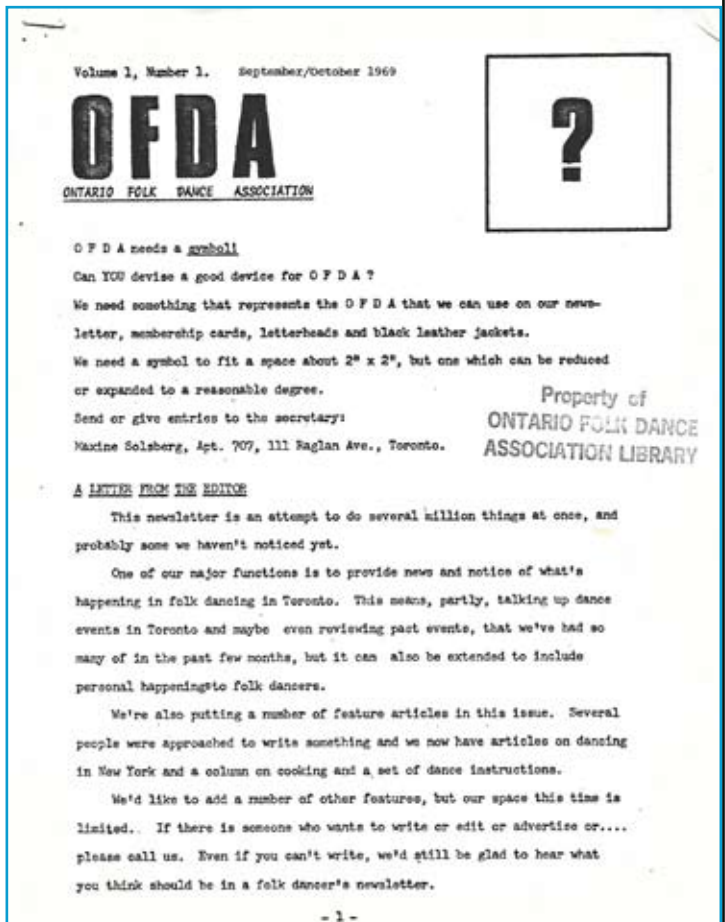
Because what we do is unique, it is important to record our history. It is one of the reasons why I am continuing with this series. While there are U.S. and other foreign organizations and magazines that deal with international folk dancing, their focus is on their own histories. This includes SFDH publications, based in Texas, and *Let’s Dance Magazine* in California. OFDA’s flagship magazine, the *Folk Dancer*, is the repository of the history of international folk dancing in Ontario and to some extent in the rest of Canada. If the magazine did not exist, our history would be lost.

Ontario Folk Dance Association. OFDA is a non-profit organization run by volunteers “to promote folk arts and particularly folk dancing of many cultures.” From 2002 to June 2019, leadership was provided by a

triumvirate steering committee with Bev Sidney serving continuously on the committee for the last 17 years. At its AGM in June 2019, Ed Thompson agreed to be nominated for OFDA President and was duly elected by acclamation. Riki Adivi, Bev Sidney, and Helen Winkler, the outgoing steering committee, agreed to serve on the executive as members-at-large. There is a shortage of volunteers willing to take on leadership responsibilities.

When Karen Bennett, the erudite and always reliable contributor to OFDA, assumed editorship of the *Folk Dancer* magazine in 2012, she did so on the understanding that it would only be for a short period. When she indicated that she would be retiring from editorial duties as of June 2014, there were no volunteers with “the skills and desire to produce a printed magazine” (Oct 2014). OFDA’s decision to launch the magazine online was thus not taken lightly. Dorothy Archer, who had assisted Karen from 2012-2014, was willing to take on the less labour-intensive task of publishing digital issues. According to Dorothy, the online magazine is “prepared completely online from submission of the articles, through the editing, layout, and proof-reading stages” (April 2015). In the same issue, Hans Sanders recalls publishing the first issue of the magazine in 1969 on “electronically cut mimeographed stencils (Gestetner).”

As production manager for some 20 years, Ruth Ostrower is not nostalgic about using typewriters when she first became involved with the magazine in 1973 (April 2012). There is just no comparison to the ease of online publishing. Other benefits include using colour photos (prohibitively expensive in paper editions) and providing web links to OFDA’s and other websites of interest to folk dancers. Online publishing is less expensive to produce and saves on mailing costs. Noemi Adorjan created and maintained the original OFDA website, with Helen Winkler taking over in 2007. In 2015, Dee Casey (Bev Sidney’s niece) kindly donated her expertise in a major update. Helen continues the overall maintenance, with Bev contributing the magazine page and events/calendar page. All are to be congratulated for a very user-friendly website. This includes links



OFDA's first magazine, 1969: Volume 1. No. 1.
(Click image to view full size.)

to dance classes and groups as well as a calendar of upcoming events. Judith Cohen created and maintains OFDA on Facebook.

The reaction to the transition to digital has for the most part been positive, especially since OFDA sends a printed copy to the few members who are unable to access the magazine online. Since the magazine is now available to anyone who visits OFDA's website (another benefit), members were offered discounts to OFDA sponsored events as well as reduced rates for advertisements. Weekly e-mail notices of upcoming events are also sent to members. The annual fee of \$24.00 (\$30 for family) remains very reasonable.



What does OFDA do? The challenges of digitization include understanding and abiding by regulations concerning the use of the web and electronic mail, and rules concerning copyright. Finding suitable venues for OFDA-sponsored events also pose challenges as is evident in trying to find Toronto spaces for summer dancing. Procuring liability insurance can be prohibitively expensive, but it is essential for the running of the organization. The more visible services of OFDA include organizing café events and annual general meetings with pot-luck suppers. The organization also sponsors the annual April 29th International Dance Day, and co-sponsors workshops with local dance groups. Recent OFDA's New Year's Eve and other celebrations have been graciously hosted by Riki and Stav Adivi at their home in King City. OFDA provides financial support for summer dancing in the park in Toronto, Richmond Hill, and Hamilton. It offers scholarships for folk dancers who undertake research projects or travel to dance camps. Videos of OFDA events by Leon Balaban are posted on the web as well as photos by Bev Sidney, Allen Katz, and others.

OFDA's many café events continue to be multifaceted from the Macedonian workshop with Vlasto Petkovski to Kurdish with Fethi Karakeçili. The cafés include cultures that are not normally part of our dance repertoire such as the Tibetan café in 2017. These events

are frequently accompanied by local musical and dance ensembles from the vast multicultural Greater Toronto Area (GTA). Judith Cohen, who teaches ethnomusicology at York University, continues to play an important role in connecting these ensembles to appreciative folk dance audiences. These ensembles also remind us that they, not us, are the keepers of their cultural traditions in Canada. Following the Assyrian café in 2012, an article by Nadia Younan, a York University graduate student, is instructive in showing how Canadians carry on their ethnic heritage – in her case Italian and Assyrian (April 2013). Reviews of Miroslav Marcetic’s Serbian Academy, which attracts more than 300 young students, and their performances are also an indication of how ethnic and cultural traditions are being preserved and manifested. As international folk dancers we enjoy participating in their cultural experiences while at the same time enjoying the uniqueness of our own folk dancing activities. The two things are related but are not the same.

One of my favorite features of the *Folk Dancer* is news about the people who dance in our circles. “The Grapevine,” formerly called “The Back Page,” celebrates our members’ achievements, travels and stories about local groups. I also appreciate feature articles such as Efrim Boritz’s interview with Cecille Ratney (February 2018). I was aware of Cecille’s considerable contributions to the Ontario Folk Dance Camp and to summer programmes at Mainewoods but did not know that she was also a feminist pioneer in the accounting profession. She is still a feisty feminist in her 103rd year. Other highlights include features on folk costumes such as Jan T. Letowski’s very instructive “Preserving Cultural Heritage” which provides practical advice on how to preserve and clean folk costumes (June 2014). Annette Lalonde’s “Playing an Ugly Stick” instructs us about this Newfoundland percussion instrument (April 2015). Based on digitized newspaper accounts of the *Porcupine*

Advance for the 1912-1950 period, Helen Winkler reports on music and social dance in the Timmins community. This includes a scanned January 22, 1919 announcement of the community’s first “Moccasin Dance” in an arena that attracted “600 and 700 ladies and gentlemen enjoying the dancing on the ice” in moccasins to the music of a 15-member orchestra (June 2019). Helen’s research reminds us that there is a lot of Canadian dance history to explore.

The magazine also pays tribute to colleagues who contributed to OFDA’s success but who are no longer with us: Henk van der Gaag (d. 2012) assisted in running Toronto’s Dancing in the Park; Denis Bowman (d. 2013) hosted many OFDA parties at his home in King City and later at Caledon Hills; Hy Diamond (d.



Jean McAdam (centre), 2011.

Photo: Allan Katz.

2016) taught at Settlement House and other groups aside from running summer dance programmes; and David Yee (d. 2017) taught for many years at the Ralph Thornton Centre. Dale Hyde, noted specialist of dances from Canada and the British Isles, died in 2018. We also remember Jean McAdam who died in 2016 at the age of 101 and whose logo still graces the front of OFDA's new T-shirts with the appropriate slogan "Dancers Without Borders" imprinted on the back. Kitty Cohen who danced well past her 100th year died in 2019 at the age of 106. At age 101, she was the oldest Canadian to throw the first pitch at the Blue Jays' opening game.

There were happier occasions to celebrate members' accomplishments. Teme Kernerman, one of the founders of the OFDA and the Ontario Folk Dance Camp, was recognized for creating Rikudiyah, the annual children's Israeli dance festival. While she resigned as Director after 45 years, Teme continues to contribute to Israeli folk dancing (Oct 2015). Jane Aronovitch, in the same issue, reported on Atanas Kolarovski's 88th birthday in Japan (Olga Sandolowich and Helen Kirkby also attended). Dancers celebrated his birthday by dancing to 100 dances that Atanas introduced to international folk dance circles. Helen Kirkby's volunteer work was recognized in 2016 by the Textile Museum in Toronto; she also received an Ontario Volunteer Service Award. In 2017, Judith Cohen was awarded a Life Membership from Toronto Musicians Association in recognition of her 35 years of contributions to music and ethnomusicology. Rina Singha was inducted into the Dance Hall of Fame. She was recognized as "one of Canada's eminent dance artists" (June 2018).



Photo: Allan Katz.

*Teme Kernerman and Olga Sandolowich
at Ontario Folk Dance Camp, 2018.*

The last seven years have seen an explosion of articles about folk dance cruises and tours as well as personal adventures around the globe. Murray Forbes' sardonic tales of travels from "Hell" with his long-suffering companion and wife Lavinia continue to amuse and amaze us. Mirdza Jaunzemis and other Hamilton dancers give Murray and Lavinia a run for the money in the number of travels undertaken in the last seven years. This includes the 2018 Macedonian tour with local dancer and choreographer Vlasto Petkovski. There are folk dance tours closer to home. Hamilton did a river cruise on the Grand River – it pales in comparison to cruising the Amazon.

International Folk Dancing Staying Power: The many anniversaries attest to the enduring nature of folk dancing. The Ontario Folk Dance Camp (a separate organization from OFDA) celebrated its 60th anniversary

in 2019. Congratulations to Sandy Starkman and her committee for organizing the annual long-weekend camp in Waterloo. It deserves the glowing reviews for the variety of instructors and introduction of dances that are an integral part of our folk dance repertoire. The 50th anniversary of the Ottawa-Hull club was celebrated in the fall of 2018 with over 100 people attending.

Longevity is also a feature of Toronto area clubs: Olga Sandolowich started the Don Heights Folk Dancers in 1973. She teaches at the Banbury Community Centre and Toronto District School Board. The International Folk Dance Club (IFDC) is in its 45th year with Judy Silver and other dedicated teachers. The Prosserman Jewish Community Centre also hosts many Israeli and international groups with Teme Kernerman and Sandy Starkman among others. Riki Adivi and Helen Winkler are two dynamic teachers of the next generation who teach classes in the GTA. Riki Adivi teaches at the Prosserman Centre and has started a variety of new international classes, including summer dancing, in Richmond Hill. Helen Winkler's specialty is Yiddish dances which she shares with IFDC, the Prosserman Centre and other groups. She has adapted dances for adults and teens with intellectual disabilities and her group "Move N'Mingle" celebrated its 13th anniversary in 2019.



Photo: Bev Sidney

*Anita Millman, incognito,
at Waterloo Camp, 2014.*

Outside of Toronto, the Hamilton International Folk Dance Club celebrated its 35th anniversary in January 2019. Anita Millman teaches classes in Dundas as well as in St. Catharines. Adam Kossowski runs Hamilton's summer dancing in the park as well as teaching classes in Brantford and Kitchener. He is also an occasional guest instructor at the London and other dance clubs. Heidi Williams reported on the London group in the June 2013 issue. There is also an international folk dance group in Owen Sound.

There are many other classes and groups listed in Ontario and other provinces on OFDA's website. One wishes that there was more information about these groups, especially outside of Ontario. Articles such as Andrea Haddad's "Dancing Out West" (February 2013) about dance groups in British Columbia and Edmonton are informative, and I would like to see more feature articles

about folk dance groups and festivals across Canada. Perhaps regular correspondents could be persuaded to report on events in their part of the country just like Nancy Nies does with her regular articles from Bakersfield, California.

It is no secret that international folk dancing is struggling to attract new participants, and this is the case not only in our area but in international circles in the United States and beyond. The key to our unique dance

activity is to make it more accessible and fun. Paula Tsatsanis and Roz Katz's conclusion on dancing with the French BalFolk group in Toronto is worth noting: "Technique and doing steps correctly was not the object of the evening, it was having fun and socializing" (April 2013). How to do this with the variety of dances unique to our circles is a challenge.

"Dance Like No One Is Watching." At the risk of being branded a hopeless heretic, I offer some suggestions based on my experience leading the Hamilton group. To begin with, I do not see our dances as sacred museum pieces. Because instructor X taught a choreographed dance to a certain piece of music 50 years ago does not mean that it is carved in stone. Dances change over time and there is more than one way of doing a dance or dancing it to different music. As is evident at any folk dance party, individuals and groups develop their own dynamic relationship to certain dances.

It is also unrealistic to assume that dancers will remember the choreography of the many dances in our repertoire. Even experienced dancers have memory lapses on how to start a dance that we have been doing for many years (there are exceptions such as Judy Silver who has an iron-clad memory). Leaders can provide quick cues before a dance to help beginners as well as more experienced dancers who need a quick reminder. Having leaders mark a dance in the middle of a circle (as do instructors at workshops) is easier to follow than cranking one's neck to see the leader at the front of a line. If there are enough inclusive dances, newcomers and less experienced dancers will not mind sitting out on more complicated dances such as Mairi's Wedding or the frenetic Romanian dance Vulpiuta.

For many of us it is the music as much as the choreography that attracts us to folk dance. We can lose the sensuality of moving in harmony with other dancers by being too intent on trying to remember steps and complicated sequences with subtle transitions to a dance that lasts less than three minutes. Dance choreographies can be simplified without losing their essence. A recent favourite "Kali Tihi," a Greek dance introduced by Lee Otterholt in 2016, can be done with just the basic pattern so that everyone can enjoy the dance more easily and listen to the male vocalist who accepts with equanimity a break-up of a relationship. An elegant Polonaise can be done with fewer figures than those choreographed for a performance ensemble. Even a rhythmically sophisticated dance like Ovčepolsko can be made more accessible by not doing all the variations. It means more people can enjoy Pece Atanasovski's wonderful recordings of traditional Macedonian music. New music for old tunes can revive interest in a dance for the most jaded dancers. I have introduced to the Hamilton group Chicken Kolo (music from Dennis Boxwell's CD *Balkan Dances 2000*) where the vocalist of the spirited Serbian band squawks like a chicken. A bit of irreverence lightens one's spirits, and quirky new music can add a sparkle to a village

type dance like U Šest that goes on past the three-minute mark.

I empathize with dancers who have difficulty with certain movements. A “pinky” hold can be replaced with a simple “W” one – just tell the dancers beside you that you are more comfortable with that hold. Short line dances in a basket hold can just as easily be done in a simple “V” hold – just encourage people to join different lines. Dancers who have trouble with all the turns in “Katonti,” an Israeli dance introduced in our area by Roberto Bagnoli, can still enjoy the dance and the beautiful music without all those spins.

Lightening up while taking what we do seriously is a difficult balancing act. As noted in the introduction, the aesthetic standard for many of our dances is based on professional performance groups, and while we may try to emulate them, we are social recreational dancers of various levels of experience. Helen Winkler in one of her workshops on Yiddish dances, emphasized that improvisation is an important feature of Yiddish dances. She quipped: “We are not British, but Yiddish” (April 2013). My revised version is: “We are not performers, but recreational international folk dancers.” Improvisation and adaptation will enhance, not diminish, the international folk dancing experience. If it is not fun and inclusive, newcomers will not join us in the unique activity that we love.

Lastly, we need to acknowledge and thank the many volunteers who make international folk dancing possible. This includes the hard-working folks in OFDA.



A simple “V” hold can be done instead of a basket hold.



“We are not performers, but recreational international folk dancers.”

50th Anniversary Party...Ventanas on stage and off



◀ Rehearsing before the evening got underway.

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◀ Band leader Tamar Ilana with mother Judith Cohen. ▶



Photo: Agnes Bleiwas.



Photos: Allen Katz.

50th Anniversary Party...Wine, Dancing & Good Cheer



Photo: Bev Sidney.



Photo: Allen Katz.



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Photo: Allen Katz.

Tribute to OFDA Leaders

by Stefania Szlek Miller

Riki Adivi, Beverley (Bev) Sidney, and Helen Winkler served on OFDA's Steering Committee from 2012 to June 2019 when Ed Thompson was elected President. The triumvirate will continue on the executive of OFDA as Members-at-Large. Karen Bennett was Editor of the Folk Dancer magazine from 2012 until June 2014. Dorothy Archer edited the last two issues of the paper edition of the magazine, and in 2015 became Editor of the Folk Dancer Online. Bev Sidney continues to be the Production Manager of the Folk Dancer magazine, a position she has held since 2000. These five women have played a key role during a critical period in OFDA's History.



Photo: Allen Katz.

Riki Adivi.

Riki Adivi, with her husband Stav, emigrated from Israel to North Carolina in 2002. She first joined an Israeli group at Chapel Hill and then was attracted to international folk dancing. Since arriving in Toronto in 2006, Riki represents the next generation of talented teachers and leaders. She is a community builder and one of the keenest folk dance recruiters in the Greater Toronto Area. She has started and teaches a number of international folk dance classes in Richmond Hill, and this includes summer dancing in the park. As a member of OFDA's steering committee, she has made major contributions to promoting folk dancing. The most visible manifestations are hosting folk dance parties including her 50th birthday in 2015. Stav and Riki have also opened their home in King City for OFDA parties including New Year's Eve celebrations. She has taught Israeli and other international folk dances at OFDA events and led workshops at clubs. Recently she has joined the organizing committee of the Ontario Folk Dance Camp. She is also one of the master chefs at Mainewoods' summer camps. Dancing and gourmet cooking – a winning combination.

Dorothy Archer was Assistant Editor of the Folk Dancer from 2012 until Karen retired in June 2014. She has been Editor since then. She edited the last two paper issues of the Folk Dancer in 2014 and launched the first issue of Folk Dancer Online in February 2015. The transition was seamless especially since Dorothy had previous experience with online publications as editor



Photo: Simone Morán-Venegas.

Dorothy Archer.

of a seniors' advocacy group newsletter. As a former university librarian and co-ordinator of the continuing education programme for library technicians at Seneca College, she brought impressive skills to OFDA's flagship publication. Witty editorials and feature articles reflect her passion for folk lore, dancing and travelling. She started dancing in Single Squares and Grant Logan's Sunday Contras where she was introduced to international folk dancing by guest teachers Walter Bye and Mary Crow. Joyce Schroeder introduced her to Olga Sandolowich's group in 1990, and she has danced at various groups since then. What attracted her to international folk dancing is the music and variety of dances as well as socializing with friends who share the same interest. Dorothy completed Teme Kernerman's teaching course and has taught classes at the North York Seniors Association and at the Hellenic Home for the Aged. Dorothy's introduction to folk dancing is a good reminder that word of mouth continues to be the best form of recruitment.



Photo: Bev Sidney.

Karen Bennett.

Karen Bennett has contributed to OFDA since 1976, the longest continuous record (and she is still a kid.) She danced first with Settlement House and then began her long association as a dancer and teacher with IFDC. Her many teaching specialties include Croatian (at one time she performed in Folklore Ensemble Croatia of Toronto and Mississauga), French, and fun "mixer" dances that she introduced at a recent OFDA café. She has called contras that she has choreographed as well as led singing sessions at Ontario Folk Dance Camps in Waterloo. For many decades, she has contributed a massive number of articles to the Folk Dancer magazine, from edgy reviews of dance workshops to feature stories about folk costumes, of which she has a large personal collection. A Guest Editor of numerous issues, she has also been Editor of the magazine twice: 1994-1997, and then from 2012 to June 2014. The extensive Index to the Folk Dancer that she prepared and maintains is an indispensable tool

for anyone interested in folk dancing. Karen is also a researcher and proofreader for Stockton Camp in California and maintains its dance database (indexed by teacher, country/region and year). Her meticulous professionalism is manifested in her passion for international folk dancing as well as in her day job editing the transcriptions of proceedings of the Ontario Legislature.

Beverley (Bev) Sidney has been an active contributor to OFDA since 1996. She was OFDA Vice-President and then President from 1999 to 2002, and thereafter served for 17 years as a key member of the OFDA Steering Committee. As Production Manager of the Folk Dancer magazine from



Bev Sidney.

2000 to the present, she continues to use her artistic/design and computer skills to produce one of the best folk dancing magazines in Canada. In 2015, she spearheaded the magazine into the digital age. Her other contributions include writing for the magazine as well as serving as an official photographer. She recently retired as a registered nurse in Toronto hospital operating rooms. Did folk dancing relieve the stress of her day job? For all her accomplishments, Bev remains an illusive leader who is reluctant to take bows on the front stage. Her enthusiasm for folk dancing started in physical education classes in Toronto schools. She has been an active participant at the International Folk Dance Club (IFDC) in Toronto for many decades. Bev is an enthusiastic dancer and strong promoter of international folk dance

communities. “The spirited energy of moving in synchrony with others, as well as the diversity of the physical movements and wonderful music” continue to attract her to recreational folk dancing.

Helen Winkler is another dynamic teacher representing the new generation of leaders. Like Bev, she was attracted to folk dancing as a result of physical education classes in Junior High School in Toronto. Sad that these classes are no longer part of the school curriculum since they were a recruitment tool for recreational folk dancing. Helen started dancing in Toronto prior to moving to Calgary where she lived for 22 years. Since returning to Toronto in 2003, Helen has balanced family and work responsibilities as well as folk dancing in her busy schedule. She teaches at IFDC and Israeli groups in Toronto. Since 2006, she has adapted dances for people with intellectual disabilities, and has assisted dance teachers to do the same by means of You Tube links. Her yiddishdance.com site is a good resource for people interested in Eastern European Jewish folk dancing. She has shared that passion with dancers at workshops and OFDA events and celebratory parties. Her recent research interests include exploring social dance in Timmins in the first half of the 20th century. One of her many contributions to OFDA since 2007 is maintaining the organization’s impressive website. Helen values the community spirit and friendship that evolves within folk dance circles.



Helen Winkler.



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50th Anniversary Party...Yummy Food & Cake

Photo: Agnes Bleiwas.



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Photos: Allen Katz.



Ernie Krehm (1927 - 2019)



This photo of Ernie Krehm and Mary Crowe appeared on page 9 of the September 1989 issue of Ontario Folkdancer..

In the February 2012 issue of Folk Dancer Online, Stefania Szlek Miller refers to Ernie Krehm as one of “the four deans of the international folk dance movement in Ontario. An OFDA scholarship endowment fund in their honour was established to support folk dance research by recipients who would disseminate their findings to the broader OFDA membership”.*

The following are

excerpts from “A Tribute to Ernie Krehm” by Walter Bye which appeared in the September 1, 1989 issue of Ontario Folkdancer.

On June 10, 1989, a special party was held at the University Settlement House to honour Ernie Krehm and to celebrate his accomplishments in the folk dance community over the past 40 years.

Ernie started folk dancing by “just going along” with his new wife, Ivy Krehm, who had previously danced in New York with Mary Ann and Michael Herman. So it was natural that she started to look for folk dancing here. They found the John Madsen group and did Danish dancing as well as some international.

In 1948, a group of international students from University of Toronto contacted Ivy to coach them for a performance at Hart House. Some of the people in that group then formed the nucleus of the recreational group which started shortly after. They danced in the basement of the old University Settlement House with plaster falling around them and the red paint from the floor coming off on shoes and clothing.

The repertoire at the beginning was quite small. Ernie recalls, “We were doing simple dances like Troika, Korobushka, some easy Israeli dances such as Mayim and Tcherkessia; then there were some novelty dances like Bummel Schottische and maybe a couple of easy Mexican dances.” When Vyts Beliajus began including Toronto on his teaching circuit, the repertoire began to enlarge. About 1954 or 1955 the first Balkan workshop was held with teacher Dick Crum.

By this time Ernie was attending camps to get new material – Maine Folk Dance Camp, Stockton and Ralph Page’s New Hampshire camp. It was from Ralph Page that Ernie learned to call contras and contras were Ernie’s specialty in the first few years.

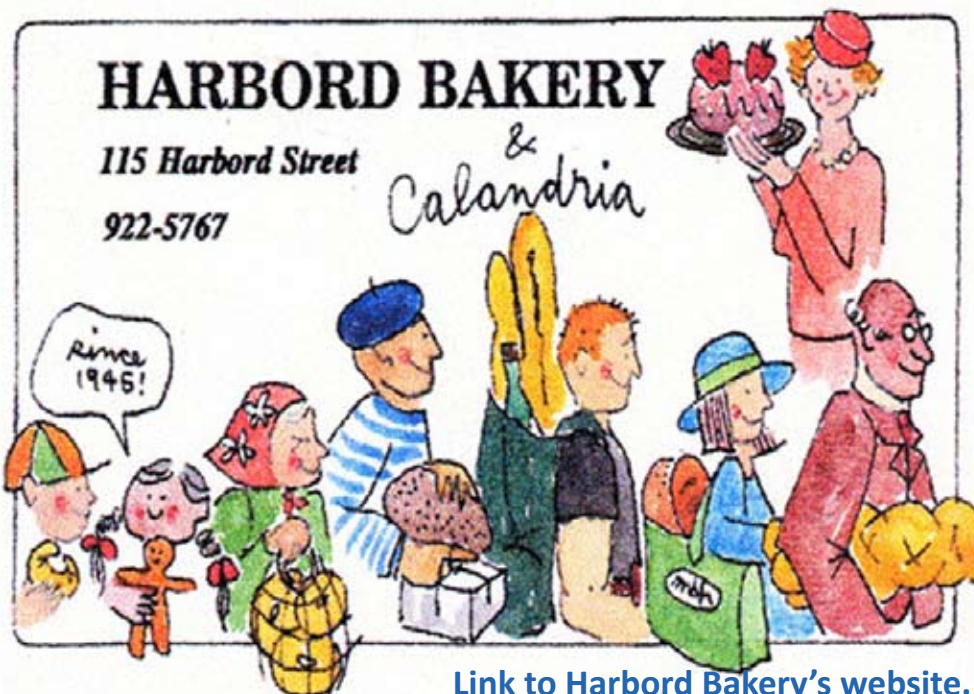
Many people don’t know that Ernie was also in a semi-professional modern dance group {along with Olga Veloff Sandolowich and Vera Davis} called the New Dance Theatre. They performed in several ballet festivals in different cities and got very good write ups.

Following the break up of the New Dance Theatre , Ivy and Ernie set up a performance group. When Ivy and Ann Fitzgerald moved on, Ernie took over as director and choreographer and continued in those positions until the recent demise of the Settlement Dancers.

Ernie set up a couples group when some of the members of the performance group married and had children, but still wished to continue dancing. Along with Olga Sandolowich, he also started a children’s program with dancing as well as arts and crafts. Olga and Ernie also began a program of folk dance participation at the Mariposa Folk Festival.

One of Ernie’s pet projects and one he is glad to see continue is Tuesday evening dances in Winston Churchill Park. The idea was initially turned down by City Hall, but Ernie persisted, returning with the backing of the Folk Arts Council and the program began in 1968 and has continued every summer since.

*The other three are Olga Sandolowich, Teme Kernerman, and Al Gladstone, hence the OTEA Scholarship.



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



50th Anniversary Party



Photo: Bev Sidney.

Photos: Allen Katz.

From the Folk Dance Cookbooks Jan Hagels (Dutch)

*Submitted by Arlene Sanders
to Ontario Folk Dancer Cookbook vol. I*



1 cup butter
1 cup sugar
1 egg, separated
2 cups flour
1 tsp. almond extract

1 tbsp. sugar
1/4 tsp. cinnamon
1/2 cup sliced almonds

Cream sugar and butter, add egg yolk and almond extract. Stir in flour. Turn dough onto an ungreased cookie sheet and spread to edges.

Beat egg white until fluffy, spread over dough. Sprinkle almonds over the egg white. Sprinkle cinnamon and sugar over the almonds.

Bake until light brown at 350 degrees F. Cut into diamonds or squares. Let cool completely then remove from pan.

[Ed. note] Do not overbake. The original recipe says to bake for 25 minutes but that was too long for my oven.





The Grapevine

Maya Trost's visit from Vancouver coincided with the OFDA 50th celebration. She has been dancing with a Serbian group in Vancouver. Another Vancouverite, Dale Adamson, took the opportunity to attend the 50th anniversary party while visiting family in Toronto. Dancers have met Dale at Waterloo Camp, which she's attended during the last several years. Diane Brook Brown was in Toronto from New York and also attended the celebration. Both Maya and Diane danced with Olga and the Don Heights Folk Dancers while they were in town.

Maxine Louie and Gary McIntosh missed the big celebration because they were touring Japan. Earlier in the fall, Mirdza Jaunzemis was in Romania with Romanian dance teachers, Cristian Florescu and Sonia Dion.



Judith Cohen took a photo of the lion dance at the Toronto Dragon Festival held at Nathan Phillips Square in September. Further along in the Square were Brazilian stilt dancers, part of a save the Amazon event.



A note from Nate Greenberg & Family: "Our heartfelt thank you to the Ontario Folk Dance Association for your condolences, your kind thoughts and words in memory of Carole, and your donation to the Bereavement Fund in Carole's honour."



*50th Anniversary
Celebration: at the
end of the night.*

