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Cover Image: Teachers Maurits and Tineke van Geel at Ontario Folk Dance Camp. See p. 25. Photo: Karen Bennett.

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[RETURN TO OFDA WEBSITE.](#)

Content from Far and Wide

by Karen Bennett, Acting Editor

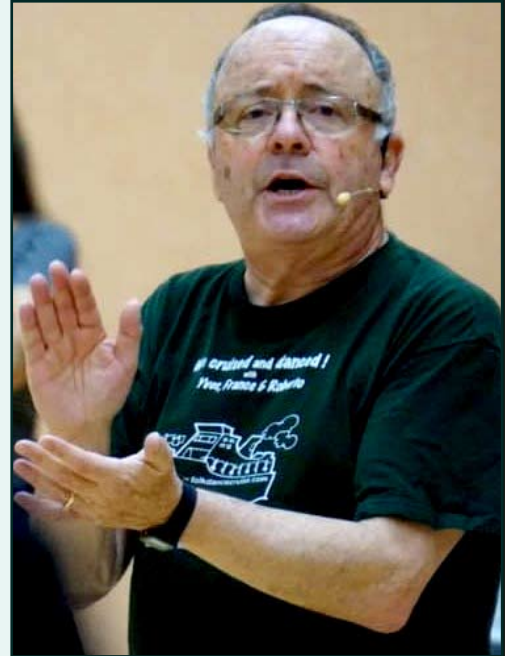
Heidi Williams of London, Ontario has written an obituary of Sheila Scott (formerly Duncan), long-time teacher of English and Scottish country dances and, latterly, a member of the London international group. I had the great pleasure of learning from Sheila at Ontario Folk Dance Camp in 2014. She died in May, aged 76. The Grapevine contains a lengthy list of and a few details on some of the other people we've lost this year, including Yves Moreau, who died in September, aged 75. See p. 23 for an OFDA dance café in honour of Yves.

Nancy Nies said, on submitting her two-part essay on string games, "I learned so much, and the article grew! And yet, I feel I've only scratched the surface of all there is to say on the topic of string games." Part I of her essay includes this quote from the director of the International String Figure Association: "Of the games people play, string figures enjoy the reputation of being the most widespread form of amusement in the world: more cultures are familiar with string figures than with any other game."

The Production Manager (Bev Sidney) and I had quite a time fitting in all the contents of this issue, and even so, a lot of material (including some written last April) had to be pushed to the next issue. Articles of the "what I did on my summer vacation" type may be expected in December as well. (Writers, please be concise, as the December Table of Contents is already looking stuffed.)

It is a double pleasure for me to present bilingual content about a very special event in Ottawa in this issue, with the English section a review written by the indefatigable Stef Miller and its French translation provided by Lucie Boisvenue. (My parents were federal civil servants, and Ottawa is my hometown.) The last time French-language content appeared in this magazine was 24 years ago: 1999.

At the same time as Stef submitted her event review, she furnished, on her own initiative, a "hobby" article—and, with reluctance, I had to push it to December. I found its subject very moving, and I believe readers will too.



Yves Moreau claps out an irregular rhythm at a Bulgarian dance workshop.

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in memory of
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Christine Chatten, and of
Jeannine Wright,
Trina Egan (daughter of
Shirley Kossowski) and
Sheryl Demetro's husband,
Chuck.



Diversity and Land Acknowledgement Statement

The OFDA recognizes the population diversities in Ontario's communities. We actively promote the exploration of Ontario's cultural diversity through the related dimensions of dance, and music.

We recognize that our activities take place on traditional territories of many Indigenous Nations and acknowledge this understanding at our events. Everyone is welcome to participate in our activities, with the expectation that their rights and dignity will be respected.

Folk Dancer Online seeks Editor

The December 2022 issue of the magazine was Dorothy Archer's last as editor, and Karen Bennett has agreed to be Acting Editor in the interim.

Are you, or is someone you know, a candidate for this volunteer position? The editor is responsible for acquiring copy for the magazine and preparing it for publication. S/he works closely with the production person, who does layout and preparation for printing.

Requires: broad familiarity with the folk dance community, good written skills in English, attention to detail, computer literacy, and ability to meet deadlines. All work is done by email, so can be done from any location.

Further information/inquiries about what the job entails can be obtained by emailing Karen at bennettke035@gmail.com.



Videos Worth Watching

by Karen Bennett

Screenshot: Karen Bennett.



Minna Suronen does waltz variations with Santeri Sääskilähti.

I love waltzes, so it was great to find a number entitled simply Valssi (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dLGSKTD7XNQ>), played by the superb Finnish band Pauhu. However, the dancers demonstrated variations that are described under the video using some terms that in translation were strange to me—plus I couldn't always spot when one variation changed to another: "Folk variations of the waltz, from running waltz to *siliä* waltz, are diverse, and they have been born during the 200 years that the dance has been popular in Finland. The wedding waltz established itself at the beginning of the 20th century at the latest."

Fortunately, help was at hand in the form of Laine Ruus, leader pro tem of the Toronto Finnish group the Sisu Folkdancers, and I am most grateful to her.

On April 30, she wrote to me: "What I see them dancing when I watch that video is: 0:28, waltz introductory or promenade steps, followed by 0:37, 'perusvalssi' = common waltz; 1:06, kaksiaskelvalssi, in Swedish called 'stegvals' or 'bakmes'; 1:26, polska introductory/promenade steps followed by more perusvalssi; 1:44, looks like vanha valssi rhythm without turning, but may just be sidesteps on the spot which they do later—of course, we can't see the feet; 2:16, more polska introductory/promenade steps; 2:18, more kaksiaskelvalssi followed by more perusvalssi; and 3:03, sidesteps on the spot."

"While there are lots of waltz tunes called 'häävalssi' or wedding waltz, I find no descriptions of anything like that in my collection of descriptions—häämenuetti yes, but 'häävalssi' no. My guess is that a musician would compose a häävalssi as a sort of wedding present for a couple getting married, and what they did to it was (a) up to them, and (b) up to anyone else on the floor when it was played. Remember, the waltz was considered quite scandalous when it came out. Having intro/promenade steps before getting into a turning step is very old, well preceding the influx of turning dances like waltz and polka in the late 1700s/early 1800s. One finds it in pols, polska, fläckpolska, sønderhoning, waltz (e.g., Danish tyrolervals), and even schottish, hambo, etc. Note that the couple here starts off with promenade steps in waltz rhythm, and later does them in pols/polska rhythm. So IMHO, 'running waltz' is just waltz steps without turning. 'Siliä' just means 'smooth.' What the couple here are not doing includes 'vanha valssi' and 'classical' waltz (i.e., forward, side, close). Instead what I see them doing is step, step, close, or perusvalssi. Granted, they are dancing on lumpy grass. so it's hard to do a siliävalssi."



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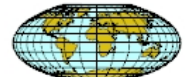
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Looking for a Hobby? Add Another String to Your Bow, Part I

by Nancy Nies

Until recently, the extent of my knowledge of string games was a passing acquaintance in childhood with Cat's Cradle. When Karen Bennett, Acting Editor of this publication, asked readers for their hobbies in addition to folk dancing, Bill Russell's reply ("Bill Russell Fiddles with Strings," [April 2023](#)) sparked her interest. I, too, was intrigued, and interested in learning more about playing games or doing tricks with a simple loop of string.

The World on a String

I was amazed to discover a whole world I had never known existed—one devoted to the making, sharing and preserving of at least 2,000 string figures! I also learned of the existence of the International String Figure Association (ISFA), founded in 1978. It has 200 members and an



"Playing at Cat's Cradle," illustration from *Tales from Maria Edgeworth*, by Maria Edgeworth et al. W. Gardner, Darton & Co., London, 1903.

Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

extensive website, with an e-mail discussion group; Japanese, Israeli and French home pages; a string figure of the month, and much more. The association publishes the quarterly *String Figure Magazine*, the semi-annual *ISFA News*, and the annual *Bulletin of the International String Figure Association* (BISFA). In the latter, you'll find scholarly, peer-reviewed articles covering the following: instructions for making newly discovered traditional string figures, for making recently invented string figures, and for recreating figures lacking methods; studies of the provenance of specific string figures and techniques; essays on myths, legends, and taboos associated with string figures; mathematical analyses of string figures;

◀ The Bulletin of the International String Figure Association. Vol. 7, 1 January 2000. The cover depicts a Mursi woman from southwestern Ethiopia.

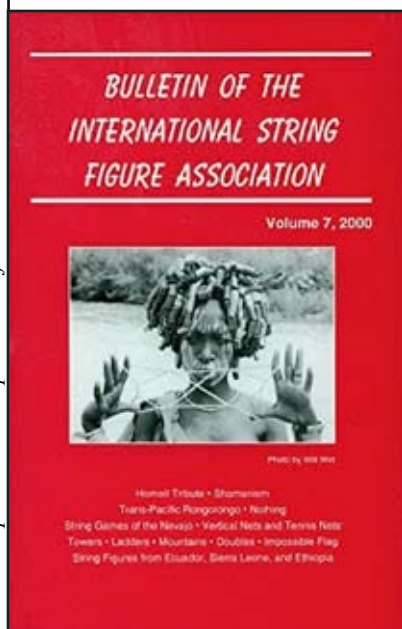


Photo: Reproduced with permission from ISFA.

descriptions of string-figure learning and teaching experiences; accounts of performances incorporating string figures; book reviews; and letters to the editor. That list gives you a quick overview of the vast world of string figures.



Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

“Mme Hitchen with string bear” (Anishinaabe). F.W. Waugh, CMOH, Long Lake, Ontario, 1916.

The specific topics of the research reports published in the 2022 *Bulletin* include: a study of ladder string figures; a string figure collection from Poland; a 1939 collection of the string figures of the northwestern Saami; Lorenzo Baeza Vega’s collection of Easter Island string figures; string figures of the southern highlands of Papua New Guinea; a Saami two-player take-over game (known as Cat’s Cradle in English) which introduces the concept of game “stages” and the transitions between them; some string figures of the Moré of northeastern Bolivia; *La Scie (the Saw)*, a 19th-century string figure from France; and Hungarian string figures, from Hungarian-language sources published from 1904–2016, featuring 12 string figures, nine tricks, three knots used in folk medicine, one display of skill and one children’s game.

As I further explored the world of string figures, it occurred to me that string figures and folk dances—despite their obvious differences—have much in common. So, how are string figures like folk dances? (That sounds like a riddle, but is actually a serious question.)

A Pastime Both Enjoyable and Entertaining

First and foremost, string figures provide both enjoyment and entertainment, not only for the person or people actively participating but also for onlookers. They bring people together. Mark Sherman, director of ISFA, writes, “Of the games people play, string figures enjoy the reputation of being the most widespread form of amusement in the world: more cultures are familiar with string figures than with any other game.”

Bill Russell tells us that he got to know Camilla Gryski when they both volunteered in the children’s area at a folk festival, and that it was there, from the children, that Camilla discovered the joy of making string figures. She would go on to become an authority—and an author—on the subject. Her first book, *Cat’s Cradle, Owl’s Eyes: A Book of String Games*, published in 1983,



Boy from Papua, Indonesia, making string figure representing beads. Photographer and date unknown.

Photo: Creative Commons via Wikimedia Commons.

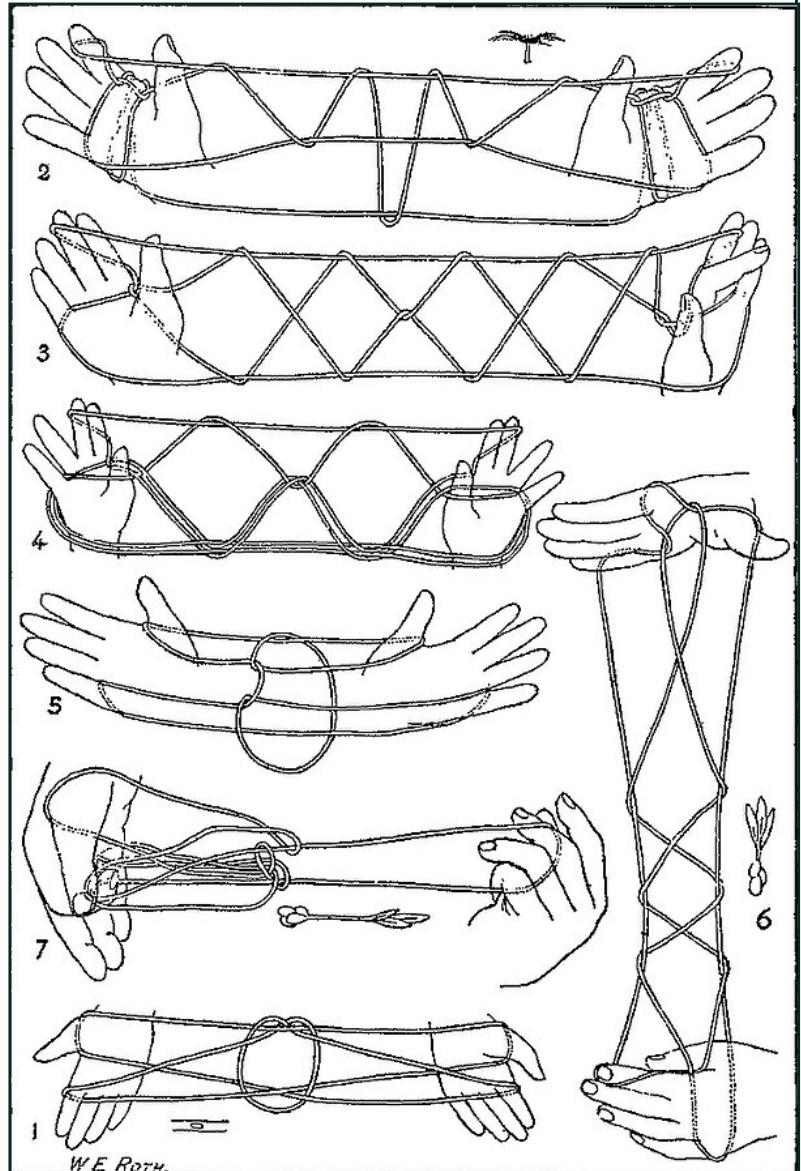
has a lovely photo by Mark Zelinski on the back cover: a smiling Camilla, her hands involved in making a string figure, surrounded by happy children who are completely captivated. Camilla concludes her book's introduction by telling the reader, "Remember: always carry a string in your pocket."

Bill Russell, too, always keeps a loop of string in his pocket, and enjoys being able to pull it out and create figures with it, wherever he may be. "What is better than doing a number of tricks while waiting in a doctor's office?" he asks. From the photos accompanying the April article, it is easy to see that Bill's hobby must bring many smiles and start many conversations.

Origins Both Ancient and Modern

Like folk dances, some string designs are modern creations, while others are thought to have prehistoric origins and to have had specific functions. To quote Camilla Gryski, "We don't know when people first started playing with string, or which primitive people invented this ancient art. We do know that all primitive societies had and used string—for hunting, fishing and weaving—and that string figures have been collected from peoples all over the world." One figure, Jacob's Ladder (Europe)—coincidentally also the name of a folk dance—likely originated 5,000 years ago and is known all over the world by various names, says Bill Russell.

Depending on the culture, making string figures provided a form of artistic expression, illustrated storytelling events, predicted the gender of an unborn child, or brought good



"Plant string figures" (Australia). Drawings by W.E. Roth, date unknown, from *String Figures and How to Make Them* by Caroline Furness Jayne, 1906. They represent, as numbered: 2, zamia (cycas tree), Atherton; 3, zamia nuts, Atherton; 4, two coconuts, Cape Grafton; 5, yams, Night Island; 6, yams, Princess Charlotte Bay; 7, edible lily root, Lower Palmer River; and 1, hole in tree limb with opossum or honey inside, Princess Charlotte Bay.

Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

luck for a hunt or harvest. In some cultures, string figures were used as passwords for secret societies or as requirements for a deceased person's entry into the underworld. For the most part, however, they served as a leisure-time activity. The figures represented people, animals, and natural phenomena. In her 1983 book, one design Camilla Gryski describes is Navajo Lightning, a figure that appears magical, with a flash of string lightning actually zigzagging across the sky. Many names of both traditional and contemporary string figures reflect the culture in which they originated, as do these picturesque examples taken from a Wikipedia list: Hunter Approaching a Seal on Ice (Netsilik Inuit); Two Islands Joined by a Bridge (Guinea, Africa); Dugout Canoe (Fiji); Two Coyotes (Navajo); Sake Cup/House (Japan); Erupting Volcano (Mapuche people, southern Chile and Argentina); and Fighting Head-Hunters (Torres Straits Islands). Curious? See those head-hunters in action here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch/wLNd1K45O2g>.

"Part of the joy of playing with a loop of string [is that] it can carry you many places in your imagination," says Bill Russell.

[To be continued]



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Sheila Scott, 1946–2023

by Heidi Williams

When Sheila Scott died on May 23, 2023, we lost an important figure in the dancing world.

Most of Sheila's career was in the capacity of Program Coordinator in Continuing Education at Western University in London. There she organized many dance and cultural programs as well as large conferences and events.

Sheila was born in Falkirk, Scotland in September of 1946, and had two younger brothers, Clive and Keith. She graduated from Strathclyde University in 1966. In 1965 and 1966 she travelled to Toronto for summer working holidays. In a U of T residence she met her future husband, Ron Duncan, whom she married in 1969. They shared 21 years as a couple, doing Morris and Scottish Country dancing and participating in many Home County Folk Festivals and Pinewoods Dance Camps while working and raising two children, Julian and Anne. They put their love of nature into canoe trips and their cottage on Stony Lake. Sheila and Ron parted ways in 1990 but remained amicable and shared many family events over the years.

Sheila was a gifted dance teacher and a sought-after caller for years of community dances. She also volunteered for many local organizations, including the Thames Valley Trail Association and Nature London, and she loved to swim, cycle, cross-country ski, watch plays in Stratford, garden at home and walk while bird-watching.

She enjoyed long phone conversations with friends and couldn't miss an occasion to get together (we remember a small tailgate party with welcome hot chocolate with Hobnob cookies after a winter hike), and she organized Christmas potluck lunches and also delightful backyard summer ones.

Here is a report from Heather Struckett:

"Sheila was a long-time Morris, English and Scottish dancer before I met her in the early 1980s at a Country Dance held as a Waldorf school



Sheila Scott calls a dance to live music at the Saturday night party at Ontario Folk Dance Camp 2014.

Photo: Bev Sidney.

fundraiser. In the 1990s, we were both part of a North West Lancashire Morris clog team called Goats-head. Sheila also called at our monthly Country dances and led our London Playford Dance group for many years. She coordinated and taught our Playford demonstration group dances, and organized trips to show our Playford era costumes and traditional English dance in so many venues: conferences, a pioneer village in the Cambridge area, Fanshawe Pioneer Village, Home County Folk Festival, Cambridge Folk Festival, Ontario Place, at Twelfth Night celebrations in Cambridge, and a Wildflower Festival in summer as well as Christmas dance performances for yearly Wassail shows in London, Port Dover and other centres for many years.

“She was on the True North Music and Dance board as a member, and later as the Chair for many years. The group organized monthly country dances with live music, and organized a yearly weekend English Ball for many years. She also served as the Dance Area Coordinator for Home County Folk Festival during the years when they had a dance stage and brought a variety of different dance styles to the festival. When the dance stage was gone, she continued to volunteer at the festival’s Home County store.

“What a wonderful legacy in our dance community!”

Sheila taught classes of Scottish and English Country Dance for many years to community groups. When she finally stopped that teaching, she joined the London International Folkdance Experience, and we were thrilled to welcome her into LIFE’s small group. She enjoyed driving occasionally to Hamilton with a couple of other London dancers to join that larger and fun group on a Friday evening.

In 2014 she was one of the guest teachers at Ontario Folk Dance Camp (OFDC) at the University of Waterloo. A co-teacher from that event, Lucia Cordeiro, invited her to go to Brazil to teach, which she did in 2016.

At OFDC in 2019 she met Cristian Florescu and Sonia Dion, and travelled with them the following November on an ethnographic tour of Romania.

Sheila’s grandchildren, Simon and Maya Rastogi and Kayla, Heather and Ethan Duncan, will miss their Nana passionately.



Photo: by a kind stranger.

◀ On a winter hike with Sheila Scott (centre) in 2016 are fellow London dancers Louise Bellhouse (left) and Teresa Janik (right). Teresa has since moved to Stratford so is no longer a London dancer.

Teaching Blind and Partially-Sighted People to Folk Dance

by Dorothy Archer and Paula Tsatsanis

All photos: Olga Kotova.



Paula teaches Lerikos. At far left, Susan Han helps her neighbour.

For several years, Paula has volunteered for the Canadian Council of the Blind (CCB) Toronto Visionaries Chapter and attended events at the Canadian National Institute for the Blind Foundation (CNIB). Her mention of her folk dancing activity created great interest among this community dealing with vision loss. Hence, with the support of the CNIB, she decided to set up a project to see how lessons would be received by blind/low vision/partially sighted people. She asked Dorothy to join her, and the planning began.

Paula had promised a performance at an upcoming dinner/dance event organized by the Toronto Visionaries, a social group of the CCB, and we only had time for three lessons. We taught Opsa, Prva Ljubov and Zemer Atik and decided on the last two dances for the performance. With support from folk dancers Jerry and Agnes Bleiwas, the dances were performed without mishap and were well received by the audience.

The second session was planned for six classes in the spring. We expected that mixing new dancers with those who had already learned some steps would be a problem, but we decided that the ones who knew the dances would pull the others forward. Also, we reviewed all dances learned earlier. We used a pattern of teaching an easy dance then reviewing one learned the week before and then teaching a new, more difficult, one. If there was time, we would do dances already learned.

At the first spring class we taught Savila se Bela Loza and then spent time practising the grapevine before learning Lerikos. The new people adapted quickly and the session went well.

Susan Han joined us at every class as a support to the dancers, helping them master details of



Dorothy stays in the centre during Savila se Bela Loza.

steps and rhythms. Masako Saito, Marylyn Peringer and Jerry Bleiwas also gave time to this important function.

Each class began with a warmup led by Paula and ended with a snack and chatting. The snacks, funded by the CNIB, were prepared by Paula and served by Peter Tsatsanis and Olga Kotova. Olga is a volunteer with the CNIB and has experience helping those with vision loss. She tended to the details around the sessions and was a valuable presence.

It was a learning experience for all. One of the members had had dance experience elsewhere and told us that walking the steps on a person's back with our fingers or hands was very helpful. We used this technique with success. People with some sight walked the steps on the table with their fingers.

We thought that we needed to do very little accommodation for blindness, the main exception being omitting full-circle turns because of disorientation. That was before Paula taught Carnivalito with the skip and Dorothy taught Ersko Kolo with a hop. Skipping and hopping are problems for people with vision loss. A search of the literature confirmed this difficulty and gave details on how to overcome it. Rather than spend time following the suggested step for learning, we decided to adapt with a brush in Carnivalito and a stamp in Ersko Kolo.

The main challenge for us was use of the language to describe the movements. When teaching Ersko Kolo, Dorothy said, "Put your right heel up." Those with some sight did so but there was confusion amongst the others. Then one of the people with sight said, "The heel isn't up; the toes are pointing straight up." Needless to say, there was a change in instruction to, "Put your weight on your right heel with toes pointing up."

At the spring session, attendance at the first two classes was seven people but at the third the number doubled. There was a mixture of experience but all had done at least one class. We had planned that this class not have any teaching but be a review of the dances learned so far. We reviewed each one carefully, and the result was that the group danced five numbers well and rewarded themselves with clapping and smiles.



Participants in a June 2023 class, from left to right: Jerry Bleiwas, Peter MacKenzie, Roly Sy, Paula, Dorothy, Bev Grant, Sylvia Jonas, guide dog Hildegard, and Susan Han.

Paula then taught Maître de la Maison over the next two classes. She began with the side steps and rising on the toes only. At the second class she added the swing steps and omitted the turn. Much easier was Robin Ddiog, which Dorothy taught, also without the turn.

At the last class we reviewed all nine dances learned. We did one walk-through and then put the music on and the members danced them all. There was no lack of enthusiasm; everyone felt proud of their accomplishments, especially given the challenge of vision loss. All look forward to more dancing in the fall.

It has been a rewarding experience teaching folk dancing to the blind and partially sighted. We hope that the program continues and expands in the fall.

OFDA AGM & Dance Café, June 10, 2023

by Dorothy Archer

June is the traditional time for OFDA's Annual General Meeting and review of dances learned at the most recent Waterloo camp.

In the afternoon of June 10, more than 40 people gathered at Willowdale Presbyterian Church in Toronto. The meeting was informative, orderly and brief. Three nice dances from camp were taught: Boereasca de la Goicea (Romania) by Judy Silver, Ach Eleni (Greece) by Karen Bennett, and Lusniak (Armenia) by Riki Adivi. The dances were done again later.

The rest of the afternoon was devoted to dancing, snacking and chatting. The music was inviting, and few people sat out. The snacks, provided by OFDA, were varied and tasty, and there were many happy reunions of people who hadn't seen each other for some time. Surprise visitors were Olga Sandolowich, who is recovering from hip surgery, and retired teacher Sandy Starkman.

While some of us look back at the original cafés fondly, this new arrangement is promising. With time it will take on its own characteristics and maybe even a new name.

OFDA 2023 AGM Snapshot

Now posted on the OFDA website: [the 2023 Minutes and Reports.](#)

This year we've been crawling (dancing) out of COVID-19, with OFDA having held in-person dance events: October 29/22 Line Dance Café (with Adam & Riki, and Free entrance as a "Welcome Back" from Covid); New Year's Party at Riki & Stav's (free for members); and in Apr/23 a Spring Dance Café, all of which were enjoyed and well-attended.

2022-23 Year-End Financial Report: This was a transition year, with Janis Smith handing over to Efrim Boritz. Efrim was out of country at the time of the AGM, and Janis delivered the Treasurer's Report. Selected details below.

ASSETS	2022	2023
Total Assets	<u>\$28,158.15</u>	<u>\$28,112.60</u>
Includes.....Current	\$17,222.91	\$17,060.18
Fixed	\$ 0	\$ 0
In Trust for OTEA	\$10,931.24	\$11,052.42
REVENUE		
Total Revenue, excluding Events	<u>\$ 4,215.30</u>	<u>\$ 4,486.50</u>
Includes.....Membership	\$ 3,840.35	\$ 3,874.68
Advertising	\$ 207.91	\$ 282.29
T-shirt Sales	\$ 55.00	\$ 140.00
EXPENSES		
Total Expenses, excluding Events	<u>\$ 3,297.36</u>	<u>\$ 3,162.31</u>
Includes..... Magazine - Printing	\$ 235.04	\$ 287.62
- Postage	\$ 358.22	\$ 390.34
Liability Insurance	\$ 972.00	\$ 972.00
EVENTS		
Dancing in the Park: Hamilton, Toronto, Richmond Hill, Dundas (-\$1075.00)		
October Line Dance Cafe (-\$161.79)		
Excess of Revenue over Expenses after events	\$ 804.94	\$ 87.50
OTEA Scholarship Awarded	\$ 0	\$ 0

Summary from Membership Chair Mirdza Jaunzemis

June 2022: Canada – 178 USA – 16 Overseas – 3 Total: 197
 March 2023: Canada – 175 USA – 15 Overseas – 3 Total: 193

Elected Executive for 2022-23

Steering Committee: Riki Adivi, Bev Sidney, Helen Winkler

Members-at-Large: Stav Adivi, Efrim Boritz, Devianée Caussy, Judith Cohen, Naomi Fromm, Mirdza Jaunzemis, Roz Katz, Gary McIntosh, Marylyn Peringer, Gloria Mostyn, Janis Smith, Mary Triantafillou, Paula Tsatsanis

The 55th Anniversary of the International Folk Dancers of Ottawa, 29–30 April 2023

by Stefania Szlek Miller

The Ottawa club has an infusion of young dancers, which bodes well for IFDO's future. As the photo of the efficient organizing committee shows, at least four of the nine members are young enough to be my grandchildren. Wijnand Karel, the dynamic guest instructor from the Netherlands, is my son's age, and that cohort is also well represented at IFDO. Marcel Pronovost, one of the founders of the Ottawa club, has danced for more than 55 years, and the club's oldest member, Ken Edwards, has danced since 1956. It's wonderful to share dances across generations.

The anniversary celebration was held at the Churchill Seniors Recreation Centre, which is near some good restaurants on Richmond Road. Dancers appreciated the spacious sprung wooden floor and the excellent sound system, managed by Seymour Shlien. According to Lucette Lepage, 82 participants registered for the event, and there were more people for the evening party, with live music provided by the renowned Pinewoods Band (<https://pixton.org/pinewoodsband/about-the-pinewoods-band.html>) from Boston. Aside from the IFDO folk, participants came from Quebec, Ontario and the USA. The Ontario Folk Dance Association was well represented by Mirdza Jaunzemis, Anita Millman and me from the Hamilton International Folk Dance Club, and by Fred Slater and Irena (Irene) Bevc, who drove from Toronto for the Saturday night dinner and party. At the Saturday day workshops, Wijnand Karel



Photo: Susanna Barbatun.

Anniversary organizing committee and IFDO board. Front row, left to right: Jo Leibovitz, Seymour Shlien, Michèle Roy and Silvia Holtrop (behind Michèle). Back: Sophie Roy, Martine Conway, Marcel Pronovost, Lucette Lepage and Danielle Pronovost. Absent was Bahram Nabatian/Comité organisateur du 55e anniversaire et conseil du club d'Ottawa. En avant, de gauche à droite : Jo Leibovitz, Seymour Shlien, Michèle Roy et Silvia Holtrop (derrière Michèle). En arrière : Sophie Roy, Martine Conway, Marcel Pronovost, Lucette Lepage et Danielle Pronovost. Absent : Bahram Nabatian.

provided instructions in English since many guest participants were not bilingual. In the evening, the balance was corrected by Tom Pixton of the Pinewoods Band introducing all the dances in French.

Wijnand is a beautiful dancer and an engaging teacher. He breaks down dances into rhythmic bites and then introduces the more complex choreographed structure. He described each dance within the context of its geographic region and cultural characteristics. In stressing the importance of strong arms for Balkan dances, he explained that dancers were forced to keep their arms from sagging into limp noodles because their traditional costumes were tight under the armpits. Maybe we should all wear tight-fitting outfits when we dance.

During the two-and-a-half-hour morning session, Wijnand taught three dances: Ti Reče Momne Le, a slow Bulgarian dance; Sevdalinke Maloj Mome, a Râčenica from Macedonia; and Valle E Camerisë, an elegant Albanian dance done in couples with scarves (provided by the teacher). In the afternoon, Wijnand introduced Hora Gagauze, from a minority Turkic ethnic group in Moldova; Devojko Mori Devojko, an 11/8-meter dance from Macedonia; and Laila Laila, an Israeli couple waltz that could also be done as a mixer.

Late in the afternoon, when we were already saturated with choreography, Wijnand announced that he would introduce a bourrée. I was delighted since I had Marie Fleming, a superb IFDO dancer, as my partner. We had also enjoyed dancing together on other occasions to Germain Hébert's stately bourrées. Well, Bourrée rue Bancale was a dance on steroids, with three couples in a set. The dancers rapidly shifted their positions and then the second couple danced in the middle while the corners changed places. It was fun trying to do all this to fast music, but the result was certainly not stately. (Note: The Web version that I accessed is not the same as the one presented by Wijnand. He provided videos of his dances for those participants who wished to procure them.)

The catered food at the evening banquet was excellent, and the tables were quickly cleared for dancing. The versatile Pinewoods Band, which had also played at IFDO's 50th anniversary (see the February 2019 issue of *Folk Dancer Online*), did not disappoint. The band has an amazing repertoire of classic as well as more recent dances in the international folkdance circuit. They interspersed choreographed dances with simpler ones that were easy to follow. To the amusement of francophones, the whole band sang the lyrics to An Dro Retourné.

In between the long sets of live music, Wijnand cued the dances that he had taught during the day. It was a lively and joyful evening.

At the Saturday evening banquet, Marcel thanked the guest teacher and welcomed all the participants. He noted that the Ottawa club was formed 55 years ago by the merger of three groups, led by Roger Wells



Hamilton participants with the teacher. Left to right: Mirdza Jaunzemis, Wijnand Karel, Stefania Miller and Anita Millman/ Les participants d'Hamilton avec le professeur. De gauche à droite: Mirdza Jaunzemis, Wijnand Karel, Stefania Miller et Anita Millman.

at Carleton University, Gilles Lasnier at Vanier, and Marcel at the University of Ottawa. Roger moved to BC some time ago and is no longer affiliated with the Ottawa group. Gilles passed away on 17 December 2022 and is fondly remembered for his contribution to IFDO. The club, according to Marcel, has three distinctive features: It is bilingual in Canada's two official languages; dance sessions are offered throughout the year; and the club is not identified with a specific leader—i.e., it is not X's or Y's group. The club

is run by a board of volunteers who all contribute to the running of the club. Its current President is Jo Leibovitz, and the Vice-President is Silvia Holtrop. They are responsible for coordinating weekly Thursday evening dance sessions, held at the Jack Purcell Community Centre. The club's mission is to promote international folk dancing and multiculturalism in the Ottawa-Hull region (see IFDO website, https://ifdo.ca/welcome_e.asp, for more details).

I would add one other distinctive feature of IFDO: They dance with joy! Kudos to the Ottawa dancers for a successful 55th anniversary. We wish you many more years of dancing.

P.S. The three of us from Hamilton had to leave early on 30 April so we missed the Sunday session, focused on teaching international folk dance. According to Lucette Lepage, 20 participants attended. We need new teachers, especially younger ones.

Le 55e anniversaire du Club de danse folklorique internationale d'Ottawa, 29 et 30 avril 2023

Traduit par Lucie Boisvenue

Le club d'Ottawa s'est enrichi de jeunes danseurs, ce qui augure bien pour l'avenir. Comme le montre la photo de son efficace comité organisateur, au moins quatre des neuf membres sont assez jeunes pour être mes petits-enfants. Wijnand Karel, le dynamique professeur invité des Pays-Bas, a l'âge de mon fils, et ce groupe d'âge est bien représenté aussi dans le club. Marcel Pronovost, un des fondateurs du club d'Ottawa,

danse depuis plus de 55 ans et Ken Edwards, le membre le plus âgé, depuis 1956. C'est formidable de voir plusieurs générations partager leur amour de la danse.

La célébration a eu lieu au Centre récréatif pour aînés Churchill, situé à proximité de bons restaurants sur le chemin Richmond. Les danseurs ont apprécié le vaste plancher flottant en bois et l'excellent système de son géré par Seymour Shlien. D'après Lucette Lepage, il y a eu 82 inscriptions, et notamment une forte participation à la folkothèque animée par le réputé Pinewoods Band de Boston. Aux membres du club d'Ottawa se sont joints des participants du Québec, d'autres régions de l'Ontario et des États-Unis. L'Ontario Folk Dance Association était bien représentée par Mirdza Jaunzemis, Anita Millman et moi-même, de l'Hamilton International Folk Dance Club, et par Fred Slater et Irena (Irene) Bevc, arrivés de Toronto pour le banquet et la folkothèque du samedi. Aux sessions du samedi, Wijnand Karel a enseigné en anglais étant donné que de nombreux participants n'étaient pas bilingues, mais dans la soirée, pour faire contrepoids, Tom Pixton du Pinewoods Band a présenté toutes les danses en français.

Wijnand est un danseur accompli et un professeur stimulant. Il décompose la danse en éléments rythmiques, qu'il fait suivre de la structure chorégraphique plus complexe. Il situe chaque danse dans son contexte géographique et culturel. Soulignant l'importance de la force des bras dans les danses balkaniques, il a expliqué que les costumes traditionnels serrés sous les aisselles empêchaient les danseurs de laisser leurs bras pendouiller. On devrait peut-être tous porter des vêtements serrés quand on danse.

Dans la session de deux heures et demie du samedi matin, Wijnand a enseigné trois danses : Ti Reče Momne Le, une danse bulgare lente; Sevdalinke Maloj Mome, une rāčenica de Macédoine; et Valle E Camerisë, une élégante danse albanaise de couple avec foulards (qu'il a lui-même

fournis). Dans l'après-midi, il a enseigné Hora Gagauze, d'une ethnie turque minoritaire de Moldavie; Devojko Mori Devojko, une danse macédonienne de rythme 11/8; et Laila Laila, une valse israélienne de couple qui peut aussi se faire comme un mixer.

Tard dans l'après-midi, alors que nous étions



Danse albanaise avec foulards/Albanian dance with scarves.

Photo: Michèle Roy.

déjà saturés de chorégraphies, Wijnand a annoncé qu'il allait nous enseigner une bourrée. J'étais ravie d'avoir comme partenaire Marie Fleming, une superbe danseuse du club d'Ottawa. En d'autres occasions, nous avons eu le plaisir de faire ensemble des bourrées de Germain Hébert avec la prestance qui les caractérise. En fait, la Bourrée rue Bancale est plutôt une danse sous stéroïdes pour trois couples. Les danseurs changent rapidement de position, puis le deuxième couple danse au centre pendant que les deux autres changent de place. Nous nous sommes bien amusés à tenter ces déplacements sur un tempo rapide, mais la prestance n'était certainement pas au rendez-vous. (À noter que la version trouvée sur le Web n'est pas celle de Wijnand. Les participants qui désiraient avoir les vidéos de ses danses ont pu se les procurer.)

Après l'excellent banquet du samedi soir, les tables ont vite été retirées pour faire place à la danse. Le Pinewoods Band, qui s'était aussi produit au 50e anniversaire (voir le numéro de février 2019 de Folk Dancer Online), a comblé les attentes. Cet orchestre a un incroyable répertoire de danses folkloriques internationales aussi bien classiques que récentes. Il a alterné des danses chorégraphiées avec des danses plus simples et faciles à suivre. Au grand amusement des francophones, tout l'orchestre a chanté les paroles d'An Dro Retourné.

Entre les longues périodes de musique jouée par l'orchestre, Wijnand a guidé nos pas dans les danses enseignées le jour même. La soirée s'est déroulée dans une ambiance animée et joyeuse.

Au banquet du samedi soir, Marcel a remercié le professeur invité et souhaité la bienvenue à tous les participants. Il a signalé que le club d'Ottawa a été fondé 55 ans auparavant par la fusion de trois groupes, dirigés par Roger Wells à l'Université Carleton, Gilles Lasnier à Vanier et lui-même à l'Université d'Ottawa. Roger est parti vivre en Colombie-Britannique il y a des années et n'est plus affilié au club. Gilles est décédé le 17 décembre 2022, et il sera sincèrement regretté. D'après Marcel, le club d'Ottawa a trois traits distinctifs : il fonctionne dans les deux langues officielles du Canada; les soirées de danse se déroulent toute l'année; et le club n'a pas de leader désigné, c.-à-d. qu'il n'est pas le groupe de X ou Y. Il est dirigé par un conseil formé de bénévoles, qui a actuellement pour présidente Jo Leibovitz et pour vice-présidente Silvia Holtrop, et qui est chargé de coordonner les soirées de danse hebdomadaires du jeudi au Centre communautaire Jack Purcell. Sa mission est de promouvoir la danse folklorique internationale et le multiculturalisme dans la région d'Ottawa-Gatineau (voir son site Web, https://ifdo.ca/welcome_f.asp, pour plus de détails).

J'ajouterais un trait distinctif au club d'Ottawa : ses danseurs ont du plaisir! Bravo aux danseurs d'Ottawa pour un 55e anniversaire réussi. Nous vous souhaitons de poursuivre l'aventure encore longtemps.



Photo: Karen Aston.

Le Pinewoods Band/The Pinewoods Band.

P.S. Nous trois d'Hamilton avons dû repartir tôt le 30 avril et avons donc manqué l'atelier de dimanche sur l'enseignement de la danse folklorique internationale. Selon Lucette Lepage, 20 personnes y ont participé. Nous avons besoin de nouveaux instructeurs, surtout des jeunes.

JOIN US ON SATURDAY AFTERNOON
FOR AN OFDA DANCE CAFÉ
IN MEMORY OF YVES MOREAU

NEW LOCATION

Date: October 28, 2023
Time: 3 - 5:30 p.m.
Place: Agricola Finnish Lutheran Church
25 Old York Mills Rd. (near SE corner
of Yonge & York Mills), Free Parking
and steps to Subway Station
Door Fee: OFDA Member - \$5
Non-Member - \$10



The afternoon will include dancing for all levels of experience, featuring teaching/leading of Yves Moreau's dances.

Snacks and beverages will be served
(you're encouraged to bring your own mug).

COVID PROTOCOLS FOR THIS EVENT

- Masking is optional.
- Please, do not attend if you feel at all unwell.

*No Shortage of Ingenuity: The Impact of War on Moravian Kroje**

by Jan Łętowski



Detail of Kyjovsko apron, ca. 1945.

If you're familiar with the folk dress of the Kyjovsko region in Czechia, you might notice something peculiar about this apron. Besides being beautiful and exceptionally ornate, it has a unique story to tell. During a visit with my friend Ladislav Lunga in the Moravian village of Milotice on July 29, 2023, we looked at some of the several hundred Kyjovsko aprons in his collection. This one immediately struck me as odd for its scant use of red—traditionally the predominant colour—and abundance of other coloured threads. Ladislav, perhaps the most knowledgeable person in the world when it comes to folk dress from this region, gave me an insightful explanation.

I already knew that during and right after WWII, there were shortages of all types of goods in Europe. Not only were many textile factories repurposed for military use; the decimation of the Jewish population eliminated an entire network of tailors, craftspeople, haberdashery shops, and vendors of imported fabrics and notions. This directly impacted folk costumes in places where traditional clothing was still in regular use because people couldn't get the necessary threads, spangles, beads, ribbons, and other materials that they needed. In the case of these Kyjovsko aprons, Ladislav told me that there were not enough embroidery threads available, so women had to get creative. They used up their own reserves of leftover threads from better days, resulting in colours that were typically used for accents becoming more dominant as more of those pre-war threads remained on the spools. But even more interestingly, women unravelled old ribbons in order to repurpose their silk threads as embroidery thread, which was deemed more important than ribbons at the time. Hence the strong presence of orange in this apron, which is extremely atypical and would have come from a deconstructed orange ribbon. Ladislav dated the apron to ca. 1945, immediately after the war.

There are many instances of how wartime shortages impacted the development of folk dress in Europe during the second half of the 20th century. The use of painting to replace embroidery was perhaps the most common and was to be seen on ribbons, aprons, vests and other garments. In some places, the war-era changes permanently replaced earlier decorative forms and remained in use for decades. However, in the Kyjovsko region, even as the colour palette continued to expand after the war, red quickly returned to its former place of honour.

*Kroje is the Czech word for traditional costumes.

Ontario Folk Dance Camp 2023

by Mirdza Jaunzemis

After a long hiatus we were finally back at camp in Waterloo! Our numbers were down from three years ago; thus, it was a rather intimate group. Our instructors were Tineke and Maurits van Geel, a dynamic duo! (Tineke had attended our camp in 1996.) They taught fewer dances than previous instructors, and reviewed many times, so that the dances stayed with us. We “travelled” through various countries and regions: Armenia, Turkey, Russia, Greece, Romania, Israel, Macedonia and Kurdistan, sometimes with a flavouring of Roma styling.

After the initial teaching of the dances, either Tineke or Maurits would lead, or they would dance together, always with smiles. Their technique was to start simply and then add bits and pieces after we learned the basics—a very good breakdown of the steps. And there were some great dances!

The evening parties were fun as usual, and once again we had the children from Colombia joining us for about a half-hour on the Sunday night. On Saturday night, Maurits gave us a talk on his involvement with the Roma diaspora and

presented a video of Roma groups he has worked with, showcasing their performances in areas such as Hungary, India and Bessarabia. (By the way: The Royal House of the Netherlands has made him a knight in the Order of Orange-Nassau: Sir Maurits!) And the evening’s theme was Spring, with some stylish colours being displayed by some participants.

On Sunday night we had our usual sing-along, led by Christine Linge—always some good selections. And Christine Chattin, a long-time member of OFDA and the organizer and preparer of snacks for camp for many years, was presented with an orchid for her contributions and dedication. And then: King Charles appeared with Camilla, the



Children from Colombia follow Riki Adivi in the “sit dance” Syp Simeon at the Sunday night party.

Photo: Mirdza Jaunzemis.

Dancing Queen! The King also had a lady-in-waiting to carry his train. Quite the spectacle, with much pomp and circumstance, silliness and a promenade! At the end of the evening we had a celebratory cake provided by Harbord Bakery (other sweet breads had also been provided by Roz and Allen Katz for the three evenings).

Monday morning was different from previous years in that we did not have a taping of the dances—just a review. The van Geels had videos for instructional purposes available for purchase. Thus, no nerves as to how we would look and how many mistakes we might make—just enjoy the dances one more time!

Our bazaar was back, with many interesting items available.

It was good to reunite with old friends, dancing together—holding hands!—socializing, enjoying each other's company. As the weekend came to an end, we said our good-byes, hoping to do this again next year!



Their Majesties King Charles (Maurits van Geel) and Queen Camilla (Lynne Smiley), attended by Heidi Williams, on Sunday night.

Photos this page: Mirdza Jaunzemis.



Camp's three attendees from the States at the Saturday night party: Bill and Karen Havens (from Syracuse, NY) and Mary Zaleta (East Lansing, MI).



The Grapevine

On May 8 came the sad news of the passing of John Kuo (<https://memorialsources.com/memorial/john-kuo>), a founding member/director of the ensemble Balkanske Igre and of the Chicago Spring Festival, which many Canadian folk dancers have attended. John and his future wife Galia Miloucheva taught a Macedonian workshop at IFDC in Toronto in September 1994 and were great friends of David Yee's. Kevin Budd's interview of John and Galia appeared in the *Ontario FolkDancer* issues of Dec. 1/94 and Jan. 15 and Mar. 1/95. John was born in Hong Kong on Sept. 11, 1949. He is survived by three siblings, wife Galia, and daughter Maria ("Mimi") Kuo Ignjatov.



Galia Miloucheva Kuo and John Kuo.

Just a few weeks after appearing at Ontario Folk Dance Camp and enjoying herself a great deal doing a little bit of dancing and a lot of chatting to people, Christine Chatten suffered a brain aneurysm. She died in Toronto on June 3. Ye Acting Editor first met Chris at the Settlement House in Toronto in 1975.

Trina Egan, daughter of Shirley Kossowski and Alfred Egan, died unexpectedly on May 20, aged 49.

In June, Scottish dance teacher Kay Munn moved from Kingston, Ontario, back to her homeland, Scotland.

Also in early June, Chuck Demetro, husband of Sheryl, passed away after a lengthy decline.

In July, Jeannine Wright, who lived in Matthews, North Carolina, passed on.

The seven-episode musical-comedy series that Judy Silver's daughter, Shaina, co-wrote and performed in, *Less Than Kosher* (<https://tjff.com/films/less-than-kosher/>), has proved to be a great hit. It had its world premiere in June in Toronto (where the series was also set). Tamar Ilana, Judith Cohen's daughter, had a cameo. The first two episodes are available to preview for free in Canada on HighballTV at <https://www.highballtv.com/products/less-than-kosher>, and the entire series can be rented or bought there too.



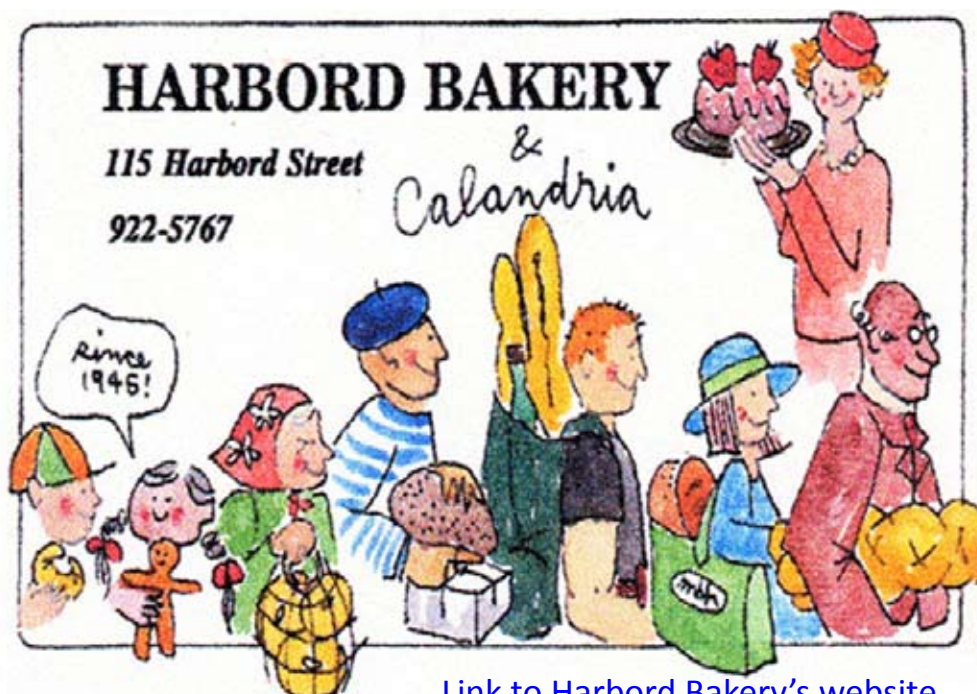
Marylyn Peringer, Riki Adivi, Janet Ng and Dorothy Archer participated in dancing at a shortened version of the Gujō Odori dance festival on August 13 at the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre in Toronto. Leon Balaban was present as a photographer. In Japan, Gujō Odori (http://www.gujohachiman.com/kanko/odori_e.html) is typically held from mid-July until the first weekend in September. The festival began more than 400 years ago to break down social barriers in the community. This year, the small city (about four hours west of Tokyo) was also celebrating being added to UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage list in 2022. The dancing in Toronto was broadcast to Japan, and a video of people dancing in the streets in Gujō was shown in Toronto.

On September 8 came the very upsetting news that the beloved Yves Moreau had died in Montréal, aged 75. Although he was best known as a teacher and choreographer of and ambassador for Bulgarian dance, he did teach other material, including French. The first dance he ever taught was Pinosavka, from Serbia. A partial biography written in 2020

may be found here: http://www.bourque-moreau.com/yves_moreau_-_short_biograp.html. A video of him teaching Žensko Kapansko Horo at a 2010 workshop in Toronto is here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SzKvKQZgaaY>. An excerpt from the announcement his family posted on Facebook read, "Yves lived such an exciting and rich life, filled with discoveries, travels, extraordinary adventures, but above all, deep relationships that he forged in the four corners of the world through his love for folk dance and music. These sincere friendships and the passion he communicated to so many people will long survive him."



Yves Moreau, surrounded by dancers in Bulgarian costume. The hand of his wife, France Bourque-Moreau, rests on his shoulder.



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