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Cover Image: *Hamilton International Folk Dancers pose after a summer evening of dancing at the waterfront. See p.15.*

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See <http://ofda.ca/wp/calendar/>

FOR DANCE CLASSES/GROUPS INFO

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FOR MEMBERSHIP INFO

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[RETURN TO OFDA WEBSITE.](#)

Dance! Dance! Dance!

by Dorothy Archer

This issue is all about dance. So? Well, usually there is a travel article or something about another culture or a description of costumes. But in the past few months many people have gone to many places and done many dances and they've returned to tell us about them.

We know about the joy of dancing but isn't it nice to enjoy something that's good for us. There have been numerous references about the benefits of dance. One of the first was Norman Doidge, author of *The Brain That Changes Itself*, who said that dancing was the best exercise because it involved not only the body but also the mind. We might add 'and the soul.'

Dancer/choreographer, Claudia Moore, curated *Older & Reckless* which is billed as an intimate performance series featuring works from OLDER artists who grow more RECKLESS as time goes by. I don't think one can accuse Ada Dziwanowska of being reckless but at 100 years she certainly is older and we are delighted to have a photo of her dancing with her children in this issue. I leave it to you to decide if you are more reckless as the years pass.

We are fortunate that Karen Bennett goes to Stockton most years and then returns to tell us about it, with photos. This year there is a bonus, an interview with a teacher new to us, Caspar Bik. Nancy Nies also has written about a dance teacher who was very dear to her (and another older and active person). Nancy has sent two articles this issue, the second being a follow-up of photos to her 2013 article about *Día de los Muertos*.

Maxine Louie describes the Canadian English Country Dance project in honour of Canada's 150th anniversary. It was a massive project accomplished in a short time. It was fun to dance to places one has visited or, better still, where one has grown up. I enjoyed dancing Active Pass. It is part of Georgia Strait in British Columbia, which I have sailed through many times. It was interesting to see how the moves matched the theme.

Canada's anniversary was celebrated at Waterloo Camp as well. Young people from Colombia were once again at the Camp and danced with the group. They were given mementos of Canada before they left. It is always nice that some of the dances from Camp are taught at the AGM café. They are listed here so you might recognize them in class.

The summer saw lots of dancing – I guess we just can't stop.

VIDEOS WORTH WATCHING

The following video link of Friesian horses was sent in by Karen Bennett, who notes that the video contains: (a) a country wedding in traditional Friesian costume at 5:04; and (b) two-horse Friesian carriages doing a quadrille at 10:00! <https://youtu.be/sAFQZoZQ3UE>.

“The Friesian is a horse breed originating in Friesland, in the Netherlands. Although the conformation of the breed resembles that of a light draught horse, Friesians are graceful and nimble for their size. It is believed that during the Middle Ages, ancestors of Friesian horses were in great demand as war horses throughout continental Europe.” More at [Wikipedia](#).



ARTICLES WORTH READING

“Tackling Age on Stage”, is the title of an online article about Toronto dancer Claudia Moore and her transition to performing as an older dancer. <http://www.everythingzoomer.com/claudia-moore-older-and-reckless/>

Claudia was a speaker in Moses Znaimer’s Ideacity this past June, where she lauded dancing as a positive life force, quoting David Bowie to help make the point. You will find a summary of her talk at the end of this Toronto Star review: <https://www.thestar.com/news/insight/2017/06/11/how-should-we-live-torontos-ideacity-offers-advice-to-mankind.html>

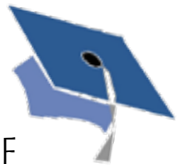


Thanks to member Janet Horowitz for a most generous donation to the OFDA.

THE OFDA IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT

KAREN BENNETT

IS THE RECIPIENT OF THIS YEAR’S OTEA SCHOLARSHIP AWARD.



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Dancing with Delphine

by Nancy Nies

This issue's column is dedicated to Delphine Szczepkowski, who single-handedly taught a weekly international folk dance class here in Bakersfield for 35 years, and who introduced me to folk dancing in 1986. On November 1, 2017, Del will celebrate her 93rd birthday—an appropriate occasion to honor this active, adventurous nonagenarian.

Born and raised in the Los Angeles area, Delphine Keagy attended the University of California at Berkeley, where she first discovered folk dancing. "I loved it," she says. At Berkeley Del met Richard Mansfield, and they married in 1949. After only three years of marriage, Delphine experienced the devastating loss of her young husband to cancer.

For some years, Delphine worked for the state of California in Sacramento, the state capital. Then, needing to get away and wanting to travel, she joined the Foreign Service. She worked overseas for nearly six years at American embassies in Paris, French Congo and Zambia. In 1968 Del returned to California to care for her ill father, who lived in Bakersfield.

Seeking a folk dance class not requiring a partner, Delphine found just one. She lost interest, though, since the instructor's repertoire consisted of only two dances. So, in 1971, she ordered the music for dances she knew, and started her own class. One of her students was Stan Szczepkowski, whom she married in 1976. Del was to teach her weekly class until Stan's death in 2006.

Delphine's life story is a truly international one. Her mother was English, her father an American of German-Swiss ancestry. Del lived in France and Africa; made trips with Stan to his native Poland; has long belonged to a French-speaking group; and, in recent years, has cruised to Alaska and around South America and traveled with Friendship Force to New Zealand, Australia, England, Brazil, Canada and the U.S. She plans a trip to Germany in 2018.

For me, Del was a devoted folk dance instructor who opened the door to many unforgettable experiences. Happy birthday and thank you, Delphine!

Author's note: When I wrote this last spring, I shared it with Delphine. At the time, it seemed impossible that she would not live to see her 93rd birthday. Delphine died on August 17, 2017.



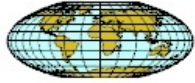
Del and Stan wearing costumes from Krakow, Poland, at a Young Audiences performance in 1990.

Photo: Photo courtesy of Delphine Szczepkowski.

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

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POLAND June 11-25, 2018

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SCOTLAND September 9-22, 2018

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Ontario Folk Dance Camp, May 2017

by Stefania Szlek Miller



Photo: Bev Sidney.

This year's teachers (front, left to right) Anne Leach, Cristian Florescu and Sonia Dion.

We celebrated Canada's 150th anniversary with three excellent camp instructors, enthusiastic Canadian participants from sea to sea - Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario, British Columbia - and a good representation of Americans from San Francisco to the Great Lakes.

The highlight for me was the Sunday evening party which we shared with 27 young students from Colombia. They and their two leaders, including Marko Betancur who accompanied them last year, were staying at the University of Waterloo residence while on a tour of Canada, and Sandy Starkman invited them to dance with us. Sandy, Olga Sandolowich, and Alene Boyar from Penfield, N.Y. helped with the short programme for the students, which we all enjoyed. Cristian Florescu and Sonia Dion, our camp teachers from Montreal, led all of us in a spooky rain dance (not that we needed rain after the Sunday downpour.)



Photo: Allen Katz.

Sandy Starkman and Marko Betancur.

The big surprise for us was Anne Leach, the camp instructor from England, who really let her hair down leading a spirited Israeli line dance. Dale Hyde called a Canadian dance, and then the students were presented with Canadian pins and flags and maple leaf cookies. The students and their teachers



Photo: Bev Sidney.

Cristian and Sonia led all in a spooky rain dance.

had tears in their eyes in appreciation – so did many of us hardened campers. It was a delightful way to celebrate Canada’s birthday and to share the joy of international folk dancing.

We did not just party – though this is a big part of camp. During the Romanian sessions, Cristian and Sonia taught two horas, a nice version of Corlu Aromân of the Vlach minority in Dobrogea, and from the same region a “harem” dance called Cadâneasca din Măcin. It was a pleasure to have a well-sprung wood floor for this Romanian syncopated stamping dance. My favourite was Mușu și Baba from Bucovina, a fun individual dance choreographed to mimic a competition between grandpas and grannies. All of the sessions were fun because of Cristian and Sonia’s enthusiasm. During the parties, we had a chance to do some of the classics of their repertoire such as Opinca and Hora de la Soroca. We sang to the latter, especially those who participated in the singing session prior to the Saturday evening party led very expertly by Anita Millman and Karen Bennett.

Anne Leach was a new instructor for most of us, and we admired her very tidy and precise styling. She presented a wide range of international dances from a very subtle Armenian dance to a Japanese one, Kotataki Ondo. The latter was very stylized, and most of us were defeated by having to co-ordinate walking with strong hand and arm movements. We had an easier time learning a very nice understated Greek dance, a Polish dance called Maruszka, and a Swedish Schottis. She also introduced a very unusual (for me) progressive English dance, Trip to Hexam. My favourites were the Swedish waltz mixer, Vals Från Vinön, and the four couple De Vleegert, from the Netherlands. Anne is a very effective and serious instructor, almost ethereal in her persona until she let her hair down with the Colombian students. My only suggestion to her would be to let her hair down more often.



Sunday evening Anne Leach led campers and Colombian students in a lively Israeli line dance.

I must compliment the Waterloo staff for some of the best cafeteria food that I have experienced at a university campus – there was always a wide array of hot dishes, excellent salad bars, fruit and other desserts. The food was supplemented by the camp staff, led by Chris Chattin and many volunteers, with snacks between teaching sessions and wonderful spreads after the evening party at 11:00 p.m. – nourishment for those who danced well after midnight.

Photo: Bev Sidney.

We signed a card wishing Cecille Ratney a belated 100th birthday, and recalled the many decades she served as camp treasurer. This world class camp would not be possible without the leadership of Sandy Starkman and the hard-working members of the organizing committee. Next year will be the 60th anniversary of the Ontario Folk Dance Camp with Yves Moreau already lined up as one of the instructors. Mark May 18 to 21, 2018 in your calendars - it will be a major international folk dance celebration.

Photo: Allen Katz.



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OFDA AGM Snapshot

The Association's Annual General Meeting was held on June 10, 2017 at the Ralph Thornton Centre in Toronto, with approximately 35 people in attendance. A potluck supper was enjoyed prior to the meeting and following the AGM we were able to review several of the dances learned at this year's Ontario Folk Dance Camp; thanks to Riki Adivi (Moşu şi Baba, Ahavat Hadassah), Karen Bennett (Corlu Aromân) and Judy Silver (Joc din Gantaga, Coragheasca).

The details below are taken from the 2016-17 Year-End Financial Report, prepared by Treasurer Janis Smith.

ASSETS	2016	2017
Total Assets	\$27,383.64	\$27,964.25
Includes.....Current	\$14,708.78	\$15,813.08
Fixed	\$ 2,281.87	\$ 1,711.40
In Trust for OTEA	\$10,392.99	\$10,439.77
REVENUE		
Total Revenue, excluding Events	\$5,532.53	\$4,943.32
Includes.....Membership	\$4,155.67	\$3,976.79
Advertising	\$ 738.50	\$ 483.74
Donations	\$ 594.00	\$ 29.44
EXPENSES		
Total Expenses, excluding Events	\$1,819.53	\$2,964.58
Includes..... Magazine - Printing	\$ 297.93	\$ 256.25
- Postage	\$ 468.13	\$ 266.30
Liability Insurance	-	\$ 900.00
EVENTS		
Cafés: Roma (-\$69.90); Azerbaijani (-\$176.04); Dale Hyde (-\$144.60); Louisiana Cajun (-\$194.62)		
New Year's Party (-\$100.00); David Yee Memorial (-\$84.75); AGM (-\$349.08),		
Dancing in the Park: Toronto (-\$325), Hamilton (-\$200), Richmond Hill (-\$150)		
Excess of Revenue over Expenses after events	\$ 2,221.70	\$ 267.53
OTEA Scholarship Awarded	\$ 300.00	\$ --

Summary from Membership Chair, Mirdza Jaunzemis

June 2016: Canada – 202 USA – 27 Overseas – 3 Total: 232

June 2017: Canada – 193 USA – 25 Overseas – 3 Total: 221

Elected Executive for 2016-17

Steering Committee: Riki Adivi, Bev Sidney, Helen Winkler

Members-at-Large: Devianée Caussy, Judith Cohen, Mirdza Jaunzemis, Roz Katz, Adam Kossowski, Shirley Kossowski, Gary McIntosh, Marylyn Peringer, Janis Smith, Patricia Stenton, Mary Triantafillou and Paula Tsatsanis

Canadian English Country Dance for the Sesquicentennial

by Maxine Louie

It was on the way home from a trip to Ottawa and a weekend of wonderful English Country Dancing in November 2016 that Lorraine Sutton from Clarksburg, and Susan Bunting and Donald Lamond from Peterborough conceived the idea of Canadian English Country Dancing, with Canadian themes, names, history, customs and people, for Canada's 150th celebration.

The trio invited callers, choreographers and composers from across Canada to submit new or recent works, and were able to produce a booklet, *ECD - Sea to Sea: Dances in the English Country Tradition by Canadian Composers*, by May 2017.

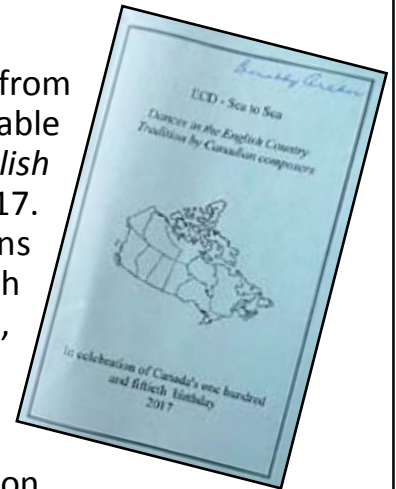
Twenty-one dances were chosen from the submissions from Newfoundland to B.C., with titles such as Fundy Tides, Regatta Day in St. John's, Blue and Gold (from the Prairies), Ralph Thornton Waltz and Pickering Valentine. Music was included for each dance, some of it newly composed. A website went live on

July 1 at www.ecd-seatosea-2017.ca. In the creative process, the trio interacted with ECD enthusiasts from across the country, surely a strengthening of ties amongst the different communities from coast to coast.

David Gallop, a long time ECD organizer and caller from Ottawa wrote: "Let country dancers from across the land put on their dancing shoes and prove the recipes contained in the booklet".

Toronto English Country Dance Assembly (TECDA)

works in conjunction with the Toronto Contra Dancers (TCD) to co-ordinate events with musicians and callers who travel to Toronto, and appreciate having more than one gig for economic reasons. TCD's renowned Island Dance was scheduled for July 16, 2017 and so TECDA booked July 15th in order to use the same caller



Musicians with caller, Walter Zagorski.





and band. Unfortunately the original caller alerted us midwinter that she was unable to call for us. Around the same time, Lorraine Sutton and Susan Bunting told me about the ECD - Sea to Sea project, and it was a perfect match. We based our July 15th dance on the 21 dances from the booklet, with as many caller/composers who could come. In honour of the sesquicentennial, a Canadiana theme was chosen. Decorations were red and white including flags, red and white dress was encouraged and there was a cake and butter tarts.

The only non-Canadian aspect was the band, as the musicians of Big Fun stem from Michigan (Myron Grant, Brad Battey, Marty Somberg), but Rick Avery from Guelph joined in with his keyboard.

This new event involved more planning. Instead of working with one caller and music that was published, we had to connect with many callers (we kept it to the Ontario callers) and the music was largely newly-composed. As the details were coming together, I thought that it would be nice to acknowledge this feat of Canada's first booklet of Canadian ECD but, without a budget, it wasn't so easy. Gary McIntosh suggested that I contact our local MP, Julie Dabrusin, for ideas that the government might have, and her office prepared congratulatory certificates for each of the composers across Canada. Julie also agreed to come to the dance to personally present the certificates to those callers that were present. Her office sent the certificates to the composers who were unable to attend.

Toronto was not the only place to dance the booklet, similar events were held in Victoria and Winnipeg. The event in Toronto was held over two days at the Ralph Thornton Centre. Friday night is our regular

weekly dance night and some of the callers practiced their dances then. Saturday afternoon and evening were the major events. It was lovely to see dancers from across southern Ontario. Don Bell, from Troy, N.Y., Mary Williams from Ottawa, Judy Greenhill from Guelph, Susan Bunting from Peterborough, were callers from away. Cathy Campbell, Dave Berman, Alan Rosenthal, Walter Zagorski and Richard Jacobs made up the Toronto contingent of callers. Essentially, each composer called their own dance as well as dances of absent composers – often a challenge since they were untested.



Julie Dabrusin (left) presenting a certificate to Susan Bunting.

At 4:00 p.m., Julie Dabrusin arrived. I met her at the door, and I explained about ECD and the project. She gave a short speech, congratulating the ECD community and caller/composers for their wonderful booklet of dances, and then presented the certificates. Refreshments were served, and Julie danced the next dance with us, before heading off to another engagement.

We continued dancing in the evening after a dinner break, and managed to dance all 21 dances. We ended with Irfôna's Waltz. Irfôna Larkin was a very important member of the Ottawa English Country Dance community. In her memory, Mary Williams composed the dance and Charlene Thomson, a musician/composer from Binghamton, N.Y., composed the tune. This was chosen as the best dance of the event - it was a wonderful end to a wonderful day of dance.

TECDA has copies of the booklet for sale. Cost is \$10. Contact Maxine Louie at maxine.louie@gmail.com. To order by mail there is an additional cost of \$2.50 for postage. Contact Lorraine Sutton 163 Slabtown Road, Box T6 RR#1 Clarksburg, Ontario Canada NOH 1J0. If multiple copies are required in one mailing or you have any questions, please contact lorrainesutton7@gmail.com or call 1-519-599-6195.

Dancing in the Summer

compiled by Dorothy Archer

While rain threatened in Richmond Hill, it started when dancing had finished and only one night was it necessary to move to the gazebo. Dancing was led by Riki Adivi for six Sunday evenings with a good turnout from dancers and passers-by. A Kurdish family from Iran came every week and the wife danced with her two little girls. They taught Riki an Iranian Kurdish dance which she plans to teach in the winter sessions.

Helen Winkler attended the Richmond Hill evenings and sent these comments: "It was really great to see the level of community participation in Riki's sessions. I'm thinking of the girl who must have arrived on a skateboard as she was wearing knee pads and elbow pads, and she joined in to the circle. She was careful not to stay past her curfew. Also the elderly woman, who needed a cane to get around, but went into the middle of the circle and improvised Middle Eastern dance movements and sang along with the Persian song that Riki played. Then there was the young Greek couple who looked like they had been playing some sort of sports before joining in. The next week they came back and I could see that they were interested in learning dances from their own culture."

Adam Kossowski, who leads the group on the waterfront in Hamilton, wrote: "Hamilton-area folk dancers enjoyed four evenings of OFDA-sponsored dancing on the Hamilton Waterfront in July. About 24 dancers participated each evening. Several passers-by joined in and were given flyers with information about year-round folk dancing in Hamilton. After dancing, many relaxed with a cool drink on the patio of the nearby Williams coffee shop."

The Grey Bruce International Folk Dancers led by May Ip danced in Harrison Park in Owen Sound in July and August. For those who might be holidaying in the area, it is Thursday night, 6:30 to sunset. They dance in the bandstand so are not affected by the weather. It is a small group and this year the park was not so busy due to the weather so there was not as many new people joining. However, the dancing was enjoyed by all and will continue next year.

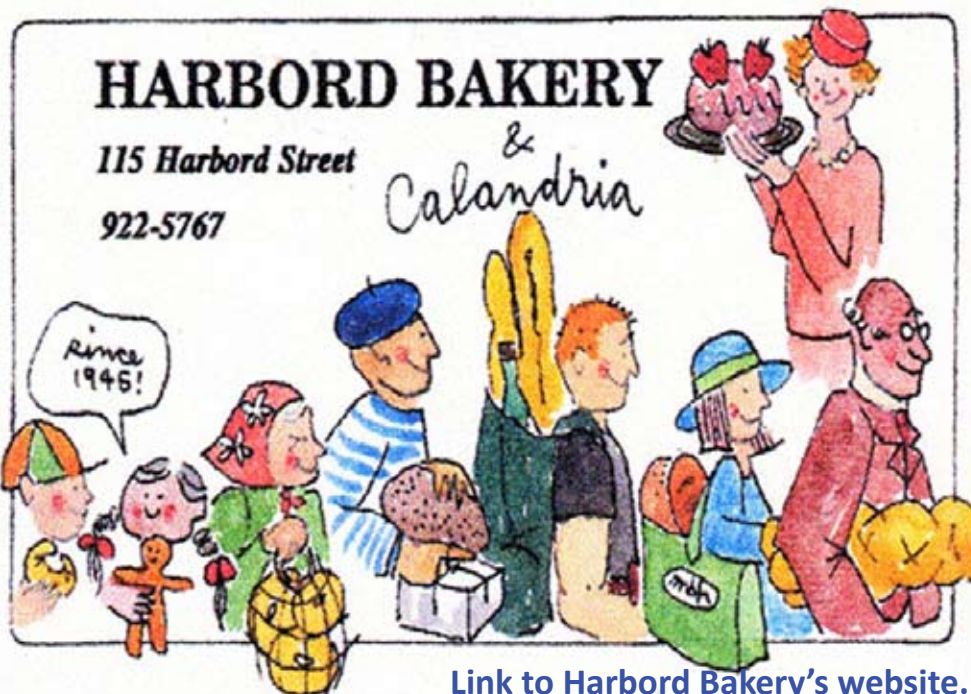
Toronto dancers moved to Hillcrest Park which had no electrical outlet and sparse lighting, but there was room to dance and the grass was kept short. Also it was less-crowded and quieter so it was possible to hear the music which was battery-run. Add to this that it was easier to park and access by transit was possible and several people said they preferred this location to Winston Churchill Park. While it was planned for six weeks only, the sessions continued for another three weeks led by Judy Silver. Attendance was close to what it had been in past years

and it was nice to see more faces from the past. Few people stopped to look or join in but dog walkers watched as they walked to the dog run nearby and several dogs took the time to visit. Like Hamilton, the dancing in Richmond Hill and Toronto is sponsored by OFDA.

The Scottish Country Dancers were at Edwards Gardens in June once again with a rain-day location at Church of the Ascension, 33 Overland Drive. Olga Sandolowich had four sessions at Banbury Community Centre. These were mainly request evenings and were popular. The Toronto English Country Dance Assembly continued with its Friday night dances which are growing in popularity. They are held at Ralph Thornton Centre.



Photo: Bev Sidney.



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

Stockton Folk Dance Camp 2017

by Karen Bennett

Yes, here I am again with an almost-yearly review of Stockton camp! (A broken leg prevented me from attending in 2015.) The event dates were July 16 to 23 (first week) and 23 to 30 (second week), while the teachers for this 70th anniversary of Stockton camp at the University of the Pacific in Stockton, California were Roberto Bagnoli for International non-partner, Caspar Bik for Georgian, France Bourque-Moreau for French Canadian and International, Cristian Florescu and Sonia Dion for Romanian non-partner dances, Bruce Hamilton for English, Radboud Koop for Russian partner dances, and Tony Parkes for squares and contras—plus a boatload of past faculty members for cameos. One of the reasons I attended both weeks this year, when normally I go for only one, was not to miss out on any of the cameos, which were different every week.

This report will be a little longer than 2016's (when I was positively *terse*) because it's in partial fulfillment of the pledge I made in my application for an OFDA scholarship. I am very grateful for OFDA's generosity in awarding me a scholarship this year. Two other fulfillments were promises to (a) contribute to *Folk Dancer Online* an interview with a Stockton teacher, and (b) come back with lots of new dances to present at a future dance café. My interview of Caspar Bik appears on p. 27, and the new dances are from Georgia, Spain, France, Bulgaria, Greece and Taiwan. I was disappointed not to bring back material from Hungary (a combination of events prevented Istvan Szabo from attending as a cameo teacher), but I managed to console myself with some Greek dances from Johnny Pappas.

The first week of camp was full, at 125 dancers, dozens of them first-timers. (The size of camp is constrained by how many people the main dance floor can accommodate in the evening, not the number of rooms in the dorm.) I was pleased to have the company of many more Canadians than last year—four of them faculty and five not, including Gail and Ian Tucker from Keewatin.

Roberto, France, Cristian and Sonia, Radboud and Tony are excellent teachers who can be relied on to present interesting stuff to great music. They are well-known to readers of this magazine, so I'll have relatively little to say about them. (Radboud brought his wife, Christel, a fine dancer and a kind person, but I had the impression that her lack of English skills was socially inhibiting. And Radboud himself? When he was introduced at the opening ceremonies, camp director Jeff O'Connor told us that years of trying to persuade Radboud to come back on staff had been met with, "Oh, nobody likes me." So not true.)

The Californian, Bruce Hamilton, who is also an expert in Scottish dancing did a good job with English country dances and presented

some material unfamiliar to me. But I've met him at previous camps and found him lacking in geniality. This year, I *really* had a problem with his saying, before calling dances at evening parties, "If you weren't in class to learn this, don't get in it now." Most of the dances were not hard, and he was *calling them*, for Pete's sake! Someone told me that Bruce's announcement was intended to deter certain inexpert people from wrecking other dancers' enjoyment, but it certainly had a chilling effect on me, a party sitter-out by default. (I bought Bruce's CD anyway, and I have his notes, so: Anyone who'd like to root through them for new dances, feel free to borrow. Bruce's dance Sapphire Sea was a big hit.)



The one teacher new to me was Dutchman Caspar Bik, who was presenting dances from Georgia. Caspar's Twitter motto (@casparbik) is, "Dance is the complement that makes life equal happiness," and at Stockton he made us happy, even if not every one of his dances (such as Rashovda, which he'd choreographed into a mixer) was a complete success. Prior to camp, I'd taken a gander at his Balkan teaching on YouTube and listened to one of the songs, called Shavlego, he intended to use for a Georgian dance (every year, I proofread the preliminary Stockton syllabus), so I was expecting good things from this newcomer to North America. Once I arrived in Stockton, the *a cappella* Shavlego was so distracting to this dancer-who-also-sings that I found it enormously difficult to concentrate on the easy dance because another part of my brain was teasing out the different voices (tenors, baritones, bass-baritones). I *did* manage to learn the dance (invented by

Caspar Bik in the costume of Adjara region, Georgia.

a Georgian choir, not Caspar), but in truth I found it most satisfying of all to learn the song and perform it in the talent show both weeks (singing the tenor part first week and the bass-baritone part second week) and also for dancing at the closing party first week. Caspar also taught another dance-that-accompanies-a-song (they're called *perkhulis*, and are deliberately slow so as not to deprive the choirs of breath while they dance) as part of his brief to present accessible material that didn't depend on expertise in Georgian dancing that nobody at camp could be expected to have. I found his dance teaching expert, clear and good-humoured, and he was a wonder at directing our impromptu choir for Shavlego. ("I'm not a singing teacher," he announced at the first rehearsal. Ha! What modesty. He had a beautiful voice, he played the piano, and *like hell* he wasn't a singing teacher.) In first week, we had an exceptional collection of singers and received thunderous applause from the audience. Shavlego is one of the dances I hope to present to Southern Ontario dancers, and I guarantee I won't be able to help singing it at the same time as I dance. Oh, and now I know how to do a Grand March Georgian-style. (At one party, Sonia and Cristian kindly helped direct the dance using airplane taxiing signals.)

Photos: Eliot Khuner.

Caspar's Culture Assembly was wonderful, and included videos of how dances progress from improvised village routine to professional stage production to somewhat ludicrous music videos (here's the music video of Rashovda: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OZfK5P4PcEM>). In Georgia, dancing is held in such cultural repute that parents brag not that their sons are doctors or lawyers but dancers (and, once they turn 35, singers or musicians). Caspar had attended Sonia and Cristian's Culture Assembly earlier in the week and noted Sonia's use of a stuffed toy fish to represent the shape of Romania (due to a technical glitch, Sonia's laptop couldn't be connected to the overhead screen). Caspar had no technical difficulties, and he displayed a photo of a garden gnome reclining on his right elbow as the closest approximation of Georgia. One of the joys of Stockton camp is seeing how teachers learn from, interact with and spoof each other.

France Bourque-Moreau's nine dances, from French Canada, Spain, France and Taiwan, were nicely pitched at intermediate level (Caspar, Roberto, Sonia and Cristian, and Radboud were doing plenty of advanced dances, thanks). Yves Moreau's health no longer allows him the stamina to be a full-time faculty for two weeks, but it was such a pleasure to have him at camp as his wife's partner and as a cameo workshop teacher. (He also did some of the singing for France's dance *Jour de Lavage*.) At his cameo session, he taught a number of accessible Bulgarian dances, some of which were new to me as he'd learned them recently from Belčo Stanev in Montreal. The standout was *Draganinata* from west Trakia, danced to the famous "Dragana i Slavej" (*Dragana's Song*) by the Filip Kutev State Folk Ensemble (from the album *Le Mystère des Voix Bulgares, Vol. 2*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tXlej6ni6VI>). The footwork was simple enough not to distract from the gorgeous vocals.

Among the contributions Yves made to camp was his observation that every mixer that begins with the woman on the left of the man is an excerpt from a suite of dances—including not only his wife's 2017 dance *Gilgodenn* (from Brittany) but *La Bastringue* from Quebec, which has turned out to be the most popular dance he has ever taught. The year 2017 was the 50th anniversary of Yves' first appearance at Stockton.



France Bourque-Moreau and Yves Moreau.

Much as I appreciate Yves, the cameo that meant the most to me was by dancer and musician Johnny Pappas (né Ioannis Efstathiou Pappayiorgas), who was a last-minute fill-in for Istvan "Kovacs" Szabo. Johnny was born in San Francisco and now lives in Stockton. I'd heard of him but never managed to attend a workshop of his. He taught four dances, three of which I knew and one I didn't: *Stá Dýo/Pogonisos*, *Zagorisios*, *Syrtos*

Thrakis and Tapeinós. The last, although done to a melancholy song (it is a truth universally acknowledged in international folk dancing that it's better for one's mental tone if one does *not* understand the words being danced to), is excellent for beginners or as a last dance of the evening. (Aside: Joe Graziosi's dance Tap'nos, while also from Thrace, is not the same, either in steps or in the song it's done to.) I hustled to buy the CD that held Tapeinos. In the second week, Johnny came back to play the clarinet with the camp band at a party.

Another cameo appearance I attended was by Susan Lind-Sinianian of Watertown, MA, whom I'd first met in 1983 with her husband Gary at a weekend workshop of Armenian dances in Toronto. Her 2017 set included Sepastia Bar (originally from Sepastia, central Turkey; the place is presently called Sivas), which I was pleased to note I'd been passing



At a cameo session, Susan Lind-Sinianian teaches the Armenian dance Sepastia Bar in village style.

on correctly since I first learned it—except that I'd been teaching men that they could snap their fingers when their hands were free. Susan did not show this in Stockton. Once the session was over, I asked her about this discrepancy, and she said that she thought Gary just liked to snap his fingers! (Aside: Gary wrote the notes for the 1983 version, and he included snaps. Frances Ajoian's version of this dance also includes snaps; Tom Bozigian, Camille Brochu and Ron Wixman's versions do not. And neither does Tineke van Geel's, which Anne Leach propagated at Ontario Folk Dance Camp in May of this year, but don't get me started on Tineke's version...) Susan's hand motions for women had also become simpler over the years, to the point that mine looked positively baroque. But then, I believe I've incorporated some of Ron Wixman's hand styling. (It's possible I hail from a village composed of *only one person*.)

The hand motions seemed to be an example of the well-known phenomenon of teachers changing their dances over time. Another example appeared to occur when the 100-year-old Ada Dziejwanowska, who had flown in alone from Milwaukee, taught, with the assistance of her son, Jas, and daughter, Basia, the multi-figure trio dance Trojak in a cameo session. After it was over, a Polish-born camper of about my age complained to me that in the past, Ada had excoriated the grapevine step as un-Polish—yet here she was in 2017 including one in a Trojak figure. My acquaintance believed that Ada had been influenced for the worse (“contaminated” wasn't the word she used, but that's what she meant) by international folk dance, much like teachers using the term “Yemenite step” when presenting Bulgarian dance (as Yves Moreau did, but let the record show that I don't have a problem with such shorthand). However, once I got home, I looked up the notes and found that Ada had

taught Trojak the same way in Maine in 1971 (notes written by Dick Crum). Huh.

For the second year in a row, I volunteered to teach a Dances for All Ages workshop. (Such workshops are remuneration-free and tend to be taught by the faculty if they wish to participate, but this year not enough faculty so wished, resulting in two sessions out of four being done by non-faculty.) Last year, my subject was France; this year it was Latvia. I managed to squeeze five easy/intermediate dances into 50 minutes, including a

Latvian version of Oira, Oira (a dance done in at least eight countries in central and eastern Europe; I first encountered the Belarus version in 2013 at a dance café in Toronto). And quite by chance, while sitting out at a party I discovered that two of my neighbours (including Vita Hollander) had been born in Latvia; they imparted hair-raising stories of escape during WWII when they were children.

A very entertaining Dances for All Ages session was presented by Tony Parkes, who taught us a selection of squares, contras and mixers he uses in one-night gigs for people who have mastered walking. Not only did he show some things I'd never seen before (such as the Fan Dance, which I gleefully turned on its head for the talent show the next day), but he imparted valuable tips for giving first-timers confidence (shades of *The Little Engine That Could*).

The URL for Stockton camp is <http://www.folkdancecamp.org/>. The dates for 2018 are July 15-22 (first week) and July 22-29 (second week).

As of time of writing, the faculty will include Aaron Alpert for Israeli, provisionally Caspar Bik for International (he specializes in dances from around the Black Sea), Cristian Florescu and Sonia Dion for Romanian partner dances, Joe Graziosi for Greek, Roo Lester for Scandinavian, Kay Munn for Scottish, and Tony Parkes for squares and contras. (A number of people have been “auditioned” to fill the gap left by the retirement of Jerry Helt a few years ago, and Tony Parkes now looks to have a permanent gig at Stockton.)

Aaron Alpert attended as a first-time camper in 2017. He's young, enthusiastic and from California, and when I watched him tear through a spectacular Israeli dance for the talent show, I knew he'd be a ball of energy in 2018 as well.



At a cameo session, Jas Dziewanowski teaches the Polish dance Trojak. His sister Basia is on his right and his mother Ada is on his left.

Photo: Eliot Khuner.



Aaron Alpert.

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El Día de los Muertos: A Photo Essay

by Nancy Nies

For the October 2013 issue of *Folk Dancer*, I wrote about the colourful *Día de los Muertos* (Day of the Dead) celebration staged by Bakersfield's Latino community, featuring elaborate memorial altars and lively Mexican music and dance. In 2016 Paul and I revisited the event, which had outgrown its original venue and moved to the spacious grounds of our local historical museum's Pioneer Village. This October I offer a photo essay, with more details and a special focus on the dancers who performed before a large crowd at last year's eighth annual early-November event.

(Photos by Nancy Nies except where noted.)



An *ofrenda*, or memorial altar

Created in memory of lost loved ones, *ofrendas* typically include photos, possessions and favorite foods, and are decorated with fresh marigolds or bright

tissue-paper flowers, votive candles or strings of small lights, and whimsical skulls and cut-paper banners.

La Calavera Catrina

This well-dressed “skeleton lady,” a symbol of the Mexican Day of the Dead, posed for photos with admirers. *El Día de Muertos*, as it is called in Mexico, is said to have had its origins in an Aztec festival honoring a goddess known as “the Lady of the Dead.” Mexican illustrator José Guadalupe Posada’s early-20th century cartoon version, parodying an upper-class woman, gave the lady her modern form.



During the two hours we spent at the event, we not only viewed many colourful altars, but also saw performances by a *mariachi* band and three *folklórico* groups.



Mariachi music

Bakersfield’s Mariachi San Marcos were billed as “the best,” were well-known to the local audience, and posed for photos with fans after their performance. They performed on their own and also accompanied the dancing. Traditional *mariachis* wore regional costumes and accompanied their large repertoire of songs with stringed instruments only. Modern *mariachi* ensembles, like this one, wear showy *charro* costumes and include the trumpet, as well as the violin, the guitar-like *vihuela*, and the bass guitar.



Aztec dance



Local Ballet

Folklórico Mi Tierra performed their interpretation of a traditional Aztec blessing. The ancient Aztecs are said to have incorporated dancing into their



ceremonies to show their adoration of the sun, earth, sky and water. Wearing costumes of brilliant red, blue, purple and gold, and tall feathered headdresses, the Mi Tierra dancers expressed the connection between human beings and nature.

Dances from Michoacán

East Bakersfield High School’s *folklórico* group performed, barefoot, sedate dances from the Mexican state of Michoacán. The state’s dances reflect its ethnic roots, as well as Spanish influences. Recreated from ancient rituals of the P’uhrépechas, the region’s pre-Columbian civilization, the dances reflect scenes from daily life. *Las guares* (P’uhrépechas women) wear a dark skirt with an embroidered blouse and apron, and their hair in two long braids decorated with colourful ribbons.



The *Día de Muertos* appears, along with *mariachi* music, on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity list. The holiday is observed particularly in central and southern Mexico, and the centrally located state of Jalisco was well represented at the Bakersfield celebration. (For beautiful photos of The Day of the Dead as celebrated in Jalisco, Mexico, see: <https://danestrom.com/series/day-of-the-dead-images-mexico/> .) There is truth in the saying "Jalisco is Mexico," since several iconic symbols of the country originated in the state: brightly-coloured dresses with wide, ruffled skirts decorated with bands of ribbons; wide-brimmed *sombrero* hats; *mariachi* music; and the *jarabe Tapatío*, or Mexican hat dance.

Dances from Jalisco

The adult dancers of Bakersfield's Ballet Folklórico Huastecalli would not be performing until after we had left, but may be seen rehearsing a dance from Jalisco here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QDXMyITORXs> . We did enjoy seeing the Jalisco costumes and dancing of Huastecalli's younger dancers. For the holiday, skeleton T-shirts replaced the traditional blouses and shirts.



Jalisco Costumes.



Escamilla Entertainment states that the dances of Jalisco, “with their rhythmic footwork, large *sombreros* and colourful dresses, express the characteristics of the Mexican culture and evoke the heart and soul of Mexico.” And that is exactly what we felt we experienced, that Sunday afternoon in early November 2016, at Bakersfield’s *Día de los Muertos* celebration.

Caspar Bik

and the Incomparable Culture of Georgia



The first three questions in this interview by Karen Bennett were put to Caspar prior to 2017 Stockton camp and appeared in the July-August 2017 issue of the California magazine Let's Dance! They are reproduced with permission. The last question was put following Stockton camp and is special to Folk Dancer Online.

The most famous Georgian dances are men-only or couple dances. How did you assemble enough non-partner dances to teach at Stockton?

I've tried to assemble different types of dances from the different regions of Georgia. At the dance camp I will be teaching a mix of circle dances (which are rare in Georgia, but they exist in certain regions for certain occasions) as well as dances for men only or mixed/couple dances which are danced free in the space. Traditionally most of the dances are done as an improvisation of different specific figures and movements according to the style of the region. For these types of dances I have made compositions (choreographies) based on the traditional figures in

order for the participants to get a good feeling and idea of the way the Georgian people embody their dance needs.

In order to train with the professional Georgian ensemble Erisioni you would've had to speak (or at least understand) Georgian. How did you learn?

I don't speak Georgian or Russian (which is the second language in Georgia). So indeed this was/is a problem when I travel(ed) in Georgia. But nowadays it's starting to become more and more common for the younger generation to learn English also. So with a few words of English and a quick study of some dance-related Georgian terms we could do a lot together. That's one of the great things about dance all over the world: You speak the language through moving together; words become secondary.

Outside of the dance sessions I had contact with a Georgian family who had lived in the Netherlands for a long time and could speak Dutch with me, and a friend of mine is a Dutch linguist specializing in Georgian language.

Was there something about Georgia that called your heart and soul into it?

Georgian culture is unique. A lot of things are not related to anything else in the world. Their alphabet is unique; their language is not comparable to any other language; their polyphonic singing is very special. And so are Georgian dances. And to research and dig into this culture and find out why this small country with lots of different people in it is so incomparable was a challenge which I had to take on.

Your bio for 2017 Stockton camp said that you've "been specializing in folk dances from countries around the Black Sea." I hear there's a possibility that you might return to Stockton next year to teach International dances, if you can get the time off work. If you concentrate on your specialty—the Black Sea—that could mean any or all of the following: Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine and Russia, in addition to Georgia. Do you have some ideas already?

Yes, with all its diverse cultures around it, the Black Sea has been the main subject in my research so far. But I have always been dancing International as well. With a lot of inspiring teachers in the Netherlands I have had the privilege to experience a lot of different dance styles which I would love to pass on when I am asked to teach an International repertoire.

If I'm teaching again at Stockton (I hope it will work out to come in 2018) I will try to bring a diverse international program which complements what the other teachers are bringing and of course use my material from around the Black Sea when it fits. I would expect some Bulgarian and Turkish dances in there somewhere, maybe some Russian Cossack dance ... and a Georgian one, for sure.



Map: the Nations Online Project.



The Grapevine



Sarah Boucher.

On 2 June 2017, the Hamilton club celebrated Raphaël Dubra's first birthday (born 31 May 2016 to parents Léa Chauvigné and Arnaud Dubra) and bid farewell to Sarah Boucher who is leaving for Morocco where she will be teaching for two years.

Marie Hori wrote: "Thank you very much for your warm and kind send-off at the dance-cafe on Saturday,

June 10 as I prepare to move to Victoria, BC in mid-August. I appreciated the special carrot cake from the Harbord Bakery and the card of good wishes from many people. It was interesting to read about the indigenous artist who painted the beautiful woman on the card: Maxine Noel. Her Sioux name is IOYAN MANI, which translates as Walk Beyond".



Arnaud Dubra and son Raphaël.

B.C. seems to be the destination of choice this year. Not only has Marie moved but Janet Hart Rutt and Ron are in the process of moving to Kelowna. And Kevin Budd and Peggy are on sabbaticals and will reside in Victoria for a year.

Judith Cohen attended the World Congress of Jewish Studies in Israel in August. Terri Taggart visited Albania in June of this year. The tour was led by Yves & France Moreau and Kujtim & Pjereta Ismaili. Visit www.bourque-moreau.com/albania-2016.html for a slide show from the previous year. In August Terri attended Balkan Camp 2017 in Iroquois Springs, N.Y.



Choosing the cover photo for a magazine is a special task requiring much thought. Therefore, we were delighted to receive the July issue of *The Northwest Folkdancer* and see Karen Bennett on the cover. Karen is posing in a costume from Liptovské Sliache, Slovakia at Stockton Folk Dance Camp in 2016.

Ontario was well-represented at Mainewoods Folk Dance Camp. Riki and Stav Adivi, Walter Zagorski, Anita Millman, Martina Freitag, Lynda Vuurman,

Helga Hyde, Mirdza Jaunzemis, Ursula Humphries and Heidi Williams attended.

Storytellers of Canada-Conteurs du Canada (SC-CC) chose Marylyn Peringer the teller for 2017 StorySave, the SC-CC committee devoted to archiving the voices of senior tellers. The three-disc set of stories are titled *Pieces of My Heart*. They include two CDs of French-Canadian tales and one CD of Maltese stories.

Toronto folk dancer/teacher Helen Winkler responded to a call for volunteers to participate late August in a multicultural block party called "Taste of Willowdale". Organized by NeighbourLink North York, they were looking for performances by ethnic groups, but Helen offered instead to lead a participatory session of international dance, and this was happily accepted. With a gathering quite diverse in the spread of ages, and some initial shyness to get up to dance, Helen (undaunted) led the first two dances with the option for people to do them while seated, and by the third and fourth dances reluctance was thrown to the wind and a good number did join the circle. In the end people really seemed to be enjoying the segment, seated or upright, and she left them smiling and laughing. The organizers were very pleased with the success of the session and asked Helen if they could call upon her for future events.



Photo: Bev Sidney.

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