

# CDSS NEWS

FALL 2015



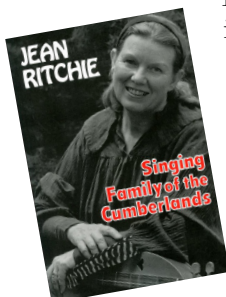
COUNTRY DANCE AND SONG SOCIETY  
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# Balance and Sing Store Update ~ Fall 2015

## Singing Family of the Cumberlands

by Jean Ritchie

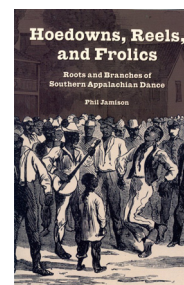


The “singing family” is the author’s parents, Balis and Abigail Ritchie, and their fourteen children, in Viper, Kentucky, deep in the Cumberland Mountains. Jean, the youngest, grew up to be a world renowned folksinger, but all the Ritchies sang—when they worked, when they prayed, when they rejoiced, even when tragedy struck. The book is an appealing account of family life and a treasury of American folklore and folksong. Foremost among the family traditions were British folksongs brought from England by James Ritchie in 1768. Even in a region noted for its wealth of songs, the Ritchies’ inheritance was exceptional. Forty-two of the family’s songs are woven through the narrative, complete with words and often musical scores. Each song evokes a memory for Jean—hoeing corn, stirring off molasses, telling ghost stories, singing a dying baby to its eternal rest. Songs lightened the burden of poverty and brought the family joy and solace. (Illustrated by Maurice Sendak.) \$20

## Hoedowns, Frolics and Reels: Roots and Branches of Southern Appalachian Dance

by Phil Jamison

From cakewalks to clogging, a new history of a vital American art form. Old-time musician and flatfoot dancer Phil Jamison journeys into the past and surveys the present to tell the story behind the square dances, step dances, reels, and other forms of dance of southern Appalachia. He argues that these distinctive folk dances are not the unaltered jigs and reels of the early British settlers, but hybrids that developed over time by adopting and incorporating elements from other popular forms. He traces the forms from their European, African American, and Native American roots to the modern day, reinterpreting an essential aspect of Appalachian culture. (See Tony Parkes’ review in this newsletter, p. 12.) \$28



## The Goldcrest Collection (book)

by Joseph Pimentel

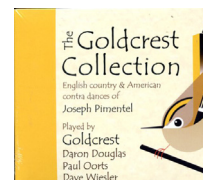


Twenty-one of Joseph’s contras and English country dances with accompanying tunes. Dances include: Appin’s Dance, A Balanced Tern, *Beautyberry*, *Blackbird Pie*, *Bluebonnets*, *Changeling Intuition*, *Come with Voices Singing*, *Dance of a Lifetime*, *The Farmer’s Joy*, A Health to All Good Dancers, *Hotpoint Special*, *Mile of Smiles*, *Mr. Hamilton’s Inauguration*, *Mr. Legge’s Initiation*, *Mr. Millstone’s Inauguration*, *Peace and Joy*, *Ramsay Chase*, *Sasna’s Swing*, *The Treasure of the Big Woods*, *Westaire Court*, *Whip-poor-will*. (Tunes for the italicized titles are on the companion CD.) Book \$12

## The Goldcrest Collection (CD)

by Goldcrest (Daron Douglas, Paul Oorts and Dave Wiesler)

A collection of twelve English country dances, and four contras from the book, *The Goldcrest Collection*. Composers represented include: Adam Broome (*The Farmer’s Joy*), Daron Douglas (*Yellow Song*, *Winter Oranges*), Debbie Jackson (*Bluebonnets*, *Mr. Hamilton’s Inauguration*, *Westaire Court*), Turlough O’Carolan (*Baptist Johnson*), and Dave Wiesler (*Castlewall*, *Floating Ground*, *Come with Voices Singing*, *Yonder*, *Year by Year*, *Zone Nine*, *Mile of Smiles*, *Lovely Lane*, *Mr. Millstone’s Inauguration*, *Peace and Joy*, *Lamp on the River*). CD \$16



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# CDSS NEWS

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The Country Dance and Song Society is a national leader in promoting participatory dance, music and song that have roots in North American and English culture. We believe in the joy that dance, music and song bring to individuals and communities. We educate, support and connect participants in these living traditions and we advocate for their vitality and sustainability into the future. Membership is open to all; benefits include the newsletter, online members list, 10% discount from the store, early registration for our summer programs, and associate membership in Fractured Atlas. CDSS is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization; membership dues and donations are tax deductible. For more information: CDSS, 116 Pleasant Street #345, Easthampton, MA 01027-2759; 413-203-5467, [office@cdss.org](mailto:office@cdss.org), <http://www.cdss.org>.

front cover: CDSS Family Week 2015, Ogontz Camp, Lyman, NH (photo by Denise Smith)

# Letters and Announcements

## SUBMITTING ADS AND ARTICLES

Articles, letters, poems and photographs about contra and traditional square dance, English country dance, morris and sword dance, dance tunes, folksongs, and the dance and music community are welcome. Newly-composed dances and tunes also are welcome, as are new looks at historical dances and tunes. Please contact the Editor for guidelines or send submissions to [news@cdss.org](mailto:news@cdss.org) (maximum size for most articles: 1,500 words, 750 words for essays and event reviews). We may edit for length and clarity.

Go to <http://www.cdss.org/upcoming-events.html> to see UPCOMING EVENTS. To include an event, send date, name of event, town/state, sponsoring group, website or phone/email to [events@cdss.org](mailto:events@cdss.org).

PERSONAL ADS (75 words maximum) are free for CDSS members and \$5 for nonmembers.

## DISPLAY AD SIZES & RATES

full page, 7-1/8" wide x 9-1/4" high, \$440  
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CDSS members may take a 50% discount from these rates. Anyone placing the same size ad in three consecutive issues may take a 10% discount. Please include a note saying which issue(s) your ad is for.

## SENDING ADS

Ads must be black and white or grayscale. Please send electronically to [news@cdss.org](mailto:news@cdss.org) (PDF, JPG or TIF, with 300-600 dpi, fonts and images embedded), with check or Visa/Mastercard info sent same day.

## DEADLINES

Spring—February 1st (issue mailed early March)  
Summer—May 1st (issue mailed early June)  
Fall—August 1st (issue mailed early September)  
Winter—November 1st (issue mailed early December)

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## SUPPORT

CDSS is a 501(c)3 organization; dues and donations are tax deductible. For the many ways you can support us and the community at large, visit <http://www.cdss.org/ways-to-give.html>. Your help is much appreciated.

## PLANNED GIVING

Does your will include the Country Dance and Song Society? If not, please consider ensuring that the programs, publications and services that matter to you continue in the future with a bequest. It's practical and tax deductible. For information, go to <http://www.cdss.org/planned-giving.html>.

## Hats Off to Theresa Lowder



In this centennial year's celebration of the Country Dance and Song Society, there is someone who deserves a special salute! Theresa Lowder of Berea, Kentucky has for the past twenty-eight years headed up a high school dance troupe, the Berea Festival Dancers. They perform primarily English country, early American, Danish, morris and sword dances. No

teen who applies is turned down; they meet every Sunday afternoon to rehearse. Over the years, Theresa has taken these dancing teens to perform in Canada, United Kingdom, Denmark, Australia, Spain, Italy and, of course, all across the United States, including the White House. Wherever they travel, they learn about the area, its history and culture. A friend lovingly referred to Theresa as "the teen whisperer," and she IS! She has the rare ability to be teacher, parent, friend and chaperone, all rolled into one wonderful person the teens adore! They, having been inspired to dance beautifully, will be some of the future CDSS community dance leaders, teaching others the joy of dancing! Hats off to the Berea Festival Dancers' leader, Theresa Lowder!

*Mary Owen Harrell, Berea, KY*

Thank you, Theresa, for all your good work!

— CDSS



*The Berea Festival Dancers' troupe performing a rapper sword dance and a country dance on an estate lawn in the United Kingdom; photos by Bill Lowder*



*Mary adds: Theresa officially "retired" in June of this year, and the leadership of the BFD is ably assumed by Jennifer Rose Escobar.*



## **Aye, Aye, Captains!**

I have a new job with CDSS, and I'd like to tell you how exciting it is! I set aside time one evening a week to make phone calls to local CDSS affiliates in my region to talk with them about how things are going in their communities and share with them resources available from CDSS. I also talk about ways they can connect with the Centennial celebration this year and be more connected to the wider dance music community. It's a pleasure to talk with folks around my region who are passionate about music and dance, willing to work to keep their communities healthy and connected, and eager to be part of the larger picture.

Many of us get so busy in our local work that we forget the wonderful resource CDSS can be. The most rewarding calls are the ones where I can help connect a community to ideas and resources to help solve a problem or initiate discussion of an important issue. It's great to be more aware of how many of us are giving time and energy to keep our communities vibrant! Many of my contacts report that they are already involved with Centennial projects. ("Yes, we are already a Passport to Joy destination!") Others are happy to learn about how they can participate. Some have ideas and suggestions for me to convey back to the CDSS office. ("Wouldn't it be a good idea to have a regular regional conference so we could stay connected with other groups in our area?")

To facilitate more visibility for CDSS and help strengthen connections, we have organized a team of regional volunteers to help the CDSS office and to build a regional network of motivated, visible CDSS promoters. We look for volunteers who are passionate about CDSS and the wider dance community, and who enjoy interacting with people. Our job may change as this project develops, but at this point, we have been recruiting folks who are willing to make regular phone calls to affiliates to share information and to encourage them to share their stories and experiences.

Each "regional captain" is given a group of affiliates with whom to build a relationship. Once we have made contact with the right person (the one who can speak for the local community), we call them periodically to check on how things are going and to encourage them to participate in Centennial projects. This is an efficient way to get information from many groups and update the CDSS office on what is happening around the country.

Project manager Mary Wesley gives us support, talking points about the latest projects and ways to become involved, and a forum for connection and communication among captains. As a pilot project, we are looking for feedback, suggestions and better ways to be effective in our communication.

We're imagining this Centennial year as an opportunity to honor community heroes and collect

our joint histories, to celebrate the best of what we do—song circles, fiddle sessions, dance parties, contra proms, family gatherings, and May Day mornings—and to visualize a future where more people than ever share the joy of our participatory arts.

Please let us know how this program is working for you. Have you been contacted by a regional captain? (All regions are not yet covered.) Would you like to be a regional captain? Can you suggest a way to improve our program so we can be even more effective? Feel free to contact Mary Wesley ([mary@cdss.org](mailto:mary@cdss.org)) or Gaye Fifer ([gayefifer@gmail.com](mailto:gayefifer@gmail.com)).

*Gaye Fifer, Pittsburgh, PA*

## **Education Department Notes**

This past May, Rima Dael, Linda Henry, Nils Fredland and I gathered with teachers from the Amherst/Pelham (Massachusetts) school district for a dance workshop. Eleanor Lincoln, music and movement teacher in the district, reached out to the CDSS Education Department, hoping to get support for her goal of adding traditional dance to the music and physical education curriculum for grades K through 6. After stimulating meetings with Eleanor and her colleague, Anne Louise White, we decided to create a pilot program to help the teachers learn dance vocabulary and concepts appropriate to each grade; model the process of teaching dance; and to develop calling skills. Nils was our workshop leader, and Linda and I played music, and provided each teacher with a CD of tunes. Nils taught plenty of variations on a small group of dances, which the teachers could use as their students developed both social and movement skills. By all accounts, the workshop was a success. Teachers without prior calling or dance leading experience reported that they were able to teach the dances quickly, using Nils's strategies and repertoire.

Building on this, we have two more regional workshops planned for the fall: in Pittsfield at the Kids4Harmony program run by Berkshire Children and Families, and at the Muddy Brook Elementary School in Great Barrington. If you, or someone you know, are interested in learning more or would like us to visit your school, please contact me.

*Pat MacPherson, Director of Education*  
CDSS [pat@cdss.org](mailto:pat@cdss.org)

*The workshops are funded by donations to CDSS via Valley Gives, 2012-2014.*

*(Letters and Announcements continue on page 22)*

# Sing Loudly for CDSS's Year of Song

by Rima Dael, CDSS Executive Director

Given the breadth of artistic genres CDSS represents, it's challenging to address the needs of our various communities all at once. After our Centennial year, we will start a cycle of focusing on one or two genres at a time, allowing for better use of time and resources as we identify community needs. We are pleased, therefore, to announce that next year, 2016, will be the CDSS Year of Song. To start, we'd love to hear from you about where song is happening in your community. Please add your concerts, weekends, festivals, house sings and other song event info to our Events Calendar, [events@cdss.org](mailto:events@cdss.org).

## C# in Appalachia, another centennial

During Cecil Sharp's second trip to the United States, in 1916, his intention was to collect songs and dances in the southern Appalachian Mountains. This he did with his assistant, Maud Karpeles, eventually collecting over fifteen hundred tunes for over five hundred different songs in forty-six weeks. We're not suggesting CDSS is going out collecting songs next year—although we'd enjoy that—but part of next year will be celebrating this artistic anniversary. We've learned that the English Folk Dance and Song Society also will be celebrating Sharp's Appalachian collecting. As part of the celebration, Malcolm Taylor, retired library director at the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library at EFDSS, will be giving talks in the United States. This provides a prime opportunity to partner with EFDSS and Malcom; we will share more information as we know it.

## Dance, dance, dance...and song

Did you know that "song" was added to our name only in 1967 although it had been a part of camp programs and festivals for many years? Next year will offer us an opportunity to examine that history and look at how song fits within our mission and activities. We also will be asking what important issues we should consider with living folk song traditions in modern society. Lorraine Hammond, CDSS Board member and Song Task Group Chair, will spearhead this effort.

CDSS's song traditions are based primarily in the English and Anglo-American traditions—folk songs, ballads, sea shanties, rounds, songs with choruses. We also include spirituals, work songs, country harmony, African call and response, shape note and gospel, contemporary a cappella, and new arrangements of traditional songs. Our particular emphasis is on community singing.

At the Youth Traditional Song Weekend this past January, Rhys McGovern facilitated a session titled "It's a really great song, but...": Content and Sensitivity in Songs." CDSS has been approached by members and communities on this topic and we'll participate in this conversation. We plan to pull together a working group this fall or winter to help frame the issues of importance in song communities today.

## So Start Warming Up

Get ready to lift your voices in song and sing loudly in 2016. And remember to send your song event information for the Events Calendar, [events@cdss.org](mailto:events@cdss.org).



*Peter Amidon and campers singing at Harmony of Song and Dance 2015 (photo: Mary Wesley)*

# Teaching the Country Dance

by May Gadd, CDSS National Director, 1937-1972

The Teacher of Country Dancing should keep in mind that the movement is a perfectly natural one. We do not wish everyone to dance in exactly the same way. Many people will have an easy natural style, and they should be left alone as much as possible.

There are, however, certain fundamental points which the teacher should have in mind in order to help those people who need it.

1. The movement is by means of a spring from foot to foot. This spring comes from the ankle, but cannot be achieved if the body is stiff. A loose easy carriage is therefore essential. Particular attention should be paid to looseness of shoulder, and the pupil should realize from the beginning that the dance involves a "body" and not a "leg" movement.

2. Correct use of arms should be taught. They should be relaxed when not in active use, and loose when used for swings, turns, rings, etc.

3. Weight of body should be used to help the dancer. There is a slight tilt in direction of movement. It is best not to emphasize this point too much as it is easily exaggerated.

4. Connection with the music should be pointed out—turning, continuity, appreciation of the tune, elementary phrasing. It is difficult to teach phrasing in a wide sense as it must always depend on the dancer's feeling for the tune, but elementary phrasing can be taught by getting the dancer to realize that the grading of the spring on a movement such as "forward and back a double" is in accord with the accent in the phrase of the music. Beginners can realize that there must be sufficient impetus at the beginning of a movement to carry the dancer to the end. This must not be confused with a jerky over-emphasized spring on the first beat.

## Class Teaching

It is very important to remember that as looseness of body is essential in order to obtain the spring, the pupils must be under no nervous strain. The teacher's aim must be to get them to relax and in order to accomplish this, it is very necessary to have a pleasant friendly atmosphere in the class. For this reason, it is well to avoid individual criticism at first.

Later on this may be helpful, but should always be employed sparingly or the dancers will become self-conscious.

## Demonstration

Although demonstration is often helpful and necessary, it is well to keep in mind that we do not wish our pupils to merely imitate, but to develop their own style. It is often more helpful to dance in a set in the class, than to demonstrate by oneself.

## Teaching of Figures

It is well to keep in mind that the figures are not the whole dance. From the beginning, we want our pupils to dance and not be overwhelmed by the difficulty of the figures. Interest in the beautiful patterns created can be developed at the beginning, but this must not be done at the expense of the movement. Explanations should be very concise, and a great deal of help given with the memory work at first.

It is often quickest to walk, without the music, but only a short piece at a time. This should then be danced immediately.

## Music

The dancers should learn at the beginning to listen to the tune while dancing. It is helpful to let them listen to the whole tune (1) before learning the dance and (2) when the dance is partly known.



*From a lecture/demonstration at the Teachers Conference, Federation of American Branches of EFDS, held at the Union Theological Seminary Gymnasium, New York City, on Saturday, December 29, 1928. May Gadd's lecture is taken from a report of the conference written by Susan H. Gilman, Secretary. Other speakers in attendance were: Marjorie Barnett ("The Morris Dance"), Olive Whitworth ("Organization of Folk Dancing in Schools"), Donald Tweedy ("Folk Dance Music"), May Elliott Hobbs ("Use of the Historical Interest of the Dances in this Country"), and Lily Roberts Conant ("Ways and Means of Propaganda"). The conference was chaired by Mrs. Hobbs.*

*Photo: May Gadd dancing with Bob Hider, Pinewoods, 1938 (by Perdue Cleaver)*



# Talking Square

by Rima Dael, CDSS Executive Director



I had the privilege of sitting on a national organization panel at the National Square Dance Convention this summer in Springfield, Massachusetts. Organizational colleagues included: CALLERLAB (<http://www.callerlab.org>), Contralab (<http://www.contralab.net>), Alliance of Round, Traditional and Square-Dance (<http://www.arts-dance.org>), United Square Dancers of America (<http://www.usda.org>), Roundalab (<http://www.roundalab.org>) and the Canadian Square and Round Dance Society (<http://www.csrds.ca>).

Topics of discussion included: 1) What are the challenges facing folk dancing today?, 2) What does your organization consider the greatest priorities to address?, 3) Are there possibilities of sharing and coordinating projects to address these issues together?, 4) What are your near term goals (next five years)?, and 5) What needs to happen so that we can expect active participation in the various forms of dance for the next one hundred years?

I shared that CDSS thinks the biggest challenge for our dance, music and song communities is time and money. With enough of both, all problems or challenges could be solved, but given that both time and money are scarce resources—for all nonprofits and volunteer groups—we focus on three ways to help our communities be resilient: building a pipeline of dancers, callers, musicians and organizers; problem identification/problem solving through sharing common issues and best practices; communication of best practices online and offline.\*

All the panelists shared concerns around time, money and cultivating volunteers needed to help keep our organizations going, and involving the younger folks in stewarding our art forms. Ironically, with questions raised about how to involve youth, none were present in the conversation. I posed that we need to ask our younger constituents how to better engage them, and to consider defining what

we mean when we say “youth”—in some instances, it could mean 40 or under, or students K–12, or young adults. There was a lot of discussion around involving next generation and youth participants. CDSS was the only organization on the panel that promotes intergenerational programs and has weeklong summer camps that teach kids, youth and young adults dance, music and song skills.

It was an interesting discussion as the national organizations represented are all arts service organizations that serve their membership with programs and services from insurance to skill-building and best practice workshops. One thing we can learn from the Modern Western Square Dance groups are how connected many of them are with their local/regional Tourism Boards and the use of assisted hearing devices that are in sync with the caller’s microphone; these are two areas CDSS would like to investigate more. David Millstone, CDSS president, also in attendance at the discussion (and, in his teacher/caller’s role, leading several dance workshops at the Convention), shared with the panel and audience the new New Hampshire Art Council social dance map (<http://www.nh.gov/folklife/learning-center/traditions/live-free-dance.htm>), based on West Virginia’s Mountain Trail Dance Map (<http://www.mountaindancetrail.org/dance-schedule>).

It was great to see so many folks in downtown Springfield, from all over the country, dressed in their formal square dance attire. This was the Convention’s first visit to New England; we look forward to seeing them again soon.

*\* These are three areas CDSS has identified through our Strategic Direction, <http://www.cdss.org/strategic-direction-2014-to-2017.html>, and specifically articulated in the “CDSS Theory of Change” section in our recent Education Report, <http://www.cdss.org/education.html>.*

Rima, third from right (photo by David Millstone)



# “I Call Square Dances for the Army, Do You?”

by Lovaine Lewis, *The Country Dancer*, July 1942

It was the strangest feeling I've ever had—that first time I called a square dance in an army camp. You see, I'm a woman. That might have had something to do with it—I don't know. Anyway I was scared. My hands felt like two lumps of ice and I was quite sure that when I stepped in front of the mike I simply would not be able to produce my voice.

Then all of a sudden I started thinking—what if I am a woman calling a square dance at an army post? These men know that women are taking over where the men have gone, so women must be calling square dances now too. What if they start booing—I'd heard they sometimes do that. But after all these men are just the boys from back home and they didn't boo there, did they? Boys from back home—that brought something new to my mind. Then they had a first day in an army camp too. They must have been pretty scared that day—or at least they felt differently than they had ever felt before. They probably know this is my first time in a camp. I no doubt show it, so it will just make us have more in common. They'll understand.

Then the girl dancing partners from the near-by town arrived and before I knew it the floor was crowded with people eager to square dance—and it all depended on me. Someway, although now I can't remember how, I stepped to the mike and with “listen to the music and wait for the call,” the dance was on.

No one laughed at me—although I know some who were a little amazed at a woman calling a square dance, especially in an army camp—but after the dance got under way it was all right, even with them.

Intermission time and my longing glance at the canteen for a coke was only a gesture for I was surrounded by happy boys all saying at once, “I come from...”; “Do you know the dance...?”; “You don't dance here like we do at home”; “This is the first time I've gotten the square dance since I've been in the army; it's wonderful”; “How about letting me call one?” And so on—.

You know after weeks of this you get to know some of the boys pretty well—those that haven't been shipped off too soon. I think it's that feeling of having something very important in common. And dancing is terribly important, isn't it? It's not just a form of recreation “cooked up” for life in the army. I recall one boy telling about a representative from a well-intentioned but ill-informed woman's club. She made

inquiries as to what types of recreation they would prefer be made available to them. His answer was, “Lady, just the kind I've always participated in...you see I come from a long line of civilians.” And then too, you realize how much it has all meant when a girl comes to your office and tells you her soldier boy friend is in another camp now, and they didn't have square dancing there, but now he's started it and is doing the calling himself. And he wonders if you could send him some of your calls because they were such fun and he knows the boys in his camp would like some new ones. And a letter received from a private transferred to another camp makes it more worth while too. He writes about starting square dancing in his camp: “I went down to the Special Service Officer (he is a Captain) this morning and talked to him for about thirty minutes (a long time for a high officer like that). He was very glad that I came down to see him. We exchanged ideas and had quite a discussion. He was surprised that anyone would come to him and help out that way. I told him about the dances we had at... and it encouraged him a lot. I wish you were here to start things off... What are you doing now for the boys? I know you won't let them down after all you have already done for them. I won't try to tell you how much the boys appreciate what the ... and ... are doing for them, because you know how they enjoy it.”

And so I look back to my first experience calling square dances at an army camp. I think of so many incidents, and the memories are happy ones. Lots of things were amazing and a little tragic, but most were amusing and I did keep my sense of humor ever present. One important thing I feel now is that army life is good for most boys—it makes real men of them—men who are strong and healthy, and very, very courteous to women square dance callers.

*The Country Dancer* was a journal published by CDSS from November 1940 to July 1943. It temporarily ceased, because of the war, and returned with the Winter 1948 issue (volume 4, number 1) until its final issue in 1965-1966 (volume 26). This article is from volume 3, numbers 3 and 4).

A second journal, *Country Dance and Song*, was published from 1968 through 1996. *The Country Dancer* and *CD&S* have been PDF'd and will be on our new website this fall. A new online journal, *CD+S Online*, edited by Allison Thompson, will debut in the late fall or early winter.



## News from Canada—From the Dining Room to a Summer Assembly

by Maxine Louie

I would like to tell the tale of the Toronto English Country Dance Assembly, which started as a small group of dancers in my house, with the dining room table pushed into the kitchen to make room for a dance floor, in March 2012. We had been talking about having a weekly group for some time, but no place was available that was affordable until I decided that having a house dance was a positive start. We had to squeeze through the narrowness between the living and dining rooms, and occasionally dancers would rest on the sofa at the end of the line, but we had a good time and learned great dances with our caller, Cathy Campbell. We discovered that we were amiable dancers who were also amenable to volunteering to help keep the project going.

Our first name was Toronto Friday Night English Country Dance, as that was our night, and we described it as a wonderful way to start off the weekend. When summer came, we danced outdoors in the nearby parks of Toronto's east end, but always with the threat of rain or excessive humidity. Dancing outdoors required access to washroom facilities nearby and open during our dance time.

In October 2012, we were able to get into the Ralph Thornton Centre, a beautiful, renovated neoclassical building, designed in 1913, that used to be a post office, in Toronto's Riverdale/Leslieville area. The only stipulation was that we were open to the community, which has always been the philosophy of English country dance as well as contra dancing anyway. We have attracted many locals of various ethnic backgrounds as well as dancers from all over Toronto through Meetup. In lieu of admission, we encourage donation for those who can. Donations are used for membership in CDSS, purchasing dance music and books, equipment, and a special donation to Deborah Denenfeld's project for veterans with PTSD.\*

photo by Dorian Louie



In August 2014, after much agonization over a new name, we officially became the Toronto English Country Dance Assembly, allowing us to finally build our website (<http://www.tecda.ca>). We continue to meet every Friday night for our weekly dance. We also worked in conjunction with Toronto Contra Dancers (<http://www.tcdance.org>) to host the occasional English dance with callers or musicians who were both ECD and contra trained. We want to expose the contra dancers to the amazing music and dance patterns that make English country dance so special.

That we have continued to grow over the last three years is the result of the voluntary spirit of almost all the dancers, each contributing what expertise they can to grow the whole organization, whether it be working on the website, flyers, booking, social occasions, videography, and especially our caller, Cathy Campbell. Her next project is to groom more callers.

### Marianne's Dance

Last winter, Marianne van Ooijen, one of our dancers who is a retired but very active professional costumer, said she wanted to celebrate her fifty-five years in Canada with a Regency dance, and that she would sew ten new dresses and some vests for dancers who did not have Jane Austen style dance outfits. We thought this exceedingly generous on her part, and came up with a plan to have the recipients of the outfits donate towards the dress-up dance, as well as charging a nominal fee to cover costs. Over the next six months, Marianne sewed twelve dresses and eight vests, all individually fitted and each unique.

On April 17, "Marianne's Anniversary Ball" was held at our dance hall at the Ralph Thornton Centre. Her guests included family, dancers from other dance organizations who she befriended prior to joining TECDA, as well as our own group. Cathy called, with live music provided by Kevin Budd and Daev Clysdale. Marianne's ally in costumes, Sarah Boutillier, offered her photography services, Peggy W. organized the dining experience, and many other volunteers helped make the evening run smoothly. (Richard Jacob has posted the video of the dance on our website.)

### Toronto's Summer Assembly

This June, TECDA sponsored the first multi-English country dance get together in southern Ontario. Altogether there were nine callers who came from Spencerville in the east, to Guelph in the west. The original invitation extended to London,

Owen Sound and parts further south, a two hour driving radius from Toronto. Despite horrendously unsummer-like weather, we had a good turnout of dancers and callers. Those who came were treated to a delicious refreshment of strawberry shortcake, using Ontario strawberries in their prime, real whipped cream, and homemade biscuits.

The idea for the Summer Assembly had three roots. The Ontario Folk Dance Association hosts several potluck dinner/dances throughout the year, excellent opportunities for the various folk dance clubs in the greater Toronto area to get together. That seemed like an idea that would benefit our ECD community. I had attended dances in Rochester, New York, where they had many callers over the course of the evening, each calling a couple of dances. Another good idea. Lastly, after attending the "Puttin' on the Dance" conference in Ottawa, March 2015, I resolved to stop procrastinating and start organizing. Everything thing fell into place with local volunteers, baking, shopping, decorating, and callers from across the region contributing their time and talent.

We hope this will be the first of many future Southern Ontario get togethers.

\* See <http://www.deborahdenenfeld.com/dancing-well-the-soldier-project.html>.

**Web extra!** More photos are on our website, <http://www.cdss.org/cdss-news.html>.



The Summer Assembly, 2015. (back row, l to r): Relative Harmony: Jonathan Avery, Shawn Johnson, Rick Avery; (middle row:) callers Walter Zagorski, Dale Hyde, Cathy Campbell, Judy Greenhill, Tom Calwell, Myra Hirschberg; (front) Susan Bunting and Tara Bolker. Photo by Maxine Louie.

*"News from Canada" features news about Canadian events and groups. Ideas for articles should be sent to Bev Bernbaum, [wturnip@sympatico.ca](mailto:wturnip@sympatico.ca), or to Rosemary Lach, [rosemaryklach@shaw.ca](mailto:rosemaryklach@shaw.ca).*

# Book Review: *Hoedowns, Reels, and Frolics*

reviewed by Tony Parkes

*Hoedowns, Reels, and Frolics: Roots and Branches of Southern Appalachian Dance.* By Phil Jamison. A volume in the series Music in American Life. Urbana, Chicago, and Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2015. xx + 276 pages. Companion website: [www.philjamison.com](http://www.philjamison.com).

*Hoedowns, Reels, and Frolics* is a masterpiece of a book and a milestone in dance historiography. Phil Jamison has done what many would have thought impossible not so long ago: documented the development of dance forms whose history is chiefly oral. He has laid century-old myths to rest and produced persuasive evidence of the southern dance's multicultural origins. And he has assembled his findings in a book that is both scholarly and readable.

Jamison is perhaps the ideal person for the task: he is at home in both academia (he teaches at Warren Wilson College) and the living world of traditional music and dance. He is a caller, a dance musician, and a percussive dancer; his long and varied experience includes thirty years of performing with the Green Grass Cloggers. His love of the dance has led him to seek and find hundreds of primary documents, most of which appear to have been overlooked until now (as he points out, when he began his research "there were no scholarly books devoted to Appalachian dance"). He has also attended dance events, conducted interviews, and catalogued and analyzed nearly a hundred commercial recordings of the 1920s and 1930s. The calls on these recordings were intended to entertain the listener and are not necessarily danceable, but they provide an important window into the southern dance tradition before square dancing began to be standardized.

Jamison's most important conclusion is that the southern dance is not, as Cecil Sharp claimed to believe, an ancient English dance form preserved nearly intact for centuries due to the isolation of mountain settlements. Rather, it draws on Scottish, Irish, French, Native American, and African traditions as well as English. Dance historians since at least the 1960s have dismissed Sharp's theory as the product of extreme Anglophilia (and racism), but Jamison has assembled enough evidence to convince anyone. He points out that Appalachia was never as isolated as romantic writers led their readers to believe; the region enjoyed considerable trade with the rest of the world, and its settlers belonged to many ethnic groups.

Perhaps the most fascinating revelation is that the practice of calling the figures, which sets

American group dancing apart from its ancestors and its cognates elsewhere, is an African-American invention. From the earliest days of non-Native settlement through the nineteenth century, most dance musicians in what is now the United States were people of color. As early as 1819, there are written accounts of black musicians calling. Jamison theorizes that the practice originated in the West Indies, the first stop in the New World for many slaves, as references to calling appear nearly simultaneously in many areas.

The bulk of the book is devoted to what can conveniently be called "square dancing," whether done in four-couple squares, large circles, or longways sets. There are also chapters on step dancing, couple dances, and the cakewalk, as well as on the relations between dance and religion. Appendices include an analysis of the commercial recordings, a three-part glossary, copious notes and twenty-four pages of bibliography. A companion website, [www.philjamison.com](http://www.philjamison.com), contains audio files of the recordings, along with a generous selection of paintings, photographs and videos depicting square dancing and step dancing through the years.

The book is handsomely presented. Even the paperback edition is printed on heavy acid-free paper; most of the sixty-two illustrations reproduce well, though occasionally a detail mentioned in the caption is hard for the eye to pick out. (The images on the website are more attractive; many are in color.) There is a smattering of typographical errors, as is usual these days, but none that I noticed appears to obscure the meaning of the text.

No praise is too high for this book. For over half a century I have been hoping someone would write it, though I feared there might not be enough provable information on the subject. It is a joy to see the task accomplished by a writer who is eminently qualified and a publisher who has served him well. The book is essential for anyone interested in American dance history or southern Appalachian culture.

*Tony Parkes is the author of Contra Dance Calling: A Basic Text, (Hands Four Productions, 2010), available at <https://store.cdss.org/>.*



# Book Review: *Appalachian Dance*

reviewed by Susan English

*Appalachian Dance: Creativity and Continuity in Six Communities*, by Susan Eike Spalding (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2014), 288 pages.

Why are African Americans largely absent from old-time dances today? Why do modern contra dance callers emphasize the musical phrase, while old-time square dance patter callers focus more on rhythm? When Cecil Sharp reported in 1917 that he had discovered pre-Playford English dancing in the mountains of Appalachia, exactly what was he witnessing?

These are three of the long-pondered questions to which I found intriguing answers by reading Susan Eike Spalding's newly released book, *Appalachian Dance*. None were simple answers that jumped off the page at me; all were deeper understandings that grew inside me as I immersed myself in the book over a number of cold winter evenings.

I cannot say which chapter is my favorite, because I would have to name at least three. Spalding takes the reader to six different dance communities in or near the geographical triangle at the intersection of Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia, where she collected data at various times over the past thirty years.

The author takes us to Pine Mountain Settlement School, now a center for environmental education; to a former company town in a once-remote coal mining area; to two very different venues consciously created to keep dance traditions alive. In 1992 she reviews dance videotapes from the 1970s with surviving African American participants. She compares her 1999 observations of another dance community to ethnographic descriptions made in 1975.

In each setting, Spalding looks back through the twentieth, nineteenth and sometimes eighteenth centuries for historical perspective. We see music and dance as interwoven into broader social changes like industrialization, urbanization and integration. In the process, the author dispels a long list of popular misconceptions about the Appalachian region.

She allows the "consultants" to speak for themselves—what they are doing, why, and what it means to them—and to use and define their own terms. We not only read the direct descriptions of a participant observer, but nearly every description is balanced with reflective analysis. The author walks with the reader every step of the way, like a friend having a conversation about what these things could mean or tell us. "I became more aware...I never imagined...I have come to believe that...I have come to wonder..." She offers an occasional metaphor, e.g. "The feeling of being on the dance floor was conversational" (p. 57) and "the circle was solid, safe, and reliable" (p. 89).

Some analyses are categorical, such as the distinction between group activities, like squares and big sets, versus individual expressions like flat footing and hamboning. Others are explanatory, such as the impact of "deliberate interventions by the government or philanthropic institutions, the focus of collectors, or the response of the media" (p. 221). Contrasting trends like jazz, the Charleston, Lindy, Rock and Roll, and hip-hop, also filter into the discussion.

Spalding uses her view across the region and decades to present hypotheses and draw conclusions such as how "dance becomes a tool to navigate and negotiate social change, and perhaps to influence it" (p. 7) and, of particular interest to me, "change over time as a result of choices...made by individuals...based on their experiences and beliefs" (p. 2).

This is one of those rare scholarly works that is both readable and fascinating to read. With a multidisciplinary Ph.D. in dance, Dr. Spalding uses her knowledge of American folk history to put her observations into broader contexts. Examples include "the folk dance recreation movement of the first third of the century" (p. 196), the "Arts and Crafts movement" (p. 125), and "the national folk revival" of the mid-twentieth century (p. 47). Each chapter is tied to an impressive list of references, including archival sources in written, audio and video formats.

By way of criticism, I would have liked more information about how the author selected the six locations and more about her method in general. I wonder if some readers might want more evidence of the national trends that are offered as established fact. Finally, Spalding's mention of people who choose not to dance, whether for religious or other reasons, makes me wish for a whole chapter on a non-dancing group or community.

For anyone interested in the history of folk dance in the twentieth century, this book is a must-read. It could help some of our dancers and dance leaders better appreciate diverse styles of music and dance. For myself, having read the book, I will step onto the dance floor and up to the microphone with a richer awareness of the breadth and depth of the heritage into which I am stepping.

*Susan English writes from Wooster, Ohio, where she leads various styles of traditional dance; she is currently working on a book about Dancing Masters in the Ohio Valley.*

# Yoga for Dancers—Abdominal Integrity, Part the Second

by Anna Rain

In every yoga pose we do, we seek the ultimate balance between stability and mobility. When we successfully achieve both to the extent we are capable, a radiance arises: the energy of the pose expresses itself and we receive the benefit thereof. As I wrote in the last column, the correct engagement of the arms and legs (firmness creates stability) allows the torso to lift and be long (from that firmness, we find mobility), which in turn, takes the abdomen to its proper alignment (radiance!).

When your abdomen is in the right place, it holds your front body together and it holds your back body together. If we attend to the limbs and the torso, the optimal action of the abdomen happens much more easily. If we neglect the arms, legs and torso, then trying to “pull” the abdomen in uses the muscles in a detrimental (not to mention difficult) way. The organs are bunched; the spine is distressed and compressed. No body parts are happy. The collective societal yearning for a “flat stomach” has caused us all to think that we can effect change by gripping in one place only, that so-called “core strength” comes from focus on the abdomen alone. The body is a community that needs all the members to contribute for optimal health, and the stability of correctly engaged arms and legs is the necessary first step to abdominal integrity.

This article’s pose uses arms and legs to bring mobility to the spine; those actions combine to position the abdomen in its optimal setting. Poses that give us experience with the abdomen correctly placed allow us to take that kinesthetic information and use it in our everyday movements of standing, walking and sitting.



First, find “external rotation” of the arms while standing (*CDSS News*, Spring 2010, “opening the shoulders”): stand with feet parallel, weight even on both feet. Rotate the arms entirely away from the mid-line of the body, turning the thumbs out as if you were hitch-hiking with both hands.

This is “external rotation,” and the

flexibility to do this easily is essential for healthy shoulder and spine function. As you rotate the arms externally, roll the shoulders back and draw the thoracic spine forward, toward the front body. From your work in lifting the spine (*CDSS News*, Summer 2014), you’ll remember—when standing—to keep the front low ribs subtly tucked in; don’t let them poke out or up.

## *Four-Footed Pose*

In this pose, the arms and the feet provide the stable base. From this grounding, the spine, through perseverance and practice, finds increased mobility and lifts ever more strongly from the floor. If you are used to slumping over a keyboard (of any type) or a steering wheel, moving the spine up and away from gravity is challenging! When the arms and legs give the pose structure, the muscles around the spine develop slowly but properly, which gives us more stamina to stand tall and straight.

Once the arms and legs are correctly positioned and the spine lifts, gravity fills in the last piece and lays the abdominal muscles perfectly against the back body. This sensation—of the abdomen effortlessly spread against the low back—is that radiance of harmony and balance of stability and mobility.



The pose is called the Four-Footed Pose because you stand on four feet: two of the feet are your feet; two of the feet are the back tips of your shoulders. Stand on all four feet, and lift your spine to the sky!

Adjust the arms properly: rock to your left side and roll the right shoulder slightly toward your ear, and then roll the outer upper arm toward the floor. Repeat for the left shoulder. See that the very top of the arm rotates out, toward the floor. This helps the thoracic spine (in between the shoulder blades) be able to move toward the front body. Holding a strap in your hands assists in the stability of the base of the pose.

When we stand, we generally want the trapezius—the muscle where someone might give us a shoulder rub—to be soft and gently (not



aggressively!) rolling toward the shoulder blades. When we're lying down, however, we want to adjust it more carefully: we want the muscle to be parallel to the wall behind us and not sloping away from our shoulders. If we pull the shoulders away from the ears, that hardens the trapezius, which is not the goal.

Adjust your thighs properly: the front thighs roll from the outside in; the top back thighs (just under the crease of the buttocks) open from the inside out. Correct thigh action assures that the low back is not compressed.

To come into the pose, exhale. As you inhale, coordinate the following actions: press down the outer upper arms; roll the front tips of the shoulders toward the floor; and lift the spine and shoulder blades away from the floor and toward the ceiling. In this pose, we do want to challenge gravity and move the whole rib cage—including the front low ribs—UP. Press the heels, press the inner and outer edges of the feet evenly, and lift the outer hips.

See that the buttock muscles are not clenched. When you do this pose, the buttock muscles are indeed engaged, but the engagement comes from the deep layers, not from hardening the muscles on the surface. To find correct action of the buttock muscles, see that the back thighs open from the inside out, and lengthen the flesh of the buttocks away from the waist. Notice the difference between gripping or clenching the buttocks (wrong) and lengthening the buttocks. Focus the lift of the pelvis on the outer hips and the tailbone.

- Lie on your back with your knees bent, your feet on the floor, and your heels a few inches from your buttock bones
- Turn your toes slightly in and take your heels slightly out; feet are about 8-10 inches apart
- Sweep the buttock flesh away from your waist
- Externally rotate the arms (palms up; outer upper arm rolls toward floor)
- (optional) Hold a strap in your hands to increase the grounding action
- Front thighs roll in; back thighs open from the inside out
- As you inhale, descend the front tips of the shoulders, press the arms down, and lift the spine and shoulder blades away from the floor
- Press the feet and lift the outer hips
- Continue the actions of the pose: press down; lift; notice that the abdomen drops into correct placement

When you've done the pose a number of times, lie flat on your back and rest for a few minutes. Roll to your side, drop your head, and press yourself up without lifting your head first. Keep your neck soft. Come to your hands and knees, tuck your toes under, and rock back on your both your feet evenly. Come to standing gently, and coordinate: your legs straighten while your hands come off the floor in a smooth motion that does not stress the knee joints.

Stand with your weight even on both feet. Engage the legs and arms as you did in the poses from the Summer 2015 CDSS newsletter: Lift the front thighs, roll the shoulders back, lengthen actively through your fingers, and draw the side waist and torso up. See if you feel the abdomen engaged in the same way it was in Four-Footed Pose: not clenched or gripped, but spread smoothly and effortlessly against the back body. This is another step toward more awareness of correct abdominal action. The more you can find that effortless place—where the abdomen is exactly where it needs to be—the easier it is to engage the muscles correctly and increase your abdominal integrity.

Students of yoga often ask: "How long should I hold a pose?" In the Iyengar tradition, we do not "hold" poses for a set time or for a certain number of breaths. We do seek to coordinate breath with action, and our breathing while in the pose is optimally smooth, soft, and rhythmic. As long as you can be in the pose with your attention on the actions of the pose, maintain it. When you find your mind slips away ("I wonder if this is long enough?" "How 'bout those Mets?"), come out of the pose, observe a few normal cycles of the breath, and attempt the pose again. See if you can move away from "X repetitions for X number of breaths" and be attentive and present to your experience in the pose, rather than what you think someone else thinks you should be doing.

*Anna Rain is a certified Iyengar Yoga instructor. She is deeply grateful for the entire CDSS community and the wondrous gifts of music, connection and personal growth its membership has brought her over the past several years. Happy Centennial, y'all!*



# CDSS Sings—“Jenny Jenkins”

by Kim Wallach

One of my favorite children’s songs is Jenny Jenkins. I have always liked the challenge of rhyming colors, as have the children I sing with. When my daughter was three, she went through a period of rejecting clothing of all colors, and finally, one morning, I had to take her to school wrapped in her “blankie”—a blue quilt appliquéd with yellow moon and stars. From that time on, that is how I picture Jenny’s “roly-poly fiddly folly seek a cause a use a double roll a find me.” (Kentucky traditional singer Jean Ritchie sang “seek a double use a cause a”—I don’t know if I learned it the other way, or changed it because it sounded better to me).

My students today tend to simplify the verses to “I won’t wear red it’s the color of my bed”/“Won’t wear green it’s the color of my jeans”—or beans, or greens. Jean’s verses say there’s something wrong with the color—“I won’t wear green, it’s not fit to be seen.” The inappropriateness of the colors appears to hark back to the days when Jenny Jenkins was Jenny or Janie Jones, and the song was a longer play party game for children. Jenny would sit or slump behind a “mother” or “parents” while a larger group of children would join hands and step forward to ask to see her, and retreat when rejected. At first the parents say Jenny is doing laundry, then they admit she is dead and the questions involve what color they should dress Jenny in, or what color the guests should wear to the funeral. After rejecting other colors as inappropriate, white is accepted and they begin to go to the funeral. “Jenny” jumps up and chases the others either as a ghost or having come back to life.

Versions of the game are known in England, Scotland, Ireland, Jamaica, and all over the United States, north, south, east and west. The rhymes change with accents and traditions, and the nonsense refrains are tongue-twisting symphonies of alliteration. Here are some great examples:

- “tally wally aye sir”, “tallawalawise”,
- “So double rose Dillevally, Sukey, Dicky, white bands appear”
- “Singin’ buy me a turley whirl, A double double early whirl, A rucker sucker rye, A ground turley oh, A brown buck berry to my lovely Jenny jin-ki-o!,” appears in Vance Randolph’s *Ozark Folksongs*, Volume III.
- In the version recorded by Janet Russell on her Bright Shining Morning CD (Harbourtown Records, Cumbria, UK), she sings: “And I’ll buy ye a rolypoly sugar alley hokey pokey whoops corduroy, Jeannie Jenkins, oh, whoops corduroy, Jeannie Jenkins, oh.”
- Alan Lomax, in the *Penguin Book of American Folksong*, includes the refrain: “I’ll buy me a twirley-whirley, sookey-lookey, Sally-Katty, double-lolly, Roll-the-find me, roll, Jenny Jenkins, roll.”

I have found wonderful threads on the Mudcat website with multiple references: *The Singing Game* by Iona and Peter Opie, and *Games and Songs of American Children* by William Wells Newell; both describe the early game versions. Although I searched every other volume in my own collection, the only other version I had in print was a picture book of Jenny Jenkins as sung by Jerry Garcia and David Grisman. Illustrated by Bruce Whatley, it uses what is essentially Jean Ritchie’s version of a timeless song.

*Kim Wallach is a music teacher, singer, songwriter, mom, camp counselor, Short Sister, Children’s Music Network board member, avid reader, and gardener living in Keene, New Hampshire. Her most recent project was a grant funded recording of songs written and sung by students at the Warwick (Massachusetts) Community School, “Sing a Song of Warwick.” Kim has more than a dozen other recordings available.*

Watch Pete Seeger and Jean Ritchie singing and laughing their way through the song at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4iCkCIBDRyE>.

**Web extra!** <http://www.cdss.org/cdss-news.html>. Hear Kim sing “Jenny Jenkins,” from her 1982 recording, “2 Dozen Children’s Songs.” (Recording available from [kimwallach@myfairpoint.net](mailto:kimwallach@myfairpoint.net).)



# Jenny Jenkins

as sung by Kim Wallach

Will you wear red, oh my dear, oh my dear? Will you wear red Jen-ny Jen-kins? No I  
won't wear red, it's the co - lor of my bed! I'll buy me a ro - ly po - ly  
fid - ly fo - ly seek - a cause - a use a doub - le roll a find me. Roll, \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Jen - ny Jen - kins, roll. \_\_\_\_\_

Will you wear pink oh my dear, oh my dear?  
Will you wear pink Jenny Jenkins?  
No, I won't wear pink, it's the color of my sink (ink, link)  
I'll buy me a roly poly, fiddlely foly seek a cause a use a double roll a find me  
Roll, Jenny Jenkins, roll.

red - head, bed  
white - kite, fright, bite  
brown - town, gown, frown  
blue - shoe, view  
maroon - balloon, tune  
orange - porridge  
green - beans, jeans, teen  
purple - gerbil  
turquoise - porpoise, her toys  
black - backpack, rack, sack, track

Well, what will you wear, oh my dear, oh my dear?  
What will you wear Jenny Jenkins?  
Oh there's nothing I will wear, so I'll have to go bare  
Or buy me a role poly fiddlely foly, seek a cause a use a double roll a find me  
Roll, Jenny Jenkins, roll.

*Tune typeset by Peter Barnes*

# Waves of Grain

by Bob Green

Duple improper longways, starts in long wavy lines, gents facing out  
Tune: Wheat, by Martha Edwards (waltz time)

- A1 1-2 Set down the hall, set up the hall,  
3-4 All take two chassé steps down the hall  
5-6 Set up the hall, down the hall,  
7-8 All take two chassé steps up the hall
- A2 1-4 Neighbor right hand turn once and a half,  
5-8 Partner back to back
- B1 1-8 Ones dolphin hey through the twos (lady starts around near gent)
- B2 1-8 Twos dolphin hey through the ones (lady starts around near gent)

© Bob Green 2012

Notes on the dance: The dolphin hey in B is similar to a shadow hey in that the active dancers (ones and then twos) dance as a unit, one following the other, and the other dancers (twos and then ones) treat that unit as a single person in a hey for three. It differs in that one dancer in the unit always leads from left to right, they turn in place, and then the other leads from right to left. To accommodate the switch of lead dancers, the track of the hey becomes longer and narrower than a normal hey. ~ Jonathan Sivier

## Wheat

by Martha Edwards

A A/g# A/f# D A F#m D E  
A A/g# A/f# D A D E A Fine  
F#m F#m A E Bm D E E  
F#m D A E F#m D E D.C. al Fine

© Martha Edwards 2012

Tune typeset by Peter Barnes



# Dance and Music in Literature

**“A Ball In the Mines,” an excerpt from *Three Years in California (1851-1854)*  
by J.D. Borthwick**

In the evening, a ball took place at the hotel I was staying at, where, though none of the fair sex were present, dancing was kept up with great spirit for several hours. For music the company were indebted to two amateurs, one of whom played the fiddle and the other the flute. It is customary in the mines for the fiddler to take the responsibility of keeping the dancers all right. He goes through the dance orally, and at the proper intervals his voice is heard above the music and the conversation, shouting loudly his directions to the dancers, “Lady’s chain,” “Set to your partner,” with other dancing school words of command; and after all the legitimate figures of the dance had been performed, out of consideration for the thirsty appetites of the dancers, and for the good of the house, he always announced, in a louder voice than usual, the supplementary finale of “Promenade to the bar, and treat your partners.” This injunction, as may be supposed, was most rigorously obeyed, and the “ladies,” after their fatigues, tossed off their cocktails and lighted their pipes just as in more polished circles they eat ice-creams and sip lemonade.

It was a strange sight to see a party of long-bearded men, in heavy boots and flannel shirts, going through all the steps and figures of the dance with so much spirit, and often with a great deal of grace, hearty enjoyment depicted on their dried-up sunburned faces, and revolvers and bowie-knives glancing in their belts; while a crowd of the same rough-looking customers stood around, cheering them on to greater efforts, and occasionally dancing a step or two quietly on their own account. Dancing parties such as these were very common, especially in small camps where there was no such general resort as the gambling-saloons of the larger towns. Wherever a fiddler could be found to play, a dance was got up. Waltzes and polkas were not so much in fashion as the “Lancers” which appeared to be very generally known, and, besides, gave plenty of exercise to the light fantastic toes of the dancers; for here men danced, as they did everything else, with all their might; and to go through the “Lancers” in such company was a very severe gymnastic exercise. The absence of ladies was a difficulty which was very easily overcome, by a simple arrangement whereby it was understood that every gentleman who had a patch on a certain part of his inexpressibles should be considered a lady for the time being. These patches were rather fashionable, and were usually

large squares of canvass, showing brightly on a dark ground, so that the “ladies” of the party were as conspicuous as if they had been surrounded by the usual quantity of white muslin.

A pas seul sometimes varied the entertainment. I was present on one occasion at a dance at Foster’s Bar, when, after several sets of the “Lancers” had been danced, a young Scotch boy, who was probably a runaway apprentice from a Scotch ship, for the sailor boy air was easily seen through the thick coating of flour which he had acquired in his present occupation in the employment of a French baker, was requested to dance the Highland Fling for the amusement of the company. The music was good, and he certainly did justice to it; dancing most vigorously for about a quarter of an hour, shouting and yelling as he was cheered by the crowd, and going into it with all the fury of a wild savage in a war-dance. The spectators were uproarious in their applause. I daresay many of them never saw such an exhibition before. The youngster was looked upon as a perfect prodigy, and if he had drank with all the men who then sought the honour of “treating” him, he would never have lived to tread another measure.

*John David Borthwick (1824-1892) was a Scottish journalist, author and artist. He traveled in gold rush California from 1851 to 1854, observing and sketching every ethnic group he met; his travel paintings were exhibited in several galleries, including the Royal Academy.*

*In 1857, he published materials from his California travels in Harper’s Weekly; his book, *Three Years in California* (William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh) was published that same year. It offers descriptions on mining techniques, personal interactions, transportation, crime, holidays, hotels and restaurants, entertainment of the social life of the era, and the growth of California, focusing on his experiences and encounters in numerous gold camps. It is considered one of the most entertaining and accurate depictions of the early Gold Rush period, and remains one of the classic first-person accounts of the Age of Gold in America. His attention to detail and his engaging portrayals are considered one of the most realistic representations of the time. (Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_David\\_Borthwick](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_David_Borthwick))*

*This Dance and Music in Literature excerpt is from sections 320-322 of Chapter 21: “A Ball,” “The Lancers and the Ladies,” and “The Highland Fling.” (Source: <https://archive.org/stream/threeyearsincali00bortrich/threeyearsincali00bortrich-divu.txt>. You can read the full text of the book there.)*

*Our thanks to CDSS member Allen Dodson, of Murphys, California who brought the dance description to our attention. Murphys began as a mining camp, in the middle of the Gold Country; the dance described in the excerpt was at Lake’s Hotel in nearby Angels Camp.*

# Who You Gonna Call?

by the CDSS Staff

Ever wonder if your CDSS membership is up to date? Or if there's a waiting list for that CDSS week you want to attend? Or how to place an ad in the newsletter? Maybe you're a millionaire and want to talk with us about leaving us a legacy. Or you've just got to have twenty copies of that new tunebook to give to friends. Hmm, maybe you're overdrawn at the bank; did we deposit your check already? Or what's the URL for that cool dance you saw on our website? Oh, no, you suddenly need a caller for your sister's brother-in-law's cousin's wedding reception in Pocatello! Who can help you? Well, give us a call. The brief job descriptions below will give you some idea of our domains. If you don't see the category you want, call 413-203-5467 or email [office@cdss.org](mailto:office@cdss.org), and we'll figure it out. (Not all the staff works fulltime, but we all work to answer your questions.)



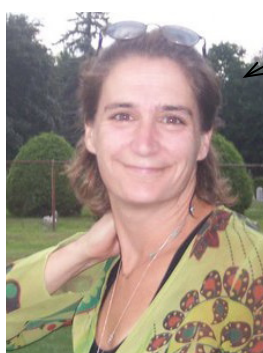
**Rima Dael** (2012), Executive Director, x 100, [rima@cdss.org](mailto:rima@cdss.org). Directs and leads CDSS toward the achievement of our philosophy, mission, strategy, and operational goals and objectives; with the Board president, enables the Board to fulfill its governance role.



**Caroline Batson** (1986), Director of Communications, x 101, [caroline@cdss.org](mailto:caroline@cdss.org). Designs camp and general promo material, writes press releases, edits the *CDSS News* and news eblasts, posts on our Facebook page, liaises with each year's Lifetime awardee.



**Anna Mach** (2011), Bookkeeper, x 113, [anna@cdss.org](mailto:anna@cdss.org). Posts information to the accounting software from source documents; maintains the chart of accounts and class codes in QuickBooks; conducts monthly reconciliation of all accounts; and analyzes general ledger data.



**Christine Dadmun** (2013), Database and Membership Administrator, x 104, [christine@cdss.org](mailto:christine@cdss.org). The go-to person for membership, donation and mailing list questions; works with Robin on Development; assists Programs, Sales, Communications and Rima.



**Bob Blondin** (2011), Business Manager, x 111, [bob@cdss.org](mailto:bob@cdss.org). Handles day-to-day financials and human resources, preps financial statements, analyzes actual to budget variances, oversees Designated Funds, develops the annual budget with the staff, and preps and submits corporate tax returns.



**Robin Hayden** (1987), Director of Development, x 107, [robin@cdss.org](mailto:robin@cdss.org). Oversees annual appeal, Centennial campaign, summer fundraising, Annual Report, major gifts, planned giving, membership, and donor relations; works with Rima and the Fund Development Committee to implement the development plan.





**Mary Wesley** (2011), Education Associate, Mary Wesley, [mary@cdss.org](mailto:mary@cdss.org). Formerly CDSS Youth Intern, she develops pathways for community and volunteer participation in Centennial Celebrations, and works on the CDSS Story Project, gathering news and stories from communities nationwide as part of the Centennial.



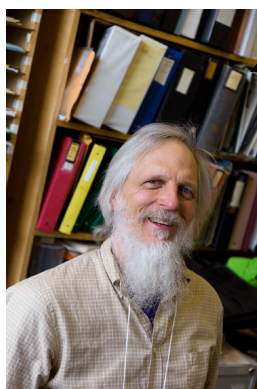
**Pat MacPherson** (1993), Director of Education, x 106, [pat@cdss.org](mailto:pat@cdss.org). Envisions the scope of the work of the Education Department within the mission and vision of CDSS; manages publication of CDSS books, booklets and recordings; liaises with the UNH Library of Traditional Music and Dance (where the CDSS Archives and Library reside).



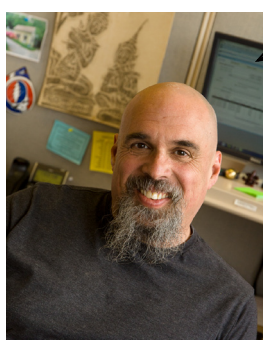
**Nils Fredland** (2010), Publications Coordinator for American Dance, [nils@cdss.org](mailto:nils@cdss.org). Works with Pat on publication projects, and this year is the Project Manager and Artistic Director of the Centennial Tour. As a professional caller, he brings news of CDSS activities to those he meets around the country.



**Linda Henry** (1992), Outreach Manager, x 105, [linda@cdss.org](mailto:linda@cdss.org). Administers scholarships for CDSS summer programs; manages our Outreach Grants program, offering funding and logistical support for projects and events throughout the US and Canada; spearheads leadership conferences cosponsored by CDSS..



**Steve Howe** (1989), Director of Camp Programs, x 102, [camp@cdss.org](mailto:camp@cdss.org). Oversees the running of our camp sessions, and works with the facilities and program directors on budgets, staffing, and overall program development; hires and oversees the seasonal office staff at camps.



**Jeff Martell** (2008), Sales and Services Manager, x 103, [jeff@cdss.org](mailto:jeff@cdss.org). Oversees and manages the Store and provides support for the services we offer (callers insurance, group tax exemption status, group liability insurance); develops new services and sales models.



**Lynn Nichols** (2013), Webmaster, [webmaster@cdss.org](mailto:webmaster@cdss.org). Maintains CDSS's extensive digital presence so it stays functioning and current, providing users with a rich and satisfying online experience; currently building a new, improved [CDSS.org](http://CDSS.org) site, scheduled to launch later this year.



**Mr. Pins** (2004), Mascot and Bosom Friend. Helps the CDSS Staff at busy times with his can-do attitude and cheery nature; breathtakingly adroit at handling calls from telemarketers even though he has no email or phone, preferring to work telepathically. He likes his Abbots Bromley costume.

Photos by Doug Plummer 2015, except for Nils (Kiqe Bosch, 2013), Caroline, Christine, and Mr. Pins (Jeff Martell); Mr. Pins' costume by Jacqueline Haney.

### **Dressing for Focus**

I've been taking photographs for two to three years at Ashokan at all their themed weeks (Northern, Southern, Western and Swing) and CDSS's English Dance Week at Pinewoods, which can be seen at <http://tinyurl.com/sdean-dance>. The greatest technical problem in shooting dance is focusing: the dancers move fast, in rapidly changing direction, and the light is low indoors or outside at night. Even with one of the best cameras available, a Canon Mk5, my yield is often no better than one in five.

I recently had the epiphany that the dancers can dress to improve this, by wearing shirts, blouses or dresses with crisp, bold, perhaps geometric, graphic patterns: this will give the camera's autofocus something to focus on. Think about it: a moving solid color fabric gives the camera almost nothing to focus on.

Perhaps it seems silly to ask the dancers to be dressed for focus, but if you know that someone is making a serious effort to photograph at your dance, you might consider doing this.

*Stewart Dean, Kingston, NY*



*English Dance Week 2014, by Stewart Dean*

### **Thank you!**

Our thanks to Abigail Hobart and Rowan Lupton for their excellent help this summer with our Archives and other projects at the CDSS office. We loved having you with us. You made a difference!

*~ Rima and the CDSS Staff*

### **One of Those "It's-a-Small-World" Things**

Earlier this week I got a phone call from Eric Dolan. I didn't even fully understand the name at first, but in the course of listening to the message I realized it was actually for my mother. A day later I met Eric and his wife of twenty-eight years, Sue, who were making their way, via Harley-Davidson, from Oregon to Harrisonville, Missouri. They stopped in for several hours at my parents' home in Kansas... and I had an absolutely lovely time getting to know my Uncle Eric, whom I hadn't until then known existed. (My forebears are trendsetters in the broken-and-subsequently-reblended family business, and it turns out Uncle Eric is my mother's VERY baby half-brother, who is only five years older than I am.)

The best part? Eric and Sue are from COOS BAY, OREGON! I showed them the Coos Bay video (and then ours, too, of course), and thoroughly enjoyed their viewing: "Hey look, that's So-and-So." "Oh yeah, she's a terrific fiddle player." "Wow, haven't seen him in a while!" "You can get great pizza at that place down there."

I want SO badly to go to that Tour stop!

*Lauralyn Bodle*

*Lauralyn will be part of her own local tour stop when the CDSS Centennial Tour rolls into Lawrence, Kansas, November 17-22, 2015 (see the last issue of the CDSS News). The Tour will be in Coos Bay on October 4-10, but Lauralyn's band has a gig that week.*

### **Watch These Delightful Videos!**

A Heartland Traditional Dance and Music Festival promo, Lawrence, Kansas, the upcoming last tour stop on the CDSS Centennial Tour, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=McvlDbN0Rhs&feature=youtu.be>.

Tamar Bordwin's affectionate glimpse of our Family Week program at Timber Ridge this summer, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TnNZH1f980&feature=youtu.be>.

And the enthusiastic Timber Ridge campers cheer an engagement, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5GcqxlN\\_yCY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5GcqxlN_yCY).

**CDSS Centennial Tour, April-November 2015**

<http://www.cdss100.org/cdsscent/>



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**Country Dance and Song Society**  
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[www.cdss.org](http://www.cdss.org)

*Change service requested*



## About Our Centennial

We're still celebrating the year! As this issue goes to press, our 2015 camp programs are winding up. Thank you to everyone who attended—it was a great summer! Our new searchable event calendar is up and running, <http://cdss100.org/events>. (Are your events there?) And have you celebrated your Local Hero yet? See <http://cdss100.org/community100/local-heroes>.

We're looking forward to two Lifetime Contribution Award events this fall: the posthumous award to Warren Argo, on October 10, in Arlington, WA, and the living award to Brad Foster, on October 24, in Athol, MA. (Tom Kruskal's interview with Brad is being edited and will be posted on our website in October.) The last four Tour stops also will be this fall, ending just before Thanksgiving.

Keep celebrating with us! For more about the Tour, Timeline, and other projects and plans, visit <http://cdss100.org>.



*Pat Shaw (1917-1977), English country dance teacher, composer and choreographer, with May Gadd (1890-1979), longtime director of CDSS, at Pinewoods Camp, 1974 (photo by Suzanne Szasz)*