

Folk Dancer

The Magazine of World Dance and Culture



Aline Morales and Victoria Krakovna, Brazilian Café (see p. 24). Photo: Al Katz.

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Joie de Vivre! - Ottawa's Newest Folk Guild

As this issue of the Folk Dancer magazine goes to press, our Editor is on the verge of a month-long voyage to Greece. In place of his editorial this month, we have a report from Ottawa, describing their folk dance-inspired multicultural explorations.

By Ellen Youle

Joie de Vivre (JdV) is the name that has been given to a new group in Ottawa, which has been created to learn more about diverse cultures through dance, cuisine, songs, garb, artisanship, language, and traditional tales and legends. This has come about through many personal, telephone and e-mail discussions between three friends who met through dancing with the International Folk Dancers of Ottawa (IFDO) - Carolyn Lake, Ellen Youle, and Susan Barker. Together we realized that we all shared many other interests over and above the dancing from various countries, and we wanted to create events that combined several aspects of the cultures of the countries from which we do the dances.



In October of 2009, we launched Joie de Vivre with a gathering in Ellen's home to chat, eat, and dance. Thirty people attended, representing several cultures and with an age range over seven decades. We even celebrated a birthday that evening – and danced birthday dances from two different cultures.

Meanwhile, two other events were starting to take shape. In January 2010, the first took place – what we called a “SarmaFest” - in which eleven of us gathered in Ellen's home for cooking and dancing – as well as socializing. Ibrahim Rizevski, who is originally from the former Yugoslavia, taught a group of us how to make “sarma”, – a Balkan

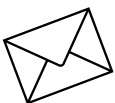
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The OFDA has established an e-mail list in order to communicate timely information of interest to folk dancers. If you would like to add your name to the list, send an e-mail request to: ontariofolkdancers@gmail.com



Please do let us know about special events!

version of cabbage rolls; and while these were cooking, he led us in Balkan dances.

The idea for the next event started through a combination of circumstances and developed into a cultural exchange with the people of the lovely St. Xenia Russian Orthodox Church. In November, 15 of us attended their Pelmeny fundraiser lunch, where we dined on Russian food cooked for us by the members of the parish. We socialized, shopped in their craft market, were entertained with a performance of Russian folk songs, and were treated to a tour of their church.

We then worked together to create a Russian Dance and Food workshop which took place on January 30, 2010, with 30 people in attendance. Once again the food was excellent, and the attendees had a chance to tour the lovely church. Daria Dmitrieva, currently a dance instructor in Ottawa but originally from Russia, taught us a selection of Russian folk dances. The 30 attendees came from various backgrounds and for various reasons. Some were actively involved in folk dancing, some had done it before but had been away from it for a while; some did other kinds of dancing but wanted to try the Russian dances; and some were of Russian ancestry and wanted to try these dances.

The success of the Russian workshop prompted the three organizers to think of themselves as the “Troika” – a Russian word signifying a group of three, but also a Russian folk dance for groups of three people. Our Troika is now busily at work, planning for other events. We are researching various communities in Ottawa with which we might create another workshop; and we are also planning some sessions in which we share with each other dances that we have learned from our own workshops and various other places.

We are not a club that will meet regularly. We just want to have some unique opportunities for people to gather to dance for joy and share culture and ideas. We will alternate some larger workshops with guest instructors and some smaller sessions where some of us can share dances, food, stories, etc. that we know. The next event will be a gathering of some people to practice some easy dances from various countries in different “set” formations that involve specific numbers of people, including odd numbers such as dances for 9 or 7 or 5 people – in an effort to always have dancing no matter the size of the group. We are also starting to work on a larger program with another community of people in Ottawa that will include some of their traditional foods, dancing, clothing, etc.

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Rikudiah Celebrates 40th Birthday

By Doris Strub Epstein

First Published March 26, 2010 in Shalom Toronto and Shalom Life



If it's spring it must be Rikudiah time. The annual children's dance festival has over the 40 years of inception, become an institution in our community. Many who participated in the past when they were youngsters, like Anne Harari (teaching the Neptune Associated Hebrew School children), have become teachers themselves, leading the children through the often intricate choreography, inculcating them with the culture and ruach of Israel through music and dance.

This year's theme was the celebration of 40 years of Rikudia and the hundredth anniversary of Tel Aviv.

Parents and friends packed the bleachers in the large gym at CHAT Wilmington, to watch, cheer and sing along. The children marched in with their instructors all dressed in white tops and blue jeans and wearing caps. Each school had its own distinctive coloured cap.

“From its inception, Rikudiyah has been a celebration in dance of all things Israeli - Israel's history, its culture and its enthusiasm for life,” says founder and director, Teme Kernerman. Each dance revisited landmarks in Israel's history.

In keeping with her philosophy, the children all performed together. There were no stars featured and no winners.

The first dance, B'lev Echad, with one heart, marks the historical visit of Egypt's President Sadat to Jerusalem and Israel, signing its first Peace Treaty with an Arab nation.

Tcherkessia, a game dance, represents the significant main wave of modern Russian Aliyah – immigration to Israel, in the 1980s. In the next dance, Ani Oleh L'Yershalayim, children joyfully celebrate the city of Jerusalem.

The two dances representing the 1990s, embody two important historical anniversaries. First, Avre Tu, sung in Ladino, a unique Judeo-Spanish language, marks 500 years after the Spanish expulsion of the Jews. The Chassidically styled dance, In Der Rebbe's Hof – in the Rabbi's orchard – celebrates 1,000 years of the Yiddish language.

To bring us to the first decade of the Twenty-First Century and the hundredth anniversary of Tel Aviv, the children danced to Tel Aviv. The grand finale, celebrating Israel's sixtieth birthday in 2008, concluded with Bat Shishim, meaning 60 years old.

Introducing Rikudiah, Craig Rimer, Chair UJA Federation Centre for Jewish Education, called the festival "a landmark event in the Jewish community, that reflects our culture and heritage and helps in our goal to be the most vibrant Jewish community in North America."

Dor Le'dor, Generation to Generation, a

group composed of mothers with their grade two children, performed to a medley of children's songs.

Two adult groups also performed: The Chai Dancers from the Prosserman JCC and the Nirkoda Israeli Dancers from the Koffler Centre of the Arts, the oldest performing group in Canada.

Israeli born Bella Dar came to watch her granddaughter who danced in the Associated group. Choking back tears, she spoke with Teme after. "It was mashehu! I was overwhelmed. There is nothing like this even in Israel."

"Rikudiah is not for just now," said Teme. "It's building connections with Judaism and Israel for the future."

Rikudiah 2010 was co-sponsored by Koffler Centre of the Arts and UJA federation Centre for Jewish Education.

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Toronto to Copper Canyon in Five Weeks

By Murray Forbes

In the euphoria of the newly retired we pointed our elderly Ford Focus west one sunny September afternoon. Fifteen thousand kilometers and five weeks later we joined the traffic congested eastbound 401 in Toronto, wheel worn but still rolling. It was wet and unpleasant and ,well, home.

Throughout North America wherever we went the roads were dug up. The economy was being stimulated by reducing four lane highways to two lanes wherever possible. Our first day and a half was not overwhelmed with excitement. We, however, liked industrial USA so much that we decided to drive through Chicago in the morning rush hour with all the roads dug up. Bumper to bumper in 6 lanes of traffic I managed to take the wrong exit to I-94, which unpredictably exits twice from I-90 - once before Milwaukee and the other after it. We were therefore able to augment our enjoyment of traffic jams and dug up highways along the industrial edge of Lake Michigan before taking the long way back to I-90. Thirteen hours later we pulled over at some indifferent motel in nowhere Minnesota (St. Cloud, I believe) for an inedible eat and a nondescript sleep.

However, all good things must come to an end and we inevitably arrived in the “drearies” – that sort of living dead state where one is apt to wake up with a funny sensation that something has happened and find that the road has curved slightly to the left. North America has definitely got wider since the last time I drove across it thirty five years ago.

We compromised with Google maps which wanted us to cross the US side. We wanted to see Banff again, so we crossed back into Canada



Murray and Lavinia in Victoria

somewhere along the Saskatchewan border, at a rather remote location. Before reaching it, however, we managed to spend some quality time in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan. If any of you are tempted to spend the night in Moose Jaw the walk downtown from the motel strip may not be the highlight of your trip.

We did not believe Google when it sent us towards Red Deer preferring, as it turns out, the perpetually red traffic lights through Calgary. However, once we completed our inspection of the traffic light system in detail and approached the Rockies there was that incredulity as the mountains get

bigger and bigger and one seems to crawl like an ant up the side of them. There is no place for pride when driving our dilapidated Ford as laden trucks overtake us up the mountainsides, leaving us ample time to admire the shear immensity of these gigantic peeks.

We arrived in Banff, with the sun shining and the leaves beginning to turn, at the end of another day of just too much driving, and managed to get lost. There are actually only three roads in Banff so getting lost takes considerable skill. We managed to get caught up in the inevitable road works. As it turned out, as a result of this diverting struggle – car against road building machine - we lucked on a vacant bed and breakfast place in someone’s basement just a few paces from the river. After walking down the river to some waterfalls and then up it past some very high end cottages to some mosquito breeding grounds and up, down and around the main street we had almost worked the driving out of our bones in preparation for the next lap.

Throughout our trip we were, in general, exceptionally lucky with the weather. Whether it was



Strolling at Lake Louise

Indian summer or just the one that didn't happen in July and August we are not sure but it was certainly agreeable. The next day, however, was one of the exceptions. We got to stroll along Lake Louise with umbrellas. In effect Lake Louise and Moraine Lake are so beautiful that rain or shine makes little difference. The water is a startling turquoise. However, the drive down the other edge of the mountains through the road works would have been more agreeable in the sun.

In a successful effort to keep the pressure up during retirement and ensure that we put in twelve hour days behind the wheel instead of at the office, I had arranged with friends in Victoria to go Balkan dancing with them on Friday night which meant getting on the ferry by early afternoon. Without any inquiry beyond a map we settled on Kamloops for the night. There may be agreeable facets to Kamloops but we did not stumble on them. After wandering downtown for a while we grabbed the only hotel that we saw, which way exceeded our needs and budget – of course the next day on the way out we managed to pass a representative of every motel chain ever invented but, alas, too late. There is a park area along the river's edge which was sort of pleasant but compared to the countryside either side of Kamloops we definitely could have planned things better.

Google started us off the next day down the

deserted and incredibly beautiful Highway 5A before joining us onto the highway down the rest of the mountains. This is one nice drive and we had no trouble getting onto the midday ferry to Victoria.

Victoria is a world apart. Beautiful, well maintained properties, surrounded by beautiful views and serviced by beautiful shops and inhabited by wealthy retired accountants and doctors. There is a total cleanliness about the place. Everyone is friendly and thoughtful and, well, how people really ought to be. No one tries to run you down at an intersection or cross walk or even at an ad-lib crossing – except on one occasion when absorbed in the wonders of Victoria's architecture we did not pursue our crossing with sufficient diligence for one driver who half heartedly hooted us. Our friends assured us that the driver must be a tourist - we think probably from Toronto. In fact arriving at the ferry we were surprised not to be pulled over at an immigration style booth and subjected to a net worth assessment by a retired accountant before being allowed in. Perhaps, however, this is self-regulating. No doubt as a result of the superior level tax base, the municipality has managed to manicure in a pleasing way every public park, building and street, not to mention the odd totem pole – no Indians of course; they have been shifted further down the island. We believe that they are even considering importing a few vagrants from Vancouver to make the place seem more normal. Well, joking aside, if you have never visited Victoria it is an absolute must – walking the beaches, wandering around the harbour, admiring the old nicely renovated buildings and quaint shops. We spent five days in Victoria and the weather cooperated beautifully. It can be rather wet and dreary we are told, but not for us.

After a night in Vancouver we headed down the Pacific coast along the endlessly scenic coast road. There are pokey little rock islands and patches of sandy beaches and enormous red wood trees all in perpetuity over the three day drive. The weather, other than the moments we chose to picnic on a beach or take a brief stroll, was lovely and sunny. We had one memorable picnic on a vast sand beach with drizzle from the Pacific fog, watching reluctant dog

owners being dragged across the beach by their pooches. In California we stuck to Highway 101 rather than taking Highway 1 down more coast. This was also lucky as we read later that at the other end there were surprise road works which had shut down or restricted some bridge or other. In fact if truth be told I preferred this stretch through redwood forest and magnificent mountains to the various seaside glimpses along the coast.

At last we arrived in San Francisco, in all its glory. What a superb city. We descended on it in the traditional way, through the fog hovering around the Golden Bridge. Although the city roughly follows some sort of a grid, which should make getting around vaguely intuitive, the streets all seem to mount vertically or descend vertically and every now and again they disappear entirely to recommence further along and then there is a stretch that goes under a whole bunch of streets. In any event it is a walking town – actually rather a lot of it and we got to discover how Californians in general get to be so fit. We managed to see the swarming ant hill around Fisherman’s wharf, ghastly in every way, and we did not eat crab chowder out of a sour dough loaf bowl. Also seen were the highly elegant Victorian houses maintained to perfection by the winners in the American dream. There were lively neighbourhoods in which those left out of the dream survived, a lively China town, a sophisticated Japan town, sea side trails surrounded by trendy shops and restaurants, some most interesting architecture – a truly great city.

After two days wearing out the pavement in San Francisco we felt that we were ready to tackle some mountains. On advice, we had booked into a lodge just outside of Yosemite Park , through the Tioga Gate. Naturally we chose the sunniest, nicest Sunday with the leaves all in full colour to make our move from sea level. It turns out that we were not the only ones, although I defy anyone to have found a more idiosyncratic route than we did. I had a perfect plan as we descended on I-80 and it did not include all accesses to it being blocked off by the police,



Photos by Murray and Lavinia Forbes

Murray and Lavinia met Tanya Pearson when she lived in Toronto and danced on Friday evenings at IFDC. With Tanya now back in Victoria, they had a chance to visit her and her Mom, pictured here.

without any detour signs or hint at alternatives. Eventually I managed to get so turned around that we headed out towards Berkley and then did some magnificent mismaneuvering to get even more lost so as to arrive at Yosemite village at the height of the throng. There is no denying the natural beauty, no matter how many fellow humans one is sharing it with. We joined the throng late in the day and had a long confusing ride in a park shuttle before getting to the Vernal Falls trailhead - the only falls with water flowing. It seems that the park wardens had in fact directed everyone to this hike as it was totally inundated with people - many of whom, one might have been tempted to surmise, were not avid hiking enthusiasts. It was a significant climb to the top in the heat, ending up in a series of steps cut into the rock. In spite of the merry throng, it was still very beautiful and well worth the effort.

We spent the next three days up in the Tuolumne Meadows higher up the mountains where things were a bit calmer and just as magnificent. One slight issue occurred when we tried to sleep at 9,500 feet, having come directly up from sea level. We both got thoroughly ill from the rapid change in altitude.

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AT EVERY SESSION Sandy Starkman INTERNATIONAL

www.mainewoodsdancecamp.org

....continued from page 9

As a result we decided to do a short flat hike the first day around Pothole Dome. This is not a hike that we would have normally bothered with but feeling so off colour it seemed like a sensible transition. In fact the path continued down a delightful river, passed some small rapids and waterfalls until it came to an end at a wide shallow bend in the river which we were able to cross. On the other side we joined what I assume was the path to Glen Aulin. This took us to the base of a large dome and as both of us were feeling better we decided to climb it. These things are much steeper than they appear and it was quite a struggle to get to the top but the view was spectacular. We had our picnic huddled behind some rocks to protect us from the cold wind and then returned to the river for a snooze before heading back to the car. On the way back I scrambled up Pothole Dome which was lower but also a good view. We decided to do one more hike on the way home. The weather was perfect and there was no merit sitting in our small hotel room listening to the neighbours through the paper thin walls. We basically went round Lampert Dome. The trail led us to Dog Lake, which was pleasant and would have been peaceful but for a group of young hikers who preferred noise.

The next day, after a not very quiet night,



Tuolumne Meadows

my wife was still feeling out of sorts, so I went off on my own to hike to lower Cathedral Lake. The weather had finally broken and it was a bit overcast with a very cold wind. Once out of the forest, the views were spectacular and the lake itself magnificent. I got going early enough, so there was no one other than myself until the return, when I passed an increasing number of people. While at the lake I decided to climb to a pile of rocks perched on top of a cliff. The rock face looked as if it could be ascended easily along ledges, but as one got onto them it was clear that to join the next one would entail unreasonable risk, so I had to back track two or three times and take a lower ledge. Finally, towards the end of the rock face, there had been a rock fall and I was able to scramble up over the enormous chunks of rock and get up that way. The heights again were deceiving and it became quite a workout to get up to the top. However, the view of the lakes and the mountains, including Cathedral Mountain, made it definitely worthwhile.

My wife was feeling much better by the time I got back and we decided to go and hike to Gaylor Lakes. The trailhead starts from just inside the Tioga Pass gate, at just under 10,000 feet. The weather had broken completely and there was rain, a very strong cold wind and a thick mist obscuring the view totally. As we mounted up to about 10,500 feet, a sort of blizzard had developed and the snow was settling in the plants. One could see the leaden lake below but there was no view of the mountains and the cold wind was disagreeable. We decided to descend down to the first Gaylor lake in any event. We were definitely the only hikers. Once we got down, the lake was calm and remote and we walked a bit around it, but were finally driven back by the wind. However, at that moment the wind managed to disperse the mist and we got a magnificent view of the mountains all around, which got even better once we got back up to the top of the path.

The next day we got an early start and took the old Ford on a roller coaster ride through Death Valley, stopping

naturally at the lowest point in USA – some salt flats at -282 ft. Into Nevada we drove through Pahrump which as far as we could tell was up for sale in its entirety. We did not stop to question why. However if any of you are looking for a nice patch of desert out in nowhere, this might just be your dream come true. Then we spent the night in Las Vegas. We were booked into Luxor which is at one end of the strip and managed to struggle down the complete length to Sahara and back the other side of the road visiting all the lobbies. Well I guess everyone ought to go there once in a lifetime.

Next day if anything we managed an even longer day's drive to Nogales on the Mexican border. We managed to avoid highway until the outskirts of Phoenix and got to enjoy the Hoover Dam in serious road works, but were luckily early enough not to get too held up. The view of Lake Powell from this side is spectacular. Later we got to see it from the other side and one can see why so many people make this the focus of their vacation.



Las Vegas

We decided not to try driving in Mexico, partly because of the tensions in the border area and partly because it is a major and time consuming headache to get all the paperwork achieved to “import” the car not to mention that very few companies will insure one for Mexico. Instead we decided to take the overnight bus to Los Mochis in order to get the Copper Canyon train to Creel. Once we finally managed to locate the bus station a bus was leaving as we arrived but we needed to do some organizing of our stuff and find somewhere relatively safe to leave our car. At the appointed hour for the next bus the person who sold us the ticket approached us to say that they did not have a driver to take us across the border and would we follow him. We were then walked across the border with our luggage on a trolley and were shoved into taxi cabs in Mexico and driven to the bus station on the Mexican side of Nogales. Squashed to about half our normal size by the addition of a very large Mexican on the back seat of the cab, we then discovered that our bus seat allocations were for decoration only. We thereafter spent the night leaping out of the bus at every stop to ensure that our luggage in the hold did not find its way off the bus before we did. We were the only non- Mexicans on the bus and Northern Mexico is not the safest place on earth at the moment. Nevertheless, we arrived in Los Mochis without mishap, and we did manage to doze off intermittently between army checkpoints and scheduled and unscheduled bus stops. In addition to the normal traumas of all night bus travel, the driver had cranked up the air conditioning to the point that we were freezing. As our warm clothes were in the luggage hold under the bus we ended up sharing my jacket as a sort of common blanket. Of course, once day arrived and we got to driving through endless desert, the air conditioning was turned off so it was too hot and stuffy in the extreme. In general this was a most uncomfortable trip.

We liked Los Mochis, a scruffy little unpretentious town, albeit the temperature was well over 40. As an antidote to our trying bus ride we decided to book into a very comfortable hotel in the centre. It was quite devoid of activity. Other than a small Mexican business group there was just us. We walked through the town and the market and found a

laundry that would clean our clothes for \$2.50. We also had a very good Mexican meal of chicken mole (sort of spicy chocolate sauce) with anti swine flu soap dispensers at the door.

We managed to get through western Canada and South Western USA, where it does rain in the Fall, with hardly a drop, but in northern Mexico where it hardly ever rains we hit monsoon season. At 5:00 a.m. we were the first at the trains station – not that we needed to worry, as tourism in Mexico has been totally mutilated by the international press. I always carry a wad of cash on these trips to cover contingencies, distributed about my body in embarrassing and inconspicuous places. This notwithstanding Lonely Planet's assurance that there was a bank in Creel and also a cash machine. I had not, however, reckoned on the train ticket having to be paid in cash nor the hotel bill in Creel and of course had sort of hoped that the bank machine might have had some cash in it. Even in the torrential rain this train trip is an experience to be remembered. The train sort of crawls straight up the mountain edges. The river and waterfalls had swollen to snarling proportions. As no food vendors bothered to come out to greet the tourist-gutted train in the pouring rain, we ended up being the only people in the restaurant car where we actually had a very good if overpriced meal.

At Divisadero the train is supposed to stop for 15 minutes to let one look at the gorge or buy some baked corn things from the local merchants. We rushed up in the rain to gape over at the canyon. Even with the slight mistiness the view was spectacular and we spent a few minutes walking along the view points. Startled from our reverie by a premature hoot on the whistle we rushed down across the swinging bridge over the canyon edge and down to the train just in time before it took off again. I guess with so few tourists they cut short their 15 minute stop.

At Creel in the pouring rain we were totally pestered by some local touts who wanted to direct us to a particular hotel and tours and so on. It was impossible to throw them off. We walked into town getting wetter and wetter and finally found the hotel

we had chosen with our new-found self-appointed guides still trying to enforce something or other on us. It turned out the hotel provided breakfast and dinner which was a godsend because in addition to no one taking plastic money in this burg they also had no interest (perhaps with some justification) in U.S. dollars or euros and we did not even attempt Canadian dollars.

Our original plan had been to take the bus to Badapilai at the bottom of the canyon and do some hiking there. I found Three Amigos – the sort of tour company cum information centre – and the amigo that I talked to assured me that the only day the Badapilai bus does not run is Sunday, ie. the day we would have gone, and the only alternative was to rent one of his pickup trucks for \$300 a day. As it turned out, by the next day the mist had settled in along with the steady drizzle and any enthusiasm for hiking in this enormous canyon dampened to fizzle.

Then fortune struck. After breakfast I got to struggling out a few pleasantries in appalling Spanish at a poor unsuspecting fellow guest who spoke excellent English and turned out to be from Chihuahua. She and her boyfriend were going to do some sightseeing in the afternoon including taking a look at the canyon and invited us to come with them. In fact this salvaged what would have been a most disappointing trip.

We decided to walk through the village to a site that was meant to have strange rock formations. It was not at all a pleasant walk through drizzle and around puddles and so on. The rocks were unimpressive. The Indians here however are quite distinctive. According to Lonely Planet, the source of all my wisdom, the Raramuri Indians have been traced back in this area for more than 10,000 years and they are renowned for their ability to run fast over very long distances. Traditionally the villages would compete, with the men running sometimes as much as 100 miles kicking a wooden object en route.

In the afternoon we set off on our misty wet trip back up to Divisadero; there we ended up in some high end tourist lodge where we had bad coffee, much to the discontent of the waiters. They were

particularly annoyed at our rearranging the seating to allow us to have our coffee in front of the fire, thereby obstructing the passageway for the luggage of an arriving tour group. It was a lovely place and luckily our new Mexican friends were able to hold their own against the onslaught of the waiter's union. Afterwards we walked down to a view point where some Indians had built their homes into a rock cave and then up to another one within the hotel grounds but the views were fleeting at best. We repaired to the Rarmuri market by the train station and had some of the corn things called gorditas which in fact were totally delicious. The shell is made of a sort of corn flour and stuffed with whatever one chooses - in our case cheese and mushrooms and cheese and beef - and then baked on a coal pot. Afterwards, we decided to drive a rather long distance to a pretty lake shrouded in mist and finally, as the rain had sort of abated, to hike to some outstanding waterfalls. The walk to Crusarere waterfalls was rather longer than we had realized and we lost light on the way back. It was a very traumatic walk in the dark, trying to find the path back to the car. The falls themselves and the hike to them were, however, spectacular. Given the state of the weather, we decided to return to Chihuahua the next day.

If you have already been deterred from attempting a cryogenic air conditioned overnight bus to Los Mochis then you probably do not want to hear about the aromatic overnight bus from Chihuahua to Nogales. We thought perhaps the driver was wearing a face mask against swine 'flu but in fact it was more



Gorditas at the Rarmuri Market in Divisadero

likely the broken toilet on the bus. If at all possible, the trip back was even more tense.

Either because of the dilapidated state of my wife's car or the fortunes of the day or the vigorous surveillance by the guard that we could not find on arrival, our car was there totally intact, as well as the contents of the trunk - the bulk of our luggage.

At a Denny's restaurant, just before Tucson, we found ourselves in the company of people even older than us. One substantial, elderly gentleman at the next table saw me cogitating over a map and discussing with my wife how to get to canyon country avoiding Phoenix. It turned out that he was native to the area and had worked for the municipality prior to retirement. On his excellent counsel we headed in entirely the wrong direction towards El Paso to pick up Hwy 191 - the Coronado trail. After a totally sleepless night we were not too happy along our lengthy detour until we actually got onto the trail. It was amazing. Twisting and climbing over the world's largest copper mine and then through gigantic mountains with pine trees everywhere. There was a dire warning at the Clifton that there was no fuel for 90 miles; however, we could not locate the gas station there. The tank was about half full and I thought that this would probably be sufficient, which of course it wasn't, given the extreme twistyness of the road, not to mention the steep ascents and descents. In desperation we pulled into a lodge that had some pumps in front of it but it turned out that they no longer sold gas and we needed to go another 22 miles to Alpine. As it was late, we decided to stay at the lodge for the night. It was, to say the least, idiosyncratic. The owners had allegedly won \$3 million in the lottery and ran it as a sort of hunting ranch-type place. Other than ourselves and three motorcyclists who had also run out of gas, everyone was dressed in cowboy outfits. The friendly owner seemed genuinely disappointed that we were not planning to go out and kill anything the next day but instead had in mind coasting down the hill to Alpine to get fuel. We had an excellent meal of T-bone steak, probably wrestled to the ground with lassoes that morning.

Luckily, the twenty-two miles to Alpine were less curvy and mainly downhill. After refilling the car, which was running on zero, we decided to keep going up Hwy 191 through miles and miles of desert. Magnificent! At one point we diverted to see the Canyon de Chelly National Monument which is truly spectacular in a less overwhelming way than some of the larger canyons. The site is sacred to the Navaho and so we were not able to hike in it without a guide, but we did manage to drive to a number of lookout points on the edge. We also diverted to see Monument Valley which was a sort of extra punishment after so much driving but the bright red monuments are something to behold.

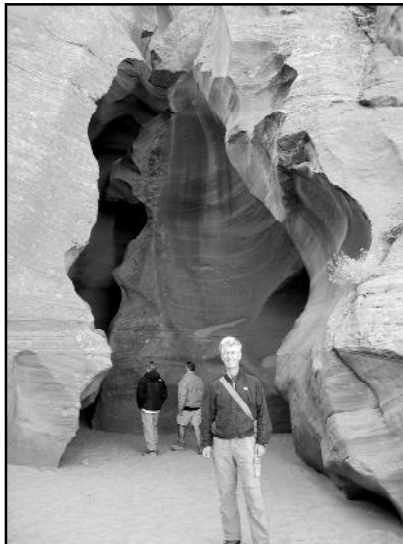
At Page we joined a Navaho tour to see the Antelope Canyon. One can only visit it with a Navaho guide. It is accessed by a bumpy ride down a sandy slot canyon. The canyon walls twist round, at places barely wider than the body and towering overhead with strange coloured light filtering through.

At this point we had moved about so much that we decided to use Kanab, Kane County as our base for the next four days. We found a great little log cabin type motel with everything that one needs except maybe space. Kanab was a centre of cowboy movies in its heyday and keeps this image still. Not much happens there now but it is a fun spot to stay. There are multicoloured cliffs everywhere – primarily red. One evening we went to Parry's Lodge for supper. This had been a sort of centre for actors and cinema crews during the heyday of the Westerns. The motivation

for this meal was that they showed free cowboy movies in the barn at 8:00 pm. This included a fascinating documentary on Parry's Lodge in which we recognized the lady we had seen in the Information Centre, who had apparently been a stunt woman in her younger years. The upper middle aged gentleman showing the film was, naturally, dressed as a cowboy and gave the introductions but did not shoot anyone.



In Antelope Canyon



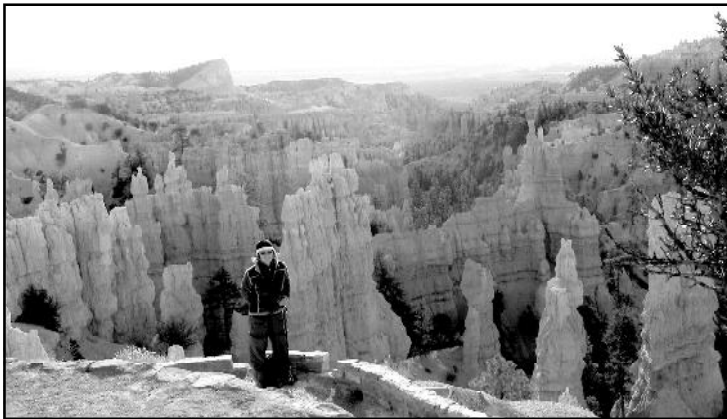
On one occasion we went for a drive to the Coral Pink Sand Dunes state park where they filmed desert scenes complete with sand waves and odd shadows. Later we drove down the Johnson Canyon road, which was staggeringly beautiful and where a lot of scenes from the westerns were shot, but we made the mistake of following the road round to join onto Hwy 98, which turned into a very rough dirt road quite unsuitable for our aging two wheel drive, low clearance car.

Over the next four days we took day trips out to various canyons to hike. At Vermilion Cliffs we hiked some slot canyons and visited some hoodoos (sort of weathered rocks with larger rocks of another colour perched precariously on top).

Another day we drove to the North Rim of the Grand Canyon and walked part of the way down this. It is without a doubt one of the most spectacular walks I have done. The path was fairly crowded in places and it is a bit of a slog going back up – I think partly because of the altitude and the difficulty getting enough oxygen into the lungs.

A beautiful, sunny Sunday was what we had chosen for Zion Canyon and even though we got going early there were an awful lot of people. These massive red cliffs are startlingly beautiful and we got to climb up the Angel's Landing path that provides an incredible view looking down into them as well as some great views en route. The top part is a bit rugged and the park organizers have attached metal chains to help one up the steep bits. With so many people on the trail, not all of whom appeared to be used to this type of terrain, getting up and down this section was a slow process, but totally worth the aggravation.

Finally, we spent a very agreeable day in Bryce Canyon, which is totally different again. One can hike right through it and it is much more open and not as steep – and, thank goodness, has much less people. We followed a fairly long path through the incredible rock sculptures but there was a bit of a cold wind developing and signs of the weather changing.



Bryce Canyon National Park

This it did in a fairly spectacular way overnight, with a sharp sudden deluge while we were staying in Boulder, Utah – a minute settlement along scenic route 12. Earlier, at the motel owner's insistence we did a scenic drive down Burr Trail Road in some spectacular canyon country which would be part of the Escalante Staircase National Park. Utah is almost too rich in rocks.

Our car having struggled up and over the

beautiful Boulder Mountain we decided to put it to the test taking the long way round to Moab so as to visit the Natural Bridges National Monument. Then, in blustery weather we went to see the Arches National Park. The park covers a vast area of spectacular rock formations and arches and lots of tourists in cars. We hiked up to see the thin arch which was a worthy short hike and totally worth the diversion. The rock colours are quite varied although predominantly some shade of startling red, and in this case we saw patches of bright turquoise along with a palette of reds, yellows, brown, buff and so on.

Eventually the weather turned on us and we had an unpleasant drive through wet snow over the mountains towards Denver. On the other side the weather had improved a bit, albeit still very cold, and we took scenic route 119 via Nederland to Boulder, Colorado. Boulder itself is a pleasant town and we managed to find the last room in a motel just off the Boulder Creek path which is a pretty walk to downtown as long as one is swift enough to dodge bikers and runners earnestly working out.

Finally the long drive home, primarily on the I-80. As night was falling we bailed off at Minden Iowa where the road sign threatened lodgings. From the exit we followed an undulating track to a tiny little farming community with one motel. Our room's door looked as if it had been used for shooting practice and I think we were the only guests. The only eating place was the bowling alley diner where we had an excellent slab of prime rib. Everyone

in the place knew everyone else and we felt more conspicuous than on the Mexican buses. It was a priceless introduction to small town America. We can now boast to our friends that we stayed on Broadway – albeit Minden. The hotel was just fine.

Then the long slog home. We stayed in Geneva just outside Chicago to visit family before working our way back to Toronto and the end of a long but memorable voyage.

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For itineraries and details: Visit www.jimgold.com

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OFDA's Brazilian Café - March 13, 2010



Guest teacher for this evening was Aline Morales, accompanied by musicians Mari Palhares and Eduardo Marçal. Aline encouraged and instructed, introducing us to Brazilian dance, music and culture. In true "folk" style, there was singing and dancing immersed in a backdrop of driving, rhythmic drumming.

The form of Brazilian dance that was demonstrated is called Maracatu, and you can read about it on Aline's website: www.nuncaantes.ca

▲ Aline teaching some basics ▼



▲ Mari Palhares and Eduardo Marçal



Yona Levy and Riki Adivi, centre-circle

OFDA's Brazilian Café - March 13, 2010



◀ Patricia Stenton



Aline Morales ▼



AK



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AK



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Judith Cohen, Marylyn Peringer and Stav Adivi
at the Membership Draw

Jerry Bleiwas and Olga Sandolowich

Folk Dancer

The Back Page...

Longtime Toronto folkdancer, Miep Koenig, passed away on March 10.

In the same month, Judy Deri had surgery and we're happy to report that she is doing well in the recovery period. Fethi Karakecili had eye surgery in early May, and was back to dancing in short order. Hy Diamond, who has been ailing for some time, has been informed that he will need open heart surgery.

Good wishes for a speedy recovery to Rina Singha, who recently suffered multiple injuries when struck by a bicyclist while boarding a bus.



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- by Evelyn & Gib Whittamore
- by Judy Deri (in memory of Teme's husband Barry Kernerman)



To the Ontario Folk Dance Camp

- by Dorothy Sloan (in memory of Margaret Whelan)

To the OFDA

- by Carl Toushan
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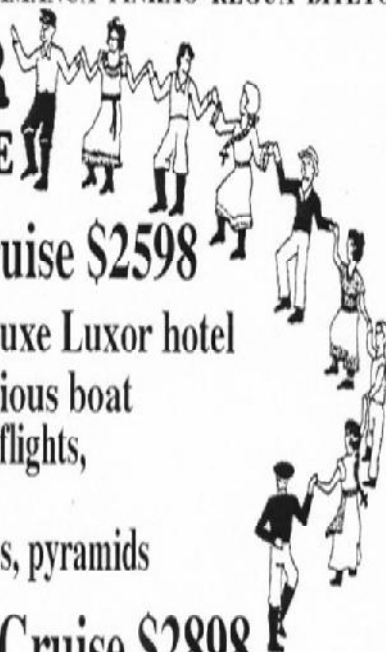
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