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# *Folk Dancer Online*

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# Folk Dancer Online

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**Cover Image:** *Trakia Ensemble musicians in Plovdiv, Bulgaria. Photo: Anita Millman. See article p.12.*

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[RETURN TO OFDA WEBSITE.](#)

## *Editorial*

by Dorothy Archer

I once worked with a woman who always took her holidays in April. She believed that April was the month most people would crash – one is recovering from the worst of winter but the pleasant weather of late spring and summer has not yet arrived. We in southern Ontario had planned to face the April blues learning international line dances from Riki Adivi and Adam Kossowski but the coronavirus put an end to that party. Instead, we spent the second half of March washing our hands and doing our income tax and not much else since everything was closed except banks and supermarkets. Let's hope that April will bring release and we will be so thankful to have our activities back, feeling grumpy will be far from our minds. The line dance program will take place in the fall.

Reading about Bulgaria should also perk you up. Judy Bourke has written about her trip and she and her companions have contributed many photos. Or maybe Prague will interest you more. Nancy Nies has sent an account of her visit there, again with many photos. Switzerland is also featured in a reprinted article about Swiss dancing which, I suspect, is not familiar to most of us.

Helen Winkler returns with a story from Northern Ontario. It is about Purim, which was celebrated March 9th to 10th this year. Helen explains the story of Esther and the dressing up activities but has left out the Hamantaschen – the tasty cookies shaped like Haman's hat.

Raphi Sussman has written a tribute to his father, who, with his wife, was a pioneer of folk dancing in Toronto. As Raphi says in the article, it was often a family affair. Raphi continued dancing and was a member of the performance group, Nirkoda, for several years. He now dances recreationally with Sandy Starkman's group at the Prosserman Jewish Community Centre. Others who, at a young age, were introduced to folk dancing by their parents are Terri Taggart and John Macdonald.

The recipe from the OFDA Cookbook is delicious. I like to try the recipes before submitting them to the magazine so I made it and invited Marylyn Peringer to give her opinion. Like me, she thought it well worth putting in this issue. If you are as ignorant as I was, bamboo shoots come in a tin – the ones in water are nice and tender. I had to go to a Chinese shop to find them.

Enjoy the issue. See you in June.

# CONDOLENCES

to folk dancers and their families...Donations have been made by OFDA to its Bereavement Fund.

In memory of Joan Uhrman, who died January 1, 2020, and in memory of Nathan Sussman, father of Raphi (Ella), who died on February 3, 2020.



... to Thelma Feldman for your donation to OFDA in memory of Nathan Sussman.

## 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.

Applications may be submitted before May 31, 2020.

Details on the OFDA website:

[OTEA Scholarship Ad and OTEA Scholarship Rules.](#)



Hello Ed and OFDA friends,

Thanks so much for the donation to the Bereavement Fund in honour of my mother's passing.



So many of my friends and acquaintances from the folk dance community had thoughtful gestures and kind words. I was surprised and touched when I received the card with the OFDA dancers. Of course the dancing itself is also comforting!

The card will remain on my desk a while longer.

Thanks again.  
Martina (Freitag)

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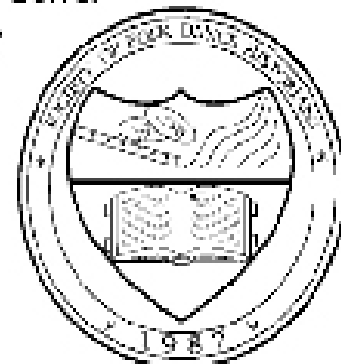
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## *Dining, Dancing and Song in Prague*

by Nancy Nies



Photos: Nancy Nies.

*Prague's Castle Hill offers a breathtaking view of the city.*

Strolling through Prague's picturesque Old Town at sunset, we admired the lovely, centuries-old buildings lining the cobblestone streets. The vibrant area attracts throngs of tourists, and that evening was no

exception. It was on a quiet side-street, however, that we found the cozy Restaurant Michal, where a wonderful evening of Czech cuisine, music, singing and dancing awaited us.



*Colourful buildings line Prague's Old Town Square.*

containing mannequins dressed in colourful traditional costumes. As we enjoyed a delicious, multi-course meal, three musicians—playing violin, bass, and cimbalom—entertained us with lively folk music. I have read that the cimbalom (dulcimer) is particularly associated with the traditional music of Moravia, a historical region in the east of what is now

Catching our eye, as we followed the host to our table, were glass cases



*At the Restaurant Michal, musicians entertain diners with lively traditional music.*



*Folk dancers perform at the Restaurant Michal.*

Czechia\*. The kind of music we heard that evening, so full of life, is said to have been—and still to be—central to the celebration of occasions such as weddings and successful harvests.

The musicians were soon joined by a talented young couple, who performed a succession of Czech and Slovak folk songs and dances, complete with several costume changes. After each set, the musicians and dancers would move to the restaurant's other room, carrying the heavy cimbalom with them, to repeat the set for another audience.

For a sampling of what we experienced at the Restaurant Michal, go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QRbkYOMLuII>

I have since learned that Czech folk songs and dances are often associated with the young men's conscription into the military, and that the most internationally famous Czech dance is the polka. It is said that the polka originated in the 1830s in Bohemia, in what is nowadays western Czechia, and the word "polka" is likely a corruption of the Czech word *půlka* (half), referring to the half-tempo and half-steps characteristic of the fast-paced dance.

The music and dancing at the Restaurant Michal brought smiles to our faces all evening, but we were particularly moved by what happened after the show. As we were leaving, we lingered to listen as a large table of jovial Czechs sang an obviously well-known folk song, accompanied by the musicians and swaying from side to side as they sang. While the singing and dancing we had seen previously, authentic as they were, had been staged for an audience of tourists, this singing was "the real thing"—and it brought tears to our eyes.

That was our first evening in Prague, an auspicious lead-in to the *Rick Steves Best of Eastern Europe Tour* we would begin the following day. We would meet the other 26 members of our tour group and our excellent guide Eszter, from Hungary, who would shepherd us through six countries—Czechia, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia and Slovenia—in two weeks. We would see not only bustling cities, quaint towns, and stunning art and architecture, but also spectacular mountains, gorgeous lakes, and the scenic Adriatic coast. In addition, we would learn a great deal about each country's history and culture. Each day was to bring incredible experiences and indelible memories.

Though the tour's pace would sometimes be intense, there also would be free time to pursue our own activities. Before leaving home we had privately booked three "folklore shows" for free evenings in Prague, Kraków, and Budapest. Rather than write a lengthy account of the entire trip, I've decided to focus, in three successive columns, on those three never-to-be-forgotten evenings—each very different from the other two, yet delightfully memorable in its own way. [To be continued]

\*The Czechs recently voted to change the name of their country from the Czech Republic to Czechia.





## Introduction to Porcupine Advance stories...

*The Timmins community arose in 1912 during a gold rush that occurred close to Porcupine Lake in northeastern Ontario in the early part of the 20th century. A weekly newspaper called the Porcupine Advance has been digitized and reflects the rich social and cultural activities in the Timmins-Porcupine Camp area from very early on in its history. Helen Winkler, whose family lived nearby in Ansonville/Iroquois Falls, has been surveying the digitized paper and brings to us excerpts of these interesting cultural episodes.*

*To see what else was in the news up north in the early 1900s, including very interesting ads, click on the photos of clippings to view the whole page from the archived paper.*

## The Timmins Purim Ball

By Helen Winkler



*Click on the image to view the archive page containing this Purim Ball Dress ad.*

Purim is a Jewish holiday that is not as well known to the greater community as certain others. It commemorates the saving of the Jewish community by the Jewish Queen Esther from the plot of the evil Haman. It is a celebratory occasion where people party and often dress in costume.

In 1931, the leaders of the Timmins Jewish community decided that Purim would be a great occasion on which to join the Jewish community with the greater community

in a celebratory event. Thus was born the Timmins Purim Ball. This unique event drew people from Timmins and the surrounding area—and was hugely successful, with attendance of between 450-550 people. Considering there were no more than about 160 Jewish families residing in Timmins at its peak in 1950, this was outstanding.

## About 500 Attend at Fourth Purim Ball

Floor Show Unusually Attractive. Many Other Interesting and Pleasing Features at Event Last Night.

The fourth annual Purim Ball, held in the Riverside pavilion last night under the direction of Bernard Sky was a striking success in every way. The attendance was very large, fully five hundred being present and enjoying every minute of the evening. The floor show was a remarkably fine feature of the evening. The Volga Boat Song was given in striking way, the Croatian orchestra and Barney Sky, all in costume, were in the big boat, which was drawn across the floor by a group also in costume, the Croatian orchestra playing most attractive music and the company singing. Barney Sky played the mandolin. Two gifted young men in costume gave the Russian Sword dance and another attractive dance. Solos by Mrs. P. H. Carson, Victor Dorego, Michele Espeleto and F. E. Hoffman were notable features on the programme. Al Pierini and his Vagabond Kings supplied the best of music for the dancing. Other big features of the evening were "Rebecca at the Well," the refreshments provided by the ladies of the Jewish Congregation, and the coronation of Queen Esther. The choice of Queen Esther proved so difficult with so many favourites in the large crowd that eventually eight names of those specially popular were placed in a hat and drawn. Miss Thorpe was the winner and was duly crowned "Queen Esther" for 1934.

*Entertainment at the Ball included a local Croatian Orchestra and a Russian sword dance performance.*

The event included a beauty pageant with the crowning of Queen Esther along with several Ladies-in-Waiting. Most years, the winner of this contest was not a member of the Jewish community. In fact, ads in the mainstream local paper encouraged all women to purchase their new ball gowns, so that they too could have a chance to win the crown. The judging of this contest was at times stressful for the panel of male judges – they finally decided that unbiased, female judges were needed.

### Women to be Judges at Purim Ball Here

Queen Esther for 1938 to be Chosen by Ladies.

[Click here to see whole article.](#)

There is frequent mention of "Rebecca at the Well" being an important feature of the Purim Ball. After searching through many reports, I finally determined that Rebecca at the Well was a beverage station, with a young woman dressed as biblical Rebecca serving refreshing, amber liquid.

### Special Features of Interest at This Year's Purim Ball

[Click here to see whole article, including description of Rebecca at the Well.](#)

There is no mention of any sort of Jewish dancing occurring at the ball. Social dances of the time were most likely performed by the attendees. The floor show, on the other hand, could include folk dances of various ethnic communities. The ball continued until at least 1950. I am not sure when it officially ceased, but the Jewish community declined as the next generation moved to the big cities. The Purim Ball marked a chapter of life in the Canadian north, that probably will not be repeated but is worth remembering.

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# *Trip to Bulgaria*

by Judith Bourke

Bulgaria: domed churches adorned with colourful frescoes, cobbled streets alive with artistic graffiti, picturesque villages set high in the forested mountains, friendly people - and really good ice cream.

Photo: Judith Bourke.



In September, a small group of Hamilton dancers, Anita Millman, Helga Hyde, Ursula Humphries, Shelagh Beattie and I, led by Vlasto Petkovski, choreographer, and Gratzian Kolev, musician, enjoyed a two-week tour of Bulgaria. Also with our group were Lita Clavier, a member of the St. Catharines folk dance group, and Christine Klianis, who dances with Vlasto's group, Zdravec. We missed Carl Toushan, who sadly had to cancel at the last minute due to

a fall. We were lucky to have Diana, a historian, as our Bulgarian guide, who efficiently and with humour made sure we were in the right place at the right time while filling us in on the long history of the country. Andrei, our minibus driver, made certain the journeys were as smooth as possible. That it was not always possible was not his fault.

Our tour began and ended in Sofia (pronounced SO-fia), the capital city. Grand state buildings from the Communist era and wide streets give the city a spacious air, but many of the residential blocks from this time are now very shabby looking. The 19th century buildings from the National Revival period add a more decorative touch as do



Photo: Judith Bourke.

*Former Headquarters of the Bulgarian Communist Party and now used by the National Assembly of Bulgaria.*





*Bulgarian National Revival style of architecture.*

the sprinkling in the Ottoman style. Modern glass tower blocks are springing up; there were many construction cranes to be seen in the area near our last hotel. Cobbled streets are common – this is a really good way to slow down the traffic. The many streetcars would give a much smoother ride.

The opulent Alexander Nevsky Memorial Church, built between 1882 and 1924, is a huge multi-domed edifice, richly decorated with much gold paint and sparkling chandeliers. Almost next door is Sofia's oldest church, the Church of Sveta Sofia (pronounced So-Fl-a), or Holy Wisdom. This goes back to the sixth century and was built on the site of two fourth century Roman churches. In contrast to the big cathedral, this church is built in the Byzantine basilica style. There are no frescoes and the intricate exposed brickwork is its only decoration.

We were lucky to see the changing of the guard at the Presidency, high-stepping guards wearing smart 19th century uniform jackets in cream and red with highly polished black boots. This ceremony is performed every hour.

On our very first evening, we were entertained by a group of dancers from Janeta Suche's group, Pirinski Polja. Janeta is a retired dancer from the Pirin Ensemble who, at three workshops in Sofia and in Bansko, taught us several interesting dances including a Syrto with four variations. The last night in Bansko, she and some of her group again entertained us, this time concluding by joining us in a review of our new dances.

Zhenski Pazar, the open air Women's Market in Sofia,



*Vlasto with the Pirinski Polja group.*

was a popular spot for us. Here you can buy good fruit, nuts, spices, colourful Bulgarian pottery, and everything else from tourist kitsch to plumbing supplies; samples of Bulgaria's famous rose perfume are freely given.

Bansko is a popular ski resort, off-season in September of course, but still popular with Bulgarians as a destination for sunny fall days. It's also a good place for weddings, and some of our group saw a newlywed couple leave the church accompanied by their family and guests. They then proceeded to dance in the



Photo: Ursula Humphries.

*The attendant is holding up the bride's veil so people can throw money into it.*

cobbled street, accompanied by gaida, gaidulka, clarinet, drum and accordion. Men dressed in folk costume shot guns into the air to add to the festive atmosphere.

There are two important monasteries in Bulgaria. It was an adventure in itself driving to Rila Monastery, up into the wooded mountains of Rila National Park, on twisting roads through narrow passes. The higher we rose into the mountains, the more misty it became, swirling around the monastery when we arrived. This is the most sacred site in Bulgaria. While it was established in the 10th century, the present building dates from after a devastating fire in 1833. Noteworthy are the frescoes on the outside of the building whose colours are still fresh after over 150 years. Bachkovo Monastery, at the foot



Photo: Judith Bourke.

*Rila Monastery.*



of the Rhodope Mountains, was founded in 1083 and has a gentler aspect with its flower-filled courtyards and fountains. Destroyed by the Ottomans in the 16th century, the monastery buildings now date from the 17th century. A popular subject of frescoes in both monasteries is the descent into the underworld of sinners and the fiery tortures that are inflicted by the fiends of hell.

When we visited the tiny mountain village of Kovachevitsa, Gratzian, born in Bulgaria but now living in Brampton, was astonished to be accosted by a woman excitedly shouting, "I know you! I know you!" She had met him on Facebook.

Photo: Anita Millman.



*Pirin Ensemble.*

were given the advantage to attend a rehearsal of the Pirin Ensemble at Blagoevgrad, thanks to Janeta. We first saw the women rehearse their part of the dance, then the men. After a short break (during which we were surprised to see many of the dancers smoking), the whole ensemble came together, dancers, singers and musicians, to rehearse the full number. Even without the folk costumes, this was a real treat, and interesting to see how hard the dancers work to perfect the performance.

Another excellent workshop was with Elena Dimitrova and Emanuil Sandzirliev in Plovdiv who taught us several enjoyable dances, one of which, Kalino, we saw performed by the Trakia Ensemble. Elena is a member of this Ensemble and Emanuil used to be a member. The day after the workshop, we were privileged to see an hour-long performance of the approximately 70 members



*Trakia Ensemble.*

Photo: Anita Millman.

of this ensemble, dancers, singers and musicians, all in full costume. This performance was put on just for our small group.

We all liked Plovdiv: our unique rooms in the quaint hotel up a cobbled laneway, the Old Town with its bustling pedestrianized streets, the 'windows' to the Roman city below street level - and the best ice cream in Bulgaria. The town was already old by the time of the Romans, having first been settled by the Thracians in the fifth millennium BCE. There is much of the Roman city still lying beneath the modern one. The recent work of pedestrianizing a main shopping street revealed one end of the Roman stadium, the rest of which still lies buried below the 19th century National Revival buildings, also an important part of Bulgaria's heritage.

The last place we stayed before our return to Sofia was Veliko Tarnovo, set high on the cliffs above the Yantra River. This was the old capital city of Bulgaria in the Second Bulgarian Kingdom (1185-1396). Our hotel room looked over a bend in the river towards the imposing Asenevtsi Monument, set on a narrow tongue of forested land between the meanders of the river. This was raised in 1985 to commemorate the 800th Anniversary of the Bulgarian Kingdom.



*Veliko Tarnovo Asenevtsi Monument.*

*Photo: Anita Millman.*



*Folk festival in Lovech.*

On our way back to Sofia, we stopped for a while at the town of Lovech where there was a folk festival. There were groups of dancers and singers, all beautifully costumed on the stage, and spectators in ordinary clothes who, inspired by the music, danced with joy on the grass. We reluctantly left to go for lunch, hoping to go back in the afternoon, but when we returned to find them all taking a long break, we headed back to Sofia.

*Photo: Ursula Humphries.*



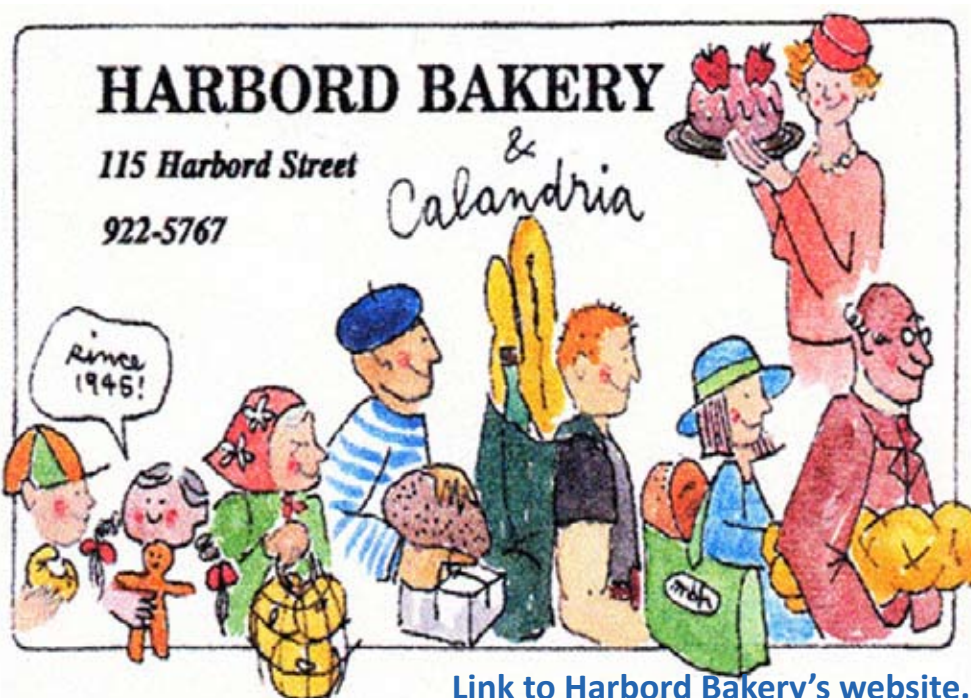


Photo: Anita Milman.

*Pletenitsa Folk Dance Club.*

One last dancing treat awaited us in Sofia at the Pletenitsa Folk Dance Club. This group meets twice a week to dance for pleasure to recorded music, much as we do. We joined in easier dances after a while; the group made us very welcome. Truly, dancing is an international language.

Although our dance teachers didn't speak much English, we had no problem following their instruction. In general, we found that people we met in markets and shops, as well as dancers, had little or no English, but German was sometimes useful, and Ursula even made use of her few words of Russian. A friendly smile, *Dobar den* (good day) and sign language were usually all that was needed to produce good results.



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

# *Folk Dancing in Switzerland*

by Karin Gottier

*Reprinted from Ontario Folkdancer, January 1991*

The dances of Eastern Switzerland are very similar to those of alpine Germany and Austria, while the dances of the western cantons are related to those of France and in the south, to those of Italy. Most Swiss dances are couple or group dances using the steps of the popular ballroom dances of the 19th century: Mazurka, Waltz, Polka, Schottische, and Gallop. Perhaps, because of the austerity of the Calvinist period, few traditional dances survived and many of the contemporary Swiss folk dances are reconstructions based on traditional dance figures that were collected and set either to traditional tunes or to melodies especially composed for these dances.



*Musik und Tanz, by Franz Niklaus König 1820.*

Very few ritual dances have remained and those are usually danced at 'driving out winter' ceremonies, Carnival, spring and harvest celebrations and at the time of the ascent and descent of the cattle from the high pastures. There is literary evidence that Switzerland still knew 'dances of death' until the middle of the last century. One such source is Gottfried Keller. In his novel *Der grüne Heinrich* he describes a funeral dance:

"... we immediately hurried outside to where, on the corridor and stairs, the crowd began to pair off and form a procession, for without a partner no one was allowed to go up. I took Anna by the hand and fell into line which began to move, led by the musicians. They struck up a lugubrious mourning march, to the rhythm of which we marched three times around the attic, which had been converted into a ballroom, and formed a large circle. Hereupon seven couples stepped into the centre and executed a lumbering old dance with seven figures and difficult jumps, kneefalls and intertwinings, accompanied by resounding clapping. After the spectacle had gone on for some time, the host appeared and went through the rows thanking the guests for their sympathy; here and there whispering into the ear of a young man – in such a way that all could hear – that he should not take the mourning too much to heart and to leave him (the host) alone with his grief. Moreover, the host

Swiss National Library, GS-GUGE-KÖNIG-F-35  
Wikimedia Commons.



By Gottfried Locher, circa 1780.

walked away and climbed down the stairs with lowered head as if they led directly to Tartarus. The musicians suddenly switched to a gay 'Hopser', the older people withdrew and the young swept shouting and stamping across the groaning floor ..."

In character, Swiss dances are more sedate and earthbound than their German counterparts. Among folk dance groups, great emphasis is placed on precision of detail in the placement of hands and arms and in the holds between partners.

The Swiss Folk Dance Movement has from its inception been a branch of the Swiss Costume Association\* (*Schweizerische Trachtenvereinigung*) which fosters and encourages the practice of all aspects of folk art.

One of the pioneers in the field of Swiss folk dance was Luise Witzig. After having come in contact with the German and English folk dance movement, she recognized the importance of folk dance research and its significance to the work of the Costume Association. She began to conduct dance workshops in which she transmitted the results of her research work. This in turn encouraged others to collect and notate existing material within their immediate areas. The Swiss Costume Association then made it its task to systematically collect old tunes and dance figures which were still to be found especially in the alpine areas.

Already in 1935 it was possible to publish the first collection of dance notations. Since then, this organization has released records as well as books and pamphlets on the dances of all cantons. It also conducts annual folk dance leader training courses and folk dance workshops; always insisting on high standards of accuracy and precision.

Alongside the folk dance movement of the Swiss Costume Association, there exists the Association of Folk Dance Groups (*Arbeitsgemeinschaft Schweizer Volkstanzkreise*) which is a collective member of the Swiss Costume Association. This organization was formed in 1956 and consists of independent dance groups who practice all forms of European folk dancing and sponsor specialized workshops in the dances of a given country, conducted by an expert in that particular field. The objectives and practices of the Folk Dance Association are very similar to the recreational folk dance movement in the United States.

\*[Ed. note] Now called the Swiss National Costume Association.



By Gottfried Locher.



# Nathan Sussman

by Raphael Sussman

My father, Nate, recently passed away at the age of 95. He and my mother, Hindeh, were among the pioneers of folk dancing in Toronto. My father, who grew up in Toronto, met my mother in Winnipeg where he was stationed during WW II. They would folk dance at local meetings of Hashomer Hatzair, the Zionist organization with which he was affiliated in Toronto.

In 1947, my parents prepared for, and then founded, a kibbutz in Israel. There was very little food or heat, members had one egg a week and chicken only on holidays, but they did dance every Friday night. My mother taught folk dancing and my father assisted, something that became the norm for them later.

When my parents returned to Toronto in 1952 they lived near Spadina and College. It was at the University Settlement House that they were introduced to international folk dancing and then learned to teach folk dancing with Ivy Krehm, an extremely enthusiastic leader from the States. They danced and performed with Ivy and her then-husband Ernie, and eventually became teachers in their own right. My mother taught international and Israeli folk dancing six and often seven days a week, mostly at schools and camps and community centres, and for social gatherings. She and my father later added ballroom dancing to their repertoire.

As a dance teacher, my mother went to dozens of dance workshops every year and then would rush down to buy the 78 rpm records at Canadian Folk Dance Service operated by Jack Geddes. I would work with her to go through all of the dances in each syllabus. As a family we went to the early Ontario Folk Dance camps at Geneva Park on Lake Couchiching sponsored by the University Settlement Folk Dancers and the YM and YWHA International Folk dancers. Folk Dance Camp was a sunup to midnight affair with teaching all day long, complicated theme-based, dress-up parties in the evening, and preparation for the parties in the late afternoon. We had teachers like Mary Ann Herman and Dick







*Nate (left) dancing recently at Sandy Starkman's Prosserman Centre class.*

Crum, and did dances from all over the world. I remember counting one Balkan dance in 15/16 time, learning a French Canadian square dance with eight couples, and getting my ankles almost smashed in a Philippine bamboo rod dance.

The heyday of folk dancing in Toronto was the 1960s and 1970s with hundreds of dancers, including my parents, coming to IFDC at the University of Toronto on Friday nights, to Al Gladstone's group at the YMCA on Eglinton east of Yonge, to Olga Sandolowich's Macedonian sessions, and to contra groups, English country dance groups, square dance groups and, of course, Israeli groups. My mother worked with dozens of school groups to prepare them for Israeli dancing for Teme Kernerman's annual Rikudiyah. A group of friends formed a couples dance group and asked my mother, along with others, to teach them. In 1971, Olga Sandolowich became the only teacher and continued until 2006 when the group disbanded. They called themselves The Happy

Hoofers and met once a month for 40 years.

In the 1970s, Toronto sponsored Caravan, a festival where ethnic communities opened their doors to the public. It was like Christmas for the international folk dance community, who danced from pavilion to pavilion. My parents prepared groups for many of Caravan's folk dance performances.

It is to the great credit of the second generation, like Sandy Starkman and Judy Silver, and especially to the hard work of the OFDA executive, that there are still international folk groups in the Toronto area today. My dad was thrilled to be able to come to Cecille's 100th birthday bash, to hear about Olga's 90th birthday party, and to dance with Sandy Starkman's group at Prosserman JCC and Riki Adivi's group outdoors in the summer while being in his 90s.

I would like to personally thank the OFDA for the donation made in the name of Nathan Sussman to the OFDA Bereavement Fund. We are honoured and know that dad would have been very pleased.



*Raphie, Nate and Cecille Ratney at her 100th Birthday Party, 2016.*

# *From the Folk Dance Cookbooks*

## *Cashew Chicken*

*Submitted by Nancy Tarsey*  
to Ontario Folk Dancer Cookbook vol. I



2 cups raw, boneless chicken, cut in bite-sized pieces  
1 tbsp. each soy sauce, cornstarch, sherry  
1/2 tsp. salt  
1 tsp. grated ginger root  
1 clove of garlic, crushed  
1 stalk of celery, cut diagonally  
Salad oil for cooking  
3/4 cup of cashews  
1/2 cup of bamboo shoots  
8 fresh mushrooms, sliced  
15 edible snow peas, ends and side strings removed

Gravy: 3/4 cup water mixed with  
1 tbsp. soy sauce  
1/2 tsp. sugar  
1 tbsp. cornstarch



Marinate chicken for 15 minutes in soy sauce, cornstarch, sherry, salt, garlic, ginger. Heat 1 tbsp. salad oil in wok (can use frying pan) over medium heat. Sauté nuts until lightly browned. Remove.

Heat 2 tbsp. oil over high heat, add bamboo shoots, mushrooms, peas and celery. Stir-fry for 2 minutes or until vegetables are crisp and tender. Remove.

Heat 1 tbsp. oil over high heat. Add marinated chicken and stir-fry for 4 minutes or until meat is white. Return vegetables and nuts to the pan. Stir cornstarch and water mixture to recombine. Pour in and stir and cook until thickened. (can add a chicken bouillon cube to the gravy mixture.)

Serves 4 to 6.





## The Grapevine

As part of their organized tour, Nancy Nies and Paul Gipe attended a performance by the Prague Castle Orchestra. This included everything from folk songs to Smetana's moving Moldau. Another concert of classical music was given by the Dvořák Symphony Orchestra at the Municipal House. See p.6 for Nancy's full report.



Photo: Nancy Nies.

Two members of the Prague Castle Orchestra.

FunkyJunk is the title of multi-media artist

Helena Wehrstein's solo exhibition, running May 2nd to 31st, at the First Unitarian Congregation, 175 St. Clair Avenue West. Opening Reception is Sunday May 3 from 12-1 p.m. Helena says "...breathing new life into old stuff is my passion. Over the years I have upcycled many items: old socks, clothes, discontinued fabric samples, buttons, toys, electronic junk. I enjoy taking things apart (computers, cables, cell phones, electronic devices, watches, etc.) to discover the treasures within."



Hairy Times: an example of Helena's imaginative use of electronic junk.

Photo: from the collection of Helena Hehrstein.

If you are looking for new adventures in travel, you might be interested in reading about Mirdza Jaunzemis' latest sojourn. It is to be found on the OFDA website under articles and is titled, *Belgium and Hungary with Friendship Force International* (FFI). This is a non-profit cultural organization focused on exploring new countries and cultures through homestays. <https://www.friendshipforce.org/>

Terri Taggart attended the Zlatne Uste Golden Festival featuring Balkan music and dance in January. Martin Koenig, who visited Toronto a few years ago, and Ethel Raim, who taught in Toronto in the 1970s were also attendees. Ethel was a founding member of The Pennywhistlers, an a cappella women's group.



Photo: Terri Taggart.

Martin Koenig and Ethel Raim.



Photo: Terri Taggart.

*The crowd at the Golden Festival Grand Prospect Ballroom , Brooklyn, N.Y.*

## MAINEWOODS DANCE CAMP 2020

### Fryeburg, Maine



[www.mainewoodsdancecamp.org](http://www.mainewoodsdancecamp.org)

#### Session One, Aug 16-22

**Penny Brichta** - Israeli  
**Ercüment Kılıç** - Turkish,  
 Azerbaijani & Circassian  
**Vlasto Petkovski** - Macedonian  
 Musicians: **Barbara Pixton,**  
**Tom Pixton & Julia Poirier**  
 Plus Scottish Country Dance  
 with **Patricia Williams**

#### Session Two, Aug 23-29

**Roberto Bagnoli**, International  
**Paty Rios**, Mexican  
**Nikolay Tsvetkov**, Bulgarian  
 Musicians: **MerakKef Express**