

# CDSS NEWS

FALL 2019



COUNTRY  
DANCE AND SONG SOCIETY

*founded in 1915*



## BALANCE AND SING



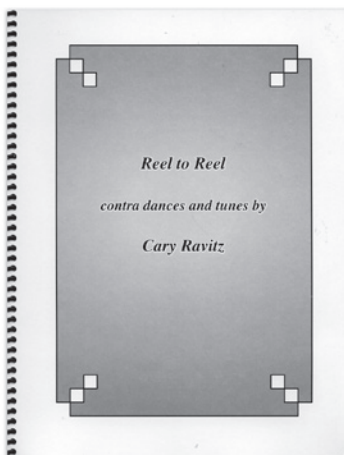
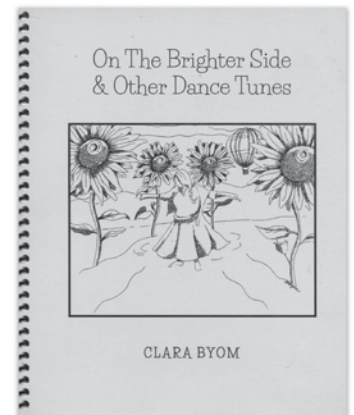
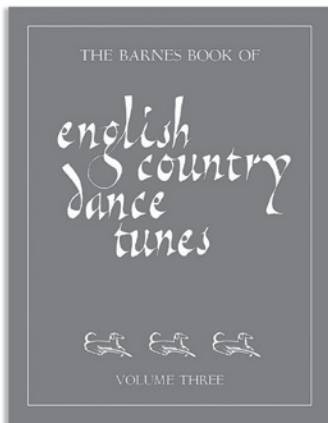
*T*une writers and choreographers have been busy this summer, writing a slew of new material for you to cut your teeth on! Check out new books from Kentucky and New Mexico, and don't miss awesome new stickers and magnets from CDSS—perfect for your water bottles, instrument cases, windows, and cars.

**Barnes III** : The long-awaited third volume of The Barnes Book of English Country Dance is here just 14 years after volume 2! The 414 entries include both historical tunes to now-popular dances, as well as many recently composed tunes to new dances. This is a must-have for any English dance musician, as well as callers and historians.

**On The Brighter Side & Other Dance Tunes** : A wonderful new book of tunes from Albuquerque-based author Clara Byom. A contra-dance clarinetist rooted in Balkan and klezmer music, Clara brings her unique voice to the 50 tunes in this book—mostly jigs and reels suitable to contra dancing, but also waltzes and more! Spiral-bound, with an index organized by style and key.

**Reel to Reel: Contra Dances and Tunes**: More than 100 original dances by long-time Lexington, KY choreographer, musician, and tune-author Cary Ravitz. Includes tunes written for about 30 of the dances, which are all standard 32 bar tunes that could fit other dances as well. Dances range from easy to difficult and aim to be simple, but interesting and unusual. Teaching notes are included with many of the dances.

**CDSS Stickers and Magnets**: Check out our new collection of CDSS Stickers and Magnets! We now have high-quality vinyl stickers for your water bottle, laptop, windows, and anything in between! The 3"x5" CDSS sticker also comes as a car magnet, perfect for showing off your CDSS pride everywhere you go! The 3" round stickers read "Magic Awaits," "Singing together is Magic," or "Dancing together is Magic." Get yours today!



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# CDSS NEWS

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The Country Dance and Song Society connects and supports people in building and sustaining vibrant communities through participatory dance, music, and song traditions that have roots in English and North American culture. Membership is open to all; benefits include the printed newsletter, 10% discount from the store, early registration for our summer programs, and more. 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, cdss.org.

*This newsletter is published quarterly by the Country Dance and Song Society.*

*The views expressed within represent the authors and are not necessarily those of CDSS. All material is published by permission.*

**Front cover:** Photo taken by Deborah Payne during Harmony of Song & Dance Week, Pinewoods 2019

## Anonymous Major Gift Received

*by CDSS Executive Director Katy German*

It is with immense gratitude that CDSS announces the receipt of an anonymous \$250,000 gift dedicated to furthering CDSS's mission and work across the continent. The donors, a couple who met through dance, have seen first-hand the power of dancing, singing, and making music together. Through their dance communities, they've forged lifelong friendships and witnessed people rally to support one another when times are hard. Their communities have warmly welcomed new folks seeking haven from loneliness and isolation and supported those seeking fun and recreation.

### *A message from the donors:*

"When we called CDSS to give them the news, they asked—after the initial swell of gratitude—why CDSS? What was it about CDSS's work that inspired this gift? We met contra dancing, and we've seen what dancing can do for people. Bringing the joy and connections of dance to more people holds the promise of improving our North American culture. CDSS is the organization best positioned to increase opportunities for people to experience community and individual connections through dance and music. CDSS invests in training and leadership, provides resources for people organizing dances in their communities, and is working hard to help those folks connect with each other.

As to why we chose to give now, we want to do it while we're still around to see the difference it makes. We've worked hard to grow our resources to a point where we have what we consider a significant amount to give. We could have chosen to bequeath the funds, but we would miss out on the fun. In the past few years, we've been impressed by new directions CDSS is exploring and hope—for the good of the community—our gift can multiply these efforts."

**"We could have chosen to bequeath the funds, but we would miss out on the fun."**

The donors have decided to make this an unrestricted gift spread out over the next 5 years, to provide a steady base for growth. CDSS takes seriously the reasons and inspiration for this visionary gift and will work to ensure that the funds are used to further **CDSS's mission to connect and support people in building and sustaining vibrant communities through participatory dance, music, and song traditions that have roots in English and North American culture.**

**Opposite:** Original photo collage incorporates a photo by Jennifer Wik taken during Family Week at Ogontz.







# Published Study Shows Dance Helps Veterans with PTSD

by Deborah Denenfeld



**Dancing Well: The Soldier Project** is thrilled to announce that our scientific study has been published in the peer-reviewed *Journal of Veterans Studies*. Results show the program of traditional dance, live music, and community significantly improved the wellness of veterans with PTSD. Family members and loved ones also showed improvement in wellness. The wellness score was a composite of multiple psychological surveys, specifically, showing improvements in feelings of connectedness, feelings of optimism, and a reduction in isolation. This is important because people with PTSD tend to isolate, which often leads to increased depression, substance abuse, and suicide. To our knowledge, Dancing Well is the only program in the world utilizing traditional dance and community to help veterans and their loved ones affected by PTSD.

For Dancing Well, publication of the study means:

- **Future researchers will know the value of community dance for people affected by PTSD**
- **Increased credibility for the Dancing Well program**
- **Improved access to sponsors for a potentially sustainable future**

*The study was conducted by Dancing Well: The Soldier Project's Deborah Denenfeld, Western Connecticut State University's Robin Gustafson, Tyla Johnson, Carlos Jimenez, Marlon Tristao, and University of Louisville's Cynthia Corbitt, Michael Dylan Collins, Tasneem Karim, and Mine Obrik-Uloho.*

Dancing Well dances are intentionally kept small and always include volunteer dancers, who were not included in the study. Due to the limited population, the study is considered a pilot. We hope that a larger study may be conducted in the future. The journal article may be found at <https://journal-veterans-studies.org/articles/abstract/68/>

## The Dances

At this time, all Dancing Well dances are held in Louisville, Kentucky and include people from Kentucky and southern Indiana. Ninety-minute-long programs are held in series of ten sessions. Over the series, bonds form and a feeling of community develops. Smiles, friendly touch, eye contact, and frequent hugs help participants feel welcomed. Recently, one veteran who



is new to our program this year, said, *"Dancing Well gives me a reason to get out of bed. I'm actually believing in people again. I think everyone should go to Dancing Well. There would be less violence if they did."* Dancing Well serves veterans with PTSD and/or brain injury, along with their families and loved ones, who are indirectly affected.

The program consists of traditional community and family dances, modified for the lowest-functioning person on the floor. The music is always live and is usually provided by the same musicians at each event. Special adjustments are made to the venue, such as special lighting and attention to the sound system, and long refreshment breaks encourage socializing. Many veterans and loved ones return series after series and consider Dancing Well family.

## How You Can Get Involved

There is room in the Dancing Well family for all of you and you are invited to join in this important work! Dancing Well: The Soldier Project depends on donations, most of which come from individuals. All donations are tax-deductible to the extent of the law. Another way to help is by sharing information with friends and family. Volunteer help is also always needed. Many tasks can be accomplished from a distance. Contact Deborah for simple, detailed instructions.

## Dancing Well Leadership Training

Would you like to learn how to encourage our veterans through dance? Thinking of offering dancing to this special group in your home community? Dancing with individuals affected by PTSD and brain injury requires sensitivity and specialized training. Based on over six years of hands-on experience leading dance with this population, Dancing Well Leadership Training will offer practical skills and advice to help dance leaders and recreation therapists develop and implement a dance program for afflicted veterans in their communities.

Two online modules will focus on PTSD, brain injuries, military culture, and the business aspects of running a nonprofit similar to Dancing Well. Experts in each area, including veterans and loved ones affected by PTSD, brain injury, or both, are helping

to develop this training. Each module will include testing to support learning and real-time group chats for questions and discussion among participants.

A third module will be held face-to-face with participants traveling to Louisville for training and participation in the local dance series for veterans and loved ones under the supervision of Dancing Well Director Deborah Denenfeld. This module will focus on a selection of

appropriate dances, programming an evening of dance, skills for interaction with this specialized population, modification of dances in real time to meet participant needs, and program evaluation. In the third module, attendees will meet some of the incredible

veterans, loved ones, and volunteers, many of whom have danced with Dancing Well for years, and who have much wisdom to share. Experts will also be present and available to answer questions and help potential leaders expand

*"... many people have been helped and at least one life, of which we are aware, has been saved from suicide."*



**Planning a visit to Louisville?** Contact Deborah to see if we will be dancing during your visit. No words can convey the joy and love expressed at the dances, and you can be a part of it. All photos courtesy of Dancing Well: The Soldier Project

their learning as they prepare to lead dancing in home communities.

Dancing Well: The Soldier Project is now in its sixth year of holding dances. Country Dance and Song Society provided bookkeeping and tax services to the organization until last year, when Dancing Well became an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Dancing Well greatly appreciates the support of CDSS, and the many dancers and dance communities who have helped to make the program possible. Over that time, many people have been helped and at least one life, of which we are aware, has been saved from suicide.

For further information on the study, Dancing Well, or the leadership training, contact Deborah Denenfeld at [Deborah@DancingWell.org](mailto:Deborah@DancingWell.org) or through the website [www.DancingWell.org](http://www.DancingWell.org).

*Dancing Well thanks community partners Jacob and Nancy Bloom and The Kentucky Arts Council, the state arts agency, who supports Dancing Well: The Soldier Project with state tax dollars and federal funding from the National Endowment for the Arts.*



**DANCING WELL**  
*The Soldier Project*



## *Remembering* **ARTHUR MUNISTERI**

**T**he world of song, music, and dance lost a joyous, talented, generous, endlessly enthusiastic, funny, wickedly smart, caring person when Arthur Munisteri passed away on August 4, 2019, in Northampton, MA. A longtime supporter and member of CDSS, Art served on the boards of CDSS affiliates in New York and Massachusetts. He was an avid, some might say fanatic, English, contra, and Morris dancer, a sought-after waltz partner, and a proud member of the Greenwich Morris Men and the Pinewoods Folk Music Club in New York City. He sang for many years in the New York Christmas Revels, and later in the Cambridge MA Christmas Revels, and was often pleased to serenade dinner companions with well-wrought selections from Gilbert & Sullivan. Arthur was well known for his repertoire of literary references, funny stories, and recall of the details of everything he had ever read. He was a dear friend to many and will be greatly missed.



—Remembrance & photo by Nikki Herbst



# Stories from the CDSS *Legacy of Joy Society*

NANCY BOYD & ARTHUR MUNISTERI

Arthur and I made our estate plans a few years back when I was serving on the CDSS Board and he was serving on both the Pinewoods Camp Board and our local dance board. Including CDSS as a beneficiary was a no-brainer for us. Art introduced me to dancing shortly after I met him and we had a ridiculously great time in the dance and song community our entire 30 years together. Dancing itself, the community and the deep friendships we made had all been central to our life together—those connections continue to be central to my life. We wanted to help sustain that kind of community long into the future.

Planning early left me no doubt about Arthur's wishes regarding CDSS, and I take comfort in knowing that all is in place to leave a legacy to something that was so deeply meaningful to him.

During Art's illness and since his death, the dance community has surrounded me with truly amazing love and support. I cannot overstate how uplifting



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*"The dance community...had been central to our life together...We wanted to help sustain that kind of community long into the future."*

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*this care was and is, and how powerfully it affirms our shared belief in the value of community. May CDSS and the communities it nurtures continue to thrive.*

If you'd like to join the CDSS *Legacy of Joy*, fill out the online **Request to Join form** at <http://cdss.org/legacy> or call Robin Hayden at 413-203-5467 x107. CDSS will work with you to contribute a joyous photo, a zippy quote, and your own legacy story. Considering including CDSS in your estate plans but don't know where to begin or what your options are? Fill out the **Expression of Interest form** on the website.

Photo by Nikki Herbst

# Response to: "A Figure by Any Other Name: Exploring Alternatives to Gypsy"

by Dragan Gill

I am both a folk dancer (English, morris, contra) and Romnichal. Romnichal are a sub-group found in the British Isles, US, and Australia. We are, probably, the largest group of Roma in the US. My family, after arriving in the US in 1851, lived a 'traditional' Roma life (nomadic/semi-nomadic with traditional/stereotypical employment) through the generation before mine. My mom's generation was the first to mostly marry "out," meaning they married non-Roma where prior generations only did so occasionally.

"Gypsy" is what I grew up calling myself, interchangeably with Romnichal. I don't hate the word. That said, I in no way can speak for the whole of the Gypsy world. I am well aware of my passing privilege and its twin: erasure.

**Here are things I think are worth considering in this conversation after reading the article from Summer.**

## Who we are

We are an ethnic group, roughly from what is now known as Rajasthan. We were originally nomadic, and some of us still are. There is no clear history that explains why we left the region and traveled more broadly. The most current research into when Roma and predecessors arrived in Europe points to differing dates, but many believe it was in the 11th century. This history was not necessarily part of Gypsy identity for many in Europe and the US, until relatively recently. Once in Europe, groups of Roma began staying in certain regions, giving rise to dialects and cultural differences which gave rise to different sub-groups, such as the Romnichal.

## Roma/Romani

The language is a Sanskrit-based language and has changed a lot over time, with many regional dialects. While highly preserved words are similar to Hindi and Urdu, language exchange has led to a lot of adopted words and grammar. For example, my grandparents used Romnes words with English grammar, which is typical of Romnichal. The word "rom" means, as is true in many languages, "man." Among advocates and activists there are further discussions and

disagreements about whether to use the word "Roma" or "Romani" as the general ethnonym.

## The word "Gypsy"

The English word "Gypsy" comes from the word "Egyptian." Many European languages use a word derived from "Egyptian." More evident to us might be Gitano (Spanish) and Gitan (French), but across the continent you'll find words starting with Tz, Ts or Cz (like the infrequently used "Tsiganology," study of Gypsies) all derived from "Egyptian." There is no definitive history on how this misnomer began, as Roma are not Egyptian, but it is historically entrenched in many languages starting with the arrival of Gypsies in Europe.

## Differing opinions on using the word Gypsy

There are uses I don't like, but it's the intention and use, rather than the word itself that I find problematic. Others have called for use of it to end entirely. As is true for other ethnic groups, preferred language is varied and complicated. For example, Professor Hancock's work is published in *Romani Studies*, a journal published by The Gypsy Lore Society. A newer name for the journal, the historic name for the society.

In the introduction to the book *Insiders, Outsiders and Others: Gypsies and Identity*, the researchers provide background into their use of the word "Gypsies" in their text which resonates strongly with my experiences:

*In our work we have chosen to use the term 'Gypsy' primarily because those groups we refer to and spoke to in our research choose to define themselves as such. Many of the people we spoke to did not choose to define themselves as 'Travellers' as, they argued, they no longer travelled. They also suggested they would always be seen as Gypsies by society at large and would always remain Gypsies regardless of their economic circumstances. Despite a recognition of the pejorative associations linked to the use of the term 'Gypsy' by non-Gypsies, the people we spoke to understood the term as having positive associations*



*with their communities and culture. Our use of this term may be seen as 'giving voice' to and legitimising the viewpoint of those people who informed our research. Here we agree with Okely (1983), who has argued that self-identification is the means by which ethnic identity is achieved and maintained.*

## My opinion on using the word Gypsy in dance

I am actually, and unsatisfactorily to debaters, ambivalent. As a morris dancer I call, "here!" in response to a "half-gyp", as in a roll-call. My mom got me a "Dance Gypsy" bumper sticker. It's fun to have these inside-jokes with my team and people who know me.

As others have done, I've looked into the history of using the term in dance and found that, like much of the history mentioned above, it's undocumented. There may be no record of why this figure has this name, the intention is missing. Those who argue in favor of continuing to use it frequently point to romantic stereotypes of Gypsies which, while they are intended to be positive, are problematic. They reduce the culture and history of a whole group to fairy tale characters. Those that argue against ignore those of us who self-identify using this term, with the best of intentions of being culturally sensitive.

I understand the impulse to use the safest terms and this is, as Jeff Kaufman pointed out, a figure whose name does not make the movement clear. It is easy to swap it out. However, throughout this process there have been calls on both sides of the debate for a Roma voice and to the extent having mine here provides insight, I am willing to provide it. I have spoken up in Facebook conversations, which interestingly have mostly led to requests to move the conversation to private messages or email, out of the public threads. Even more telling was a request for someone more "in the community" when I recommended Professor Hancock's work as a counter to my own experiences. This person felt fully against using stereotypical language, but was unable to imagine a Gypsy in academia. And this is the crux of the problem: This debate is focusing on a word with more nuanced use than either sides' arguments provide. It is not a simple fix to a simple problem to stop using it. The problem isn't the word, it's a lack of understanding about the people behind the word.

CDSS did not begin this conversation; it's been in callers' blogs and email lists, on Facebook group pages, and forums for a while. But what I hope CDSS can provide is more space for depth—to have better conversations, not just more.



**An old family photo**—An example of traditional/stereotypical employment. Many of my family members sold horses across New England and the Midwest, with sales stables scattered across the region. This photograph shows: Williams Brother's Horse Market c. 1917, Hartford CT. There was another in East Hartford and one in Holyoke, which is now a furniture store still owned and operated by family, as well as a few others. The stables closed over time as fewer people used work horses in daily life.

**Want to read more?** Hancock's book *We Are the Romani People* provides further history and background on this subject.

# Remembering My Mentor, Legendary Caller Ralph Sweet

by Nils Fredland



learning to call singing squares. After a few years of getting to know his voice, I was hired by CDSS to work with Ralph to bring his vast collection of square dances together in a book. That life-changing experience began in 2008, and resulted in a print representation of the entire basis for our friendship. My copy of “On the Beat with Ralph Sweet” is VERY used, and reminds me every time I pick it up of this man who continues to touch my life. When I call dances, Ralph is never far from my mind.

Ralph Sweet was born on May 17, 1929 in Norwich, CT. His interest in contra dancing was sparked early on, discovering and pouring through his mother’s copy of the book “American Country Dances” by New York educator Elizabeth Burchenal. In Ralph’s own words:

*“I’d just follow these little diagrams [in the book] and I’d get these little pictures [in my mind] and I thought it would be fun. I wondered if anybody was still doing contra dancing.”*

On June 20th, 2019, a small corner of social media exploded with the news that Ralph Sweet had died. He celebrated his 90th birthday just one month earlier. I wrote the following post on Facebook later that day:

*“I first heard the voice of Ralph Sweet through the speakers of my car stereo probably 15 years ago. That started a love affair with the weird and charming art form of ‘singing squares’ that has only deepened over the years since. I was fortunate to develop a close friendship with Ralph through mutual interests, curiosity, and collaboration. He was a force. Passionate and funny (OMG his laugh! The best.). And what a mind! In helping him put together his book (On the Beat with Ralph Sweet -- CDSS, 2010), I often found myself thinking how remarkable it was that he could recount in such astonishing detail so many stories from his over 60 year dance calling career. Ralph Sweet changed my life. I’m a better man for having known him. What a blessing, and what a loss.”*

My relationship with Ralph was very specific. He was my mentor, dance calling colleague, co-author, and friend. Our point of connection was our mutual interest in contra and square dancing. As my Facebook post suggests, I knew of Ralph starting in 2004 when I got excited about

Lacking opportunities to learn from local people who were still doing contra dancing, Ralph got swept up in the ubiquitous square dance wave at the time and didn’t look back. He took his first square dance lessons as a junior in high school (a local teen club was offering the lessons “...to keep us off the streets, I guess”). Then Ralph attended the University of Connecticut, where the 4H Club was offering square dance lessons after their meetings (“So I joined the 4H Club so I could take the square dance lessons.”). Then, like so many of us that travel more hours getting to dances than we spend actually dancing, Ralph hit the road to attend traditional square dances all over Connecticut, and up into central Massachusetts and Vermont. Singing squares were the norm at the time, and so Ralph learned to dance and call them. A brief career in the military followed graduation (...while stationed in Texas he managed to go square dancing thirteen nights in a row!) He left the service, continued to develop as a dance caller, married, started a family, bought the old Powder Mill Barn in Enfield, CT, converted it to a dance facility, and began a twenty-five year career as a Modern Western Square Dance Caller. He shifted focus and became a high school physics teacher, and at some



point became a designer and maker of high-quality fifes, Irish flutes, and whistles out of his “Sweetheart Flute” workshop. The workshop was in operation for forty-three years before closing its doors, and Ralph’s instruments are played worldwide. In all that time, he never stopped calling dances, keeping to his square dance roots while fully embracing the contra dance repertoire.

I think it’s helpful to point out that learning was never a casual thing for Ralph. If something struck his interest, he was all in. That was certainly true of his journey into dance calling:

*“I got this habit of taking a notebook with me and writing down, not only the names of the dances, but usually I wrote down the directions for all the dances [the callers] called. And then, if I kept going to one dance like Hadlyme, Connecticut with [caller] Harold Gates, I finally got all the words to all the calls that he ever called, and I’d go home and type them all up. And I still have that collection and it’s really a nice collection to have of all those different callers.”*

I don’t know how many notebooks Ralph filled up in seventy years of going to dances, but I know he was still writing down dance calls at the contra dances in Greenfield, MA up until 2017. If Ralph wasn’t on the dance floor, he could almost always be found sitting off to the side listening carefully to the caller and taking notes. He never stopped trying to improve. Ralph was revered by the contra dance community, and could have easily rested on his laurels; but that wasn’t his style. He was always striving to be current. His enthusiasm and love for contra dancing were backed up by scholarship and hard work. He was, and continues to be, an inspiration to me. Based on what I’ve read on social media and heard in conversations since his death, I am not alone in that feeling. Appreciation and admiration for Ralph run deep.

We have lost with Ralph Sweet’s death his fantastically unique voice. My first interactions with Ralph were as his editor, and in that role, I was increasingly frustrated with his ‘personality’ which showed up on the pages he shared with me in a way that made having a style manual almost irrelevant. He wrote as he remembered, and that reflected how he lived in the moment, with intense passion. “On the Beat with Ralph Sweet” is an important resource for the dance community, certainly, but I sometimes feel like I didn’t do justice to the fact that Ralph’s voice could be

heard in how he wrote. Recognizing that feeling is part of my process of grief. Grieving is letting go, and by letting go I can allow Ralph’s voice to come through in all of its quirky and chaotic beauty.

It’s sad to lose someone you love. Lots of people loved Ralph Sweet, and so there is sadness—but there is also a celebration in sharing memories. Healing comes from remembering, and ninety years of living gives us a lot of time to work with. Those memories will keep coming, and the more we share them with each other the more we hold each other up in the pain of loss. That’s a community! And our community is what Ralph Sweet loved. He had unfailing faith in the wonder that is the contra dance community, and he found great pleasure watching others find a home inside that same magic.

I miss him so much. I will always be able to hear his voice in my head, which comes through in my calling, which is shared with dancers across the country and beyond. Recently, I taught a group of fifteen 10-to 12-year-olds to call Ralph’s signature singing square, “The Auctioneer.” This amazing group of children stood up on stage at Pinewoods Camp and with astonishing skill and energy called the dance for a pavilion full of dancers of all ages. I stood in front of them with my guitar and let their voices flood me with memories of my friend who gave me so many gifts. Ralph Sweet lives on.



**Above:** Undated photo courtesy of Sweet family.

**Opposite page:** Artist rendering of Nils and Ralph performing “The Auctioneer” together in 2010.

# News From Canada—True North Music and Dance Takes Its Final Bow

*by Sheila Scott, Chair, TNMD*

March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019 marked a sad day for the dance community in London, Ontario, when we held our last True North Music and Dance event of the era. We dancers have come full circle after nearly 40 years encompassing morris, long sword, rapper, northwest clog, contra, historical, “Playford” demos, Christmas Wassail performances, ECD annual workshops with high calibre leaders and musicians – and a lot of fun! It was bold Englishman John Gillett, who danced with the Shakespeare Morris Men in Stratford (UK), who started the ball rolling in the mid 1970’s and Forest City Morris and Sword was born with three sides, men, women and mixed.

Our first connection to CDSS was through English Week at Pinewoods in 1980 when the “Three Canadian/Scottish Musketeers”, Alistair Brown, Sheila Scott (Duncan at that time) and Janice Mark attended to absorb all the morris and ritual classes available and they discovered “this English dance stuff” going on in the evening and were hooked. They came back to London “speaking in tongues” and immediately started a country dance series with various bands and various musicians—Fat Boys, The Waits, New Rigged Ship—and novice callers Alistair Brown, Janice Mark, Sheila Scott, Cathy Stephens, and Pat Taylor. Cathy Stephens branched out to lead historical, vintage, and Victorian dance in the ten-year series of Victorian Echoes and Ragtime Rendezvous annual weekends. Many Londoners regularly attended Pinewoods over the years, including recipients of scholarships provided by the proceeds of the annual silent auctions (overseen by Margot Kearney), as well as matching scholarships from CDSS. The Pinewoods “All Camp Canada Parties” hosted by Tom and Anne Siess and Margot Kearney are legendary.

The morris teams increased to six: Forest City Morris and Sword (the original London team which still exists today as a women’s side), Malt Mill, Thames Valley International (still going strong), Harlequin (a youth team), Goatshead Northwest and Stonetown Northwest.

The annual London Morris Ale was a popular fixture on the morris circuit calendar, and London teams were often invited to the Marlboro Ale. Over the years, Forest City and Thames Valley enjoyed tours to England, while Goatshead received an invitation to tour spectacular Bermuda.

ECD also flourished with the formation of the London Playford Dancers (under the direction of Elizabeth Taylor and later Sheila Scott) and the annual London Playford Ball Weekends which ran for 25 years! These events attracted dancers from a wide area of Canada and the US. Thanks to several grants over the years from CDSS we were able to engage superb dance leaders and bands who were all at the top of their game. The famous lively “after parties” at the home of Tom and Anne Siess were also a highlight. Sunday morning saw shape note singing at the Siess home for those willing and able.

True North Music and Dance ran the dance area at Home County Folk Festival, and performed at it for twenty years, and one year hosted the Berea Dancers. “Home County in the Schools” operated an outreach program for several years in local elementary schools. Sheila Scott and musician Bill Stephens, on buttonbox, were invited to teach morris, the Maypole Dance and community dances in various settings.

Our last dance on March 31<sup>st</sup>, with local band Celtic Shift, was a celebration of all that has been accomplished,







new dance groups forming and recognition of the many dancers' and musicians' contributions over the years. In memory of Tom Siess we danced several of his compositions—Scotch on the Rocks (for Tracey McDonald and Gerry Rucchin's wedding), Hands Across the Border (for Barbara Broerman and John Patcai's wedding) and Dancing in the Springtime (for our annual Playford Ball weekend which was always held in March, sometimes in a blizzard!). The "newlyweds," now happily married couples, were in attendance.

So, why are we disbanding after all of the above achievements? Unfortunately, our numbers have been gradually dwindling and our regular dance series has been reduced to four Sunday afternoon dances from September–April. This has worked well for a while, but our numbers were often on the edge. We have been dealt a blow this past year with the loss of six of our regular/key dancers, due to the ravages of death, injuries, moving away etc., and we have been unable to attract enough new people. We are no longer sustainable and the regulars are running out of steam. We are delighted, however, to celebrate the development of the new groups that have sprung up since we started all those years ago.

**Above:** *London Playford Dancers. Photo courtesy of London Free Press .* **Opposite page:** *Forest City Morris and Sword. Photo by Wendy Palmer.*

And what of the morris? We dancers have come full circle indeed. Forest City Morris and Sword is still active as a women's side. Thames Valley International no longer has its base in London—hence the "International", but they are still dancing.

## Gratitude

All of the successes of True North Music and Dance over the years were accomplished by the efforts and contributions of a dedicated core executive of volunteers. These are the people who spent many hours planning events, making arrangements for venues and bands, organizing activities, and of course the callers who help make the dances happen. We would like to recognize the contributions of these dedicated volunteers: Sheila Scott, Tom and Anne Siess, Janice Mark, Gary and Heather Struckett, Laura Brown, Tracey McDonald, Bruce Curtis and Patricia Ferries.

# All Join Hands

*Dispatches from the world of community dancing*

## Organizing a Family/Community Dance Series, Part 2

by Marian Rose

### Introduction

This is the second of two articles looking at the challenging and rewarding work of organizing a community dance series. The first article which appeared in the June 2019 issue of the CDSS news presented some examples of the kinds of dance series currently happening across North America and talked about the organizers' guiding vision, strategies for promotion and the difficult but essential topic of finances. This second article will focus on repertoire, music, and "extras" that contribute to the sense of community that we are hoping to nurture.

Both articles are based on contributions from the participants in a recent CDSS-sponsored Web Chat entitled 'Family and Community Dance Organizers Unite!' as well as valuable input from members of the Pourparler online chat group. They represent dance series held in large cities and rural towns in both Canada and the U.S.

### Music

Music is the beating heart of any dance evening and is often the defining feature of a dance series. Most organizers would love to have access to competent, energetic musicians who play a wide variety of styles, can easily pick up new material, and who contribute to the dynamic energy in the room. However, the availability and skill level of musicians varies widely from place to place, a reality which directly affects other decisions for both the organizers and the caller. Here are some examples from Pourparler participants:



#### Village Dance, Dummerston VT (Andy Davis):

"Live music is essential. It is a main draw. One of our favorite roles in the community is providing a venue for young musicians to play for dancers. Over the years we have had many musicians play for the Village Dance who have gone on to be in actual touring bands. It is a well-known phenomenon around here that when a youth band is playing, we will have a bigger crowd."

Family Dance, Sebastopol, CA: "Rodney Miller has a young musician program – he emails them a tune list and encourages them to join the band."

Albany NY (Paul Rosenberg): "I hire a variety of local musicians and callers. Our musicians play very danceable tunes, without bells and whistles. I love that they make eye contact with the dancers, and that they feed off the dancers' energy. The musicians may not know the tunes that I want, but they are willing to learn them."

Calgary Old-Time Experience (Leslie Gotfrit): "This series is a shared vision between me and one musician, a bass/guitar player who also owns good sound equipment and is a professional sound tech. He and I do the work and we hire a fiddler and a guitar or banjo player. We pay very well, another part of our vision. Hired musicians help set up and take down but the musicians are not invested like my colleague and myself."

Belfast ME (Chrissy Fowler): "Open all-comers band is critical -- all ages, all skill levels, all instruments. Belfast has a vibrant traditional music scene, Irish jam, weekly jams with a standard local repertoire. Lots of high school and middle school kids come for the early dance, to play music or dance. No one is amplified. All are equally important."



**Viroqua, WI (Sue Hulsether):** “Open band. One of the organizers usually makes sure there is a core of fiddle, guitar, banjo and the rest just seems to take care of itself. I remember one dance where we had only 9 people. The musicians in the crowd rotated in and out of dancing, so we had a square of dancers and one musician playing for each dance, all evening long.”

**Smithers, BC (Marian Rose):** “The large and dynamic fiddling group here (featuring fiddlers from age 6 to 75) concentrates much of their energy on producing elaborate stage productions. For them, the ‘Fiddle Dances’ are a chance to let off steam and have fun together, while at the same time getting experience playing for dances. Calling for their dances, therefore, also involves coaching them on what tunes to play, how to make them danceable and how to work with a caller. Happily, they are all fine musicians who learn well by ear and are eager to learn new styles. I have had no difficulty introducing some basic international dances to our repertoire.”

However, not everyone has access to competent, flexible musicians. Sam Baumgarten has organized a monthly international family dance series for the past eight years in Bridgewater, MA. Because the size of his group limits his budget, he rarely uses live music, but does try to hire some musicians occasionally. The Pomeroyes in Fort St. John, BC have been holding barn dances (in their barn!) for a decade using only recorded music, an event that is bursting at the seams with young dancers and has become central to the cultural life in their rural community.

## Repertoire

The vision of a dance series and the musicians that are available will inform the style of dancing that is done. For most of the groups presented in this article, the focus is on simple, fun dances that can be done by dancers of a wide range of ages. Some groups specialize in Anglo-American dances, or old-time squares and others feature more couple dancing and international folk dancing. Often there is a wide variety of skill levels and a certain level of chaos, so there is a trade-off between welcoming beginners and building skills. Some gems of wisdom from our experts:

- **Emphasize fun—this is a party.**
- **Simple dances, variety of formations.**
- **Encourage flexible partnering.**
- **Don’t be afraid of repetition; some groups do the same opening or closing dance every month.**
- **Not many mixers—kids want to stay with their parents.**
- **Not many squares or fixed size sets.**

More in-depth approaches to repertoire:

**Sam Baumgarten:** “I open with a circle dance (thus allowing late comers to jump in), then follow up with mixers and Sicilians circles. Then, depending on the numbers, I may go to either contras or squares. I come prepared to go in multiple directions depending on the crowd. I always close with a calming dance in the Sacred Circle genre. I tend to vary the program week to week, but almost always re-visit dances over the course of a season, especially folk dances that may take more time to learn. I walk the fine line of challenging more experienced dancers while keeping newcomers comfortable. Mostly, I try to resist the urge to get more complicated. Everyone enjoys the basics and simple patterns and feeling successful is most important.”

**Angie Pomeroy:** “The first hour features family-friendly dances and the second hour dances to please the crowd of energetic young adults who flock to the dance. They use recorded music exclusively, which has resulted in a repertoire that mixes the ubiquitous northern-Canada standards such as two-step, polka and schottische with longways sets, square dances, singing games and jiving.”

**Andy Davis:** “Mostly Anglo-American dances. Singing games are often worked into the program. Every dance includes longways sets, circle mixers and keepers, Sicilian circles, scatter dances, squares and contras. We have had a Quebecois themed dance recently with music provided by musicians from a local Quebecois music session. We have no desire to become a mainstream contra dance. We fill a niche and enjoy doing so.”

**Emily Addison (Ottawa):** “FUN FUN FUN, accessible for all ages, not overly kid-focused dances (some singing games wouldn’t appeal to adults who are there without kids), variety in formation! Repetition is good and happy to keep at the same level of dancing over time.”

**Paul Rosenberg:** “Some of the dances are funny and/or silly! We do lots of singing games. There are certain dances that we have been doing since 1994 and we are always adding in new dances. Probably 25% of dances are the same most evenings, but I use a large variety of dances for the other 75%. We are not looking to raise the level of dancing, although I occasionally will talk about how the music relates to the dance, or I’ll teach a tiny bit about the mechanics of certain steps or figures. Generally, we just want to provide a fun time for families to do things together.”

**Sue Hulsether:** “Some old-favorites, and some new ones – our regular dancers love both ends of the spectrum. There is no clear need on anyone’s part to change the level of dancing, but some adult dancers yearn for a bit of a challenge. Combined with an ethic that children are welcome and encouraged to dance, these desires sometimes run cross-purpose. For most of



us, the desire for more difficulty is mitigated by the pleasure of seeing our young ones dance alone for the first time in their lives or execute a flawless grand right and left at age 4. We do not cater the repertoire to appeal to children, we just do dances that everyone can do."

**Leslie Gotfrit:** "We are Old-Time, so I program southern squares, scatters and circle mixers, but will use anything that is FUN, easy to learn, satisfying, playful, has a bit of problem solving. I do nine dances plus a scoop-'em-up, no-teach dance to start and the Waltz Mixer to end. I decide on repertoire based on what I've had fun with in my travels, what I want to learn to call, and what fits the crowd at the moment. I don't expect skills to rise but they do anyway. Good ol' elbow swing seems to work great for this crowd."

## Fun Extras

Organizers of community dances often like to include some non-dance activities for a change of pace and to give people an extra reason to attend. Probably the most common of these involves some form of food—a potluck meal before or after the dance, pizza, ice cream or a potluck snack at the break. This can be a wonderful addition but does come with considerable logistic impact and can be a distraction if done at the wrong time. One group used to have a 'tasty treat' potluck at the end of the dance, but they scrapped that idea because parents didn't want their children eating sweets before bedtime. A group in Wisconsin holds a yearly pie auction—complete with a professional auctioneer—as a fundraiser for a local folk festival.

Another favourite activity is a musical performance at the break: dancers (Irish, hip-hop, Morris, step dancing) a choir, body percussion, or other non-musical skills such as yo-yo, hula-hooping, juggling. It is fun to find the special skills in your community and give them their moment of fame.

Andy Davis likes to tell a story at the break. He says: "Storytelling brings the group together in a different kind of way, engaging imagination and a bit of quiet time. Some families leave after the story because their children are calmed down for the ride home."

Other ideas include door prizes (sidewalk chalk, ice cream, bumper stickers, gift certificates), novelty dances (paddle dance, spot dance, bingo dance, broom dance), an interlude for songs or an open mic for jokes. Some groups use name tags with first name and simple

conversation starters to break the ice and get people talking to each other.

## Conclusion

Organizing a community dance series can be a valuable contribution to the life of a community, but it does come with significant organizational and logistical challenges. It is a constantly evolving process involving creative collaboration and problem-solving.

For further information and resources on community dancing, see the Children and Community Dance section on the CDSS online store.

**Marian Rose** is a musician, dance leader, linguist and former CDSS board member. [www.marianrose.com](http://www.marianrose.com).

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## "A truly triumphant evening"

by Keith Murphy

For over ten years, Becky and I have been teaching what we call "Celtic music classes" at our local music school, the Brattleboro Music Center. These are not dance-focused classes, per se, but awhile ago we realized that it was a nice way to end our Sept–June year by having all our classes play together for a dance.

It's been a great assemblage of players of different ages and skill levels. It's a celebration of community that comes from relationships based on creating music in a larger group. Sometimes we have donated the financial proceeds of year-end events to a local cause. For the dance this past year, we realized we had the opportunity to offer our support to fiddler and contra caller icon David Kaynor, who was recently diagnosed with ALS.

By the time of our dance at the end of May, David had lost his ability to speak and had been having a lot of difficulties eating. He had lost a lot of weight and has been using various electronic means to participate in conversation. None of this kept him from the dance floor or from playing his fiddle! The fact that the dance was a benefit for David seemed to bring out dancers who we had not seen for many years at the Greenfield Grange. Among them were many leaders in the dance world—musicians and callers who themselves have been critical to the growth and enthusiasm for contra dancing around the country and beyond. (Connecticut dance caller Ralph Sweet came to the dance in a wheelchair and passed away a couple of weeks later at the age of 90.) The turnout was beautiful, though it would have taken a stadium to hold all the people whose lives have been touched by David.

Sometime in the mid to late 1980s, after attending Pinewoods Scottish Week, someone took me out to try contra dancing in Cambridge, MA. I can still picture the hall on that steamy summer's night—David was at the caller's mic. There was wild energy in the hall, but David anchored the night with a controlled clarity and humor. It was exhilarating, and I kept thinking about that night for months. It planted a seed of something I was excited to become a part of, and it was an important moment in my path towards working as a dance musician.

A little while later (before Becky and I had met), Becky was honing her skills as a contra dance fiddler and found herself drawn into the orbit of the Greenfield, MA dance scene. David and the band gave her a place to cut her teeth. Having David fiddling by her side at our recent benefit felt like a musical circle had been closed.

Before the dance, an online donation platform was created to allow people unable to attend to make a contribution.

By the time of the dance, thousands of dollars had come in, and after the dance donations continued to amass. The generosity of donors is first and foremost a reflection of the immense contributions that David has made to the world of contra dancing and music over the years. But the success of the event was also the result of the cooperation and support of several key entities. The Brattleboro Music Center created and managed the online donations (mainly Carol Compton) and publicized the event. Friends of the Grange also played a key part in spreading the word and managing the house on the night of the dance. Ray Sebold, a long-time member of the Greenfield dance community, recorded some video of the evening, capturing both the music on stage as well as the energy on the floor. It's a beautiful record of the people who made it out, including David himself dancing.

David has made such a profound and indelible imprint on the world of contra dancing and we owe him so much. We are all deeply saddened by the challenges that David is facing. It will not be an easy time ahead for him, and there will be many opportunities for people to show their love and support for David. It was a privilege to help create a moment to honor him and offer some financial support. I'll give him the last word, quoting a comment he left with the posting of Ray's video:

*"This video fills me with the sounds, sights, and spirits of a wonderful multi-generational, multi-backgrounded, multi-skill-level community band in which everyone, at every level, is learning, discovering growing, and having a terrific time doing it. Keith Murphy and Becky Tracy make it happen. Teaming up with dance teacher/caller Nils Fredland, they created a truly triumphant evening. While I'm quite pleased with myself for all the dancing I did, too much can never be said about...beautifully played music, and the connection with the people to whom it has brought...meaning, and joy."*

# The CDSS Affiliate Network Speaks: A preliminary look at the first annual CDSS Affiliate Survey

by Emily Addison & Katy German

We are thrilled to report some of the findings from CDSS's recent Affiliate member survey! Yes... we (Katy & Emily) confess to being data geeks. An impressive 48% of CDSS Affiliates participated in the survey, and 94% of respondents continued through to the final few questions.

## What is a CDSS Affiliate?

CDSS Affiliates are autonomous and independent organizations that pay an annual fee to receive information, connection, and services through CDSS.

## The goals of the survey were to learn:

1. More about our Affiliates and the work they are doing.
2. What Affiliates like about the services we provide and how we can improve.
3. What value Affiliates see in traditional participatory arts and what advocacy work can be done to support our shared traditions. (Results coming soon.)

## 1 What are our affiliates doing?

- **Their focus:** The majority of Affiliates who participated in the survey focus on social dance: 59% focus solely on social dance (e.g., contra; squares); 5% focus solely on ritual dance; 2% focus solely on song; 1% focus solely on music jams; 1% focus solely on other types of traditions; and 32% organize two or more of the categories above.
- **Their organization health:** We asked three direct questions to gauge how Affiliates view the health of their organization. While the majority of Affiliates reported that they are thriving or are stable, many Affiliates are struggling. For instance, 31% of respondents identified that their organization is struggling some or a lot—more than we would hope. Roughly 41% of respondents noted that their series (i.e., recurring events) is struggling some or a lot. Interestingly, only 20% of respondents felt that their special events are struggling.
- **Their strengths:** Overall survey participants feel most confident in the positive culture they create on the dance floor (welcoming, warm, friendly, inclusive), their ability to identify and attract talent, and the experience they have on their organizing teams.

- **Their challenges:** It was not surprising that the most common challenge currently facing Affiliates is around attendance. However, while we haven't formally compared the Affiliate survey findings with our 2016 and 2018 survey of organizers (Affiliates AND non-Affiliates), our initial impression is that more organizers have broadened their interest from simply getting new people to attend, to also retaining those new people and existing participants.
- **Their youth engagement:** Many of our affiliates are engaging youth in a wide range of ways. For instance, 25% of survey participants noted that their dance series attracts school-aged children and/or college students. Also, 29% of survey participants incorporate community dances, and 15% incorporate family dances into their programming.
- **Their terminology:** Approximately 1/3 (33%) of all survey respondents that organize social dances are either regularly using or are experimenting with gender-neutral terms for dancer roles. The most common terminology reported to be used is Larks and Ravens.
- **Their funding:** The vast majority of Affiliates receive funds from door entry fees. However, many other sources of revenue are also being used by Affiliates. For instance, 39% of Affiliates have annual membership fees, 25% use their special events to generate funds for their organization, 24% have individuals who sponsor events, 21% hold fundraising events, and 16% hold an annual appeal for donations.

## 2 Provided Services & Improvement

We were very heartened by Affiliates' positive perception of their relationship with CDSS. On a five-point scale, 85% of survey respondents reported very positive or positive feelings about their Affiliate's relationship with CDSS, while the other 15% were neutral (i.e., no negative or very negative feelings among respondents).

- **Why are groups Affiliate members?** While group liability insurance and non-profit tax exemption are common reasons for groups to become Affiliate members, we were pleasantly surprised about how many Affiliates identified other reasons for joining CDSS. For instance, 20% of Affiliates cited that they



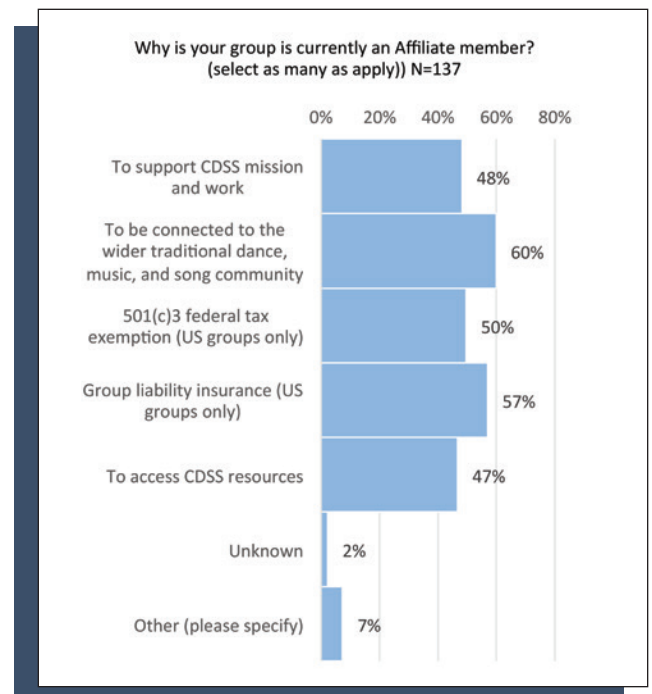
became group members to be connected to the wider traditional dance music and song community (note: respondents could only choose one reason—so that’s impressive!). 60% of Affiliates see that broader connection as a reason to remain a member.

- **CDSS needs to improve communication: Survey results indicated that our communication with Affiliates is not nearly as effective as it could be.** While our 1:1 contact seems effective (e.g., very positive feedback on phone calls and direct emails), our outreach efforts via mail, email blasts, and social media are not reaching nearly as many Affiliates as we would like. For instance, 28% of respondents were unaware of our Affiliate Handbook and a further 24% had never used it. Also, 16% of respondents were unaware of Shop Talk and a further 22% had never used it.
- **Favorite CDSS services:** The services that Affiliates find most valuable include CDSS promotion of local affiliates (e.g., advertisements in the CDSS News; CDSS map, event calendar, and Affiliate directory), non-profit tax exemption, insurance, matching scholarships for camp, and advice for organizers (e.g., access to online resources; one-on-one advice).
- **How CDSS can improve the services offered:** When asked about how we could improve the services that we offer Affiliates, the most common suggestion focused on communication (e.g., Affiliates not being aware of various CDSS resources). When asked for suggestions regarding additional services/supports/resources that CDSS could offer, the most common response was for more ‘how-to’ advice for organizers.

## Next Steps for Moving Forward

How we’ll put these findings to good use:

- **Publish the full survey report:** We will complete a final survey report with more detail and will publish that report online.
- **Renovate our existing member program:** Our Affiliate Resource Team will prioritize the next steps regarding the Affiliate membership program. For instance, a few respondents suggested that we coordinate their renewals of membership, 501(c)(3), and insurance to happen at the same time.
- **Strengthen resources for youth:** Our Task Group for School-Aged Participants (made up of Board and community members) will use the findings from youth-related questions to draft ideas on how we can



better support those who are working to engage school-aged children and college students.

- **Improve communication:** Our entire team will examine the feedback on communication to see how we can improve upon and expand our existing modes to reach more members.
- **Improve map & events listings:** Our Community Resources Team (members of our office staff) will use the feedback regarding the map and events listing to improve those online resources.
- **Share best practices:** Affiliates and other organizers have let us know that they benefit greatly from hearing what other groups are doing well (best practices). We will continue to create resources that capture best practices across North America and find effective ways to distribute this information as widely as possible. Stay tuned for two new best practice resources about (1) Open Bands and (2) Fund-Raising Strategies (e.g., door entry costing models; annual appeals; membership and seasons passes).
- **Engage more Affiliates:** We will look into how we can engage even more Affiliates in future surveys and projects as we continue to build a network of North American organizers.

In addition to the next steps listed above, staff will follow up with individual Affiliates who raised specific questions/concerns as part of their survey responses.

**The Board and Staff at CDSS are passionate about supporting organizers and are excited about the work ahead of us. Thank you to everyone who provided input to this year’s Affiliate survey!**

# Thirty and Thriving: The Birth and Long Life of Capital English Country Dancers

by Nancy Yule

It is 30 years since Capital English Country Dancers (CECD) held its first event and a thriving dance community began to grow in the New York State's Capital District. And like most fires it all began with a spark. Nancy Yule fell in love with English Country Dance (ECD) in 1975 while attending Folk Music Week at Pinewoods Camp, as a guest of her father. Both of Nancy's parents were from England. Her father enjoyed sharing his love of music and dance with his daughter, and her mother shared her recollection of dancing ECD as a school girl.

Others had similar awakenings, and in 1989, Nancy gathered a small group of English country dancers who wanted an ongoing ECD in the Capital District. She had immersed herself in local dance and music, and, with the ensuing experience and network, took a chance starting an ECD group. The newly formed group of ECD planners had attended Amherst dances led by Cammy Kaynor and shared a vision of Cammy's dance.

Nancy asked Cammy Kaynor if he would call/play a monthly dance near Albany. He felt it was too far, but thought we could run it "with a little coaching and guidance." Cammy offered "to hold an afternoon workshop for dancers, musicians, and callers simultaneously." He felt that understanding all three roles would improve any of these roles. With "feedback and pointers in a low-key setting" callers "wouldn't feel challenged and defensive." The things that matter are nurturing "a feeling of community amongst the dancers, ...put[ting] newcomers at ease...", and guiding "the band and the dancers without interfering with the artistic expression of both."

On Sunday, October 29, 1989, Capital English Country Dancers' first event was led by Cammy: an afternoon workshop followed by a potluck and evening dance. Cammy invited music workshop participants to join the evening dance band. Because Cammy had a reputation as a dynamic contra dance caller and musician, he drew curious contra and folk dancers and musicians. More than fifty dancers danced in the basement of St. Stephens

Lutheran Church, just East of Albany, NY!

## English Country Dancing Takes Off

The group of planners moved ahead. They created a monthly series of Sunday afternoon dances, drew up bylaws, became a 501(c)(3) nonprofit group member of Country Dance and Song Society (CDSS), and were awarded a NYS Arts Decentralization Grant. The first CECD Board included Nancy Yule, David Barnert, Veronica Skinner, Julie Raskin, and Craig Brandon.

CECD programming was very extensive. The grant provided funds for skilled callers and musicians who could lead dance band and dance workshops. Music Chair David Barnert, facilitated networking and played in the dance band. For musicians new to ECD music, three months of informal weekly band workshops were held in Joan Mullen's music studio.

It was hoped that a dancer attending the workshops would become an ECD caller. When no one came forward, Nancy took on the challenge. She attended caller workshops, was mentored by callers of CECD dances, and became apprentice to ECD caller Fried Herman. As Nancy became a caller, other local dancers took up calling at occasional CECD sampler

dances with musicians from music workshops. For many years, the DanceFlurry Festival also scheduled a sampler for these callers and musicians.

When the grant ended in December 1990, the monthly dances continued, as well as occasional dance and music workshops. CECD facilitated other ECD opportunities, such as dance band workshops in dancers' homes and a six-session Old Songs English dance band class, led by musician Larry Wallach. CECD collaborated with the yearly DanceFlurry Festival to enhance ECD programming, and the Flurry quickly became a February draw for out-of-town English country dancers. Old Songs also added ECD to their yearly festival, held in June, and included some ECD in a

*"...That we pulled this off...was something to celebrate! That it continued ...was an even greater reward." —Cammy Kaynor*



contra dance, sparking dancer interest in ECD.

As dancers became more skilled and attended English balls, they wanted a local event where they could dance effortlessly with other experienced dancers, enjoy scrumptious refreshments, and dress up. In 1994, CECD started two dance parties a year. One was an Autumn afternoon dance party, which took place during The Scottish Dancers Fall Dance Weekend, and the other was a Spring Dance Party. The dance parties continued for ten years, until the Fall Dance Weekend phased out and an ice cream social replaced the Spring event. The Stockade Assembly started soon after.

During this period of creativity, CECD Treasurer Victor Skowronski started choreographing dances. Caller Gene Morrow premiered Victor's Raffe's Waltz at CECD, then called it at the DanceFlurry and, thereafter, Victor's choreography became very popular.

To grow, a dance community must attract newcomers and engender their confidence, while keeping the interest of regular dancers. Introductory workshops with "dance angels" were held prior to monthly dances. In 1993, Nancy and musician Laura Hagen teamed up to teach weekly ECD classes at Shaker H.S. The classes continued for six years, until a dance workshop began at Union College.

The Capital Region has a strong folk music and dance tradition. CECD's focus on music as well as dance tapped into that tradition, and the community of dancers developed a deep & abiding interest in English Country Dancing, its music, and its history. With CECD having paved the way, new ECD leaders emerged with their own visions and started independent events:

In September 1993, Gail Griffith established a monthly dance in Troy with a rehearsed drop-in band and as many callers as wanted to participate—it ran for five years.

Some small groups formed bands. DayLilly played when Gail called dances at festivals and local events. When Don Bell started organizing dances in 1993, Amadeus and then HeartsEase became the house band.

In 1999, a group of dancers started an ECD workshop at Union College. Recently, the Union workshop phased out and a beginner workshop was established in Troy.

In 2005, the Stockade Assembly began semi annual dance parties for experienced dancers after CECD



dance parties ended.

Meanwhile, Hudson Mohawk Country Dancers grew into the DanceFlurry Organization (DFO)—an umbrella organization for affiliates. CECD benefits from greater exposure through the DFO website and from DFO outreach funding.

## Attracting Newcomers

Nancy began to call outreach dances at regional festivals, historic houses, and other events. Often a group of CECD dancers would demonstrate dances prior to audience participation. Dance rehearsals and performance strengthened the commitment and skills of CECD dancers. Audience participation attracted some participants to attend CECD dances.

Recent outreach was in December 2018 at Capital Repertory's Miss Bennett: Christmas at Pemberly. CECD gave a pre-show demonstration of English Country Dancing onstage, and then the audience joined in dancing. Later, the actors performed ECD as a part of the play.

## A Bright Future

CECD is going strong with ample season members, regular members, and many newcomers. The dancers value those who make our dances: callers, musicians, organizers, volunteers, donors, new dancers, and regular dancers. Outreach programs continue. CECD remains flexible as other groups emerge with different visions, and as the dance community and dancer preferences change. Recently, CECD transitioned from leadership, primarily by the founder, to leadership by a strong and enthusiastic Board. It has great potential to be self-sustaining for many years. It's ablaze with energy.

**Photo:** CECD outreach at Capital Repertory Theatre "Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley".



**Above left:** Pinewoods cabin named after Pat Shaw's dance "Quite Carr-ied Away" named in Joan's honor (CDSS Archive). **Above right:** Joan Carr Shimer (photo courtesy of the Shimer family).

## Remembering Joan

by Brad Foster, Emeritus Executive & Artistic Director

Joan Carr Shimer passed away on August 7th, in Putney, Vermont. Joan worked for CDSS in a variety of capacities during the National and Executive Directorships of Genny Shimer, Jim Morrison, and Nancy White Kurzman in the mid to late 1970s, when the office was on Christopher Street in Greenwich Village and before moving to California to work for Apple Computer. She was a strong part of the committee tasked with creating the first CDSS Family Week at Pinewoods. Joan danced in the Bicentennial show of Early American Dance and Song; Pat Shaw wrote the dance "Quite Carr-ied Away, or Joan Transported" in her honor. Joan also was involved in education, for a time teaching in Waldorf schools, and much later co-authored "Games People Sing and Play: Singing Movement Games to Play with Children Ages 3-5" with Valerie Baadh Garrett, in 2013. Joan played the recorder and the Celtic harp, and she sang with River Singers and the Guilford Church choirs both in Vermont. Joan married Jack Shimer in 1996; they lived first in Randolph, New Hampshire, before moving to White River Junction, Vermont. —Her memory lives on.

## Contra Dance: Danny's Red Shoes

by Bob Dalsemer

- A1 Long lines forward and back (8); gents allemande right HALFWAY to a wavy line of four (left hand to partner) [ladies may take a step to the right to meet partner to insure that the wave goes straight across] (4), balance the wave (4)
- A2 Allemande left partner once and a half (8); ladies pass right shoulders to start a half hey across (8)
- B1 Balance and swing partner
- B2 Circle left 3/4 (6-8); swing neighbor

In memory of Brasstown dancer  
Danny Wilson, 1951-2019.



*A straightforward and satisfying dance for Danny,  
who always made everyone feel welcome.*



# Contra: Homegrown in Saskatoon

By Liz James

In November of 2018, a small but enthusiastic group of dancers gathered in a tiny room above a shoe store in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan... determined to contra dance. Contra dancing was new to many people there. A couple of us had contra danced before in other cities across North America. Several of us remembered the dances organized in the late 1990's by the Saskatoon Folk Music association. Those dances were always based on having guest callers, including Pippa Hall (Ottawa), Stephen Methot (Calgary), John Wheeler, and John Michael Seng-Wheeler (Virginia). The "guest caller" dances always had good turnouts with enthusiast dancers who longed for regular events—but they never quite got off the ground. Why? None of us locals knew how to call. For a regular dance community to bloom we knew that would

**"We were working with a budget of zero dollars and zero cents..."**

have to change... With wild enthusiasm and a great deal of patience and generosity of spirit on our side, we rolled up our sleeves and got to work.

We split up the duties... Paul Gitlitz, who'd danced all over North America, was the technological spearhead, and coordinated the musicians. He also populated the Google drive folder, and gave lessons relying heavily on David Kaynor's book "Calling for Beginners," which he read over and over. Paddy Tutty and Booker Blakely stepped in as musicians and callers, and Liz James took on the role of "Facebook Overlord," supplementing Paddy's excellent email and poster work with some social media publicity.

We knew it would be hard. Teaching people to contra dance is tricky. Teaching an entire room of *new* people while you are learning to call, turns out, is even trickier. We learned to modify, modify, modify. Some callers were



at the level of trying to imitate the beautiful swelling of music and elegant grace they'd experienced in other places. Other callers began with an intro that went along the lines of "I can't really hear the beat in the music yet, so as you dance can you please yell out the numbers one to eight along with the beats?" Which, turns out, works just fine. In fact, it's pretty good for teaching new dancers how to hear the beat, too.

We were working with a budget of zero dollars and zero cents, and will be forever grateful to the musicians who showed up to play for free in... awkward conditions, knowing they might need to figure out what type of tune to play on the fly, adjust as needed to compensate for a caller who might wander a little, or even abandon their instrument entirely to stand in as a dancer for a bit.

Brainsport—a local shoe store to whom we will always be very grateful—donated the room above their store for free. It was small, and featured many pillars, which caused a unique kind of calling in which "watch out for the pillar" was frequently worked into the spaces in the music.

There was much giggling, much ending up in the wrong spots, and we invented a contra move called, "REBOOT"... which is when the dancers all shuffle back to their original spots and the caller glares in frustration at the dance card and tries to figure out what happened. The glaring was not entirely effective, as the problem was rarely with the dance card.

But over time, the dancers learned the dances along with the callers, and we problem solved as a group. The musicians waited patiently as we walked through the dances to try to figure out what was happening and why.

For much of the winter we read everything we could find online, watched YouTube videos, learned to count in our heads (some of us), and practiced biweekly in the room above the shoe store. Paul researched tirelessly, and taught us to write our own dance cards, and how to work with a band. We learned the importance of attitude—that people could have fun as a dance was falling apart, but that visible frustration on our parts could kill an evening faster than any mistake might.

Slowly, we improved to the point where the calls were punctuated with "I can't believe it's working!" instead of "watch out for the pillar". Buoyed by our progress, we decided it was time for a real dance. We rented a hall, and hoped for dear life that Paddy's posters and Liz's Facebook enthusiasm would attract enough dancers to pay for it.

To someone who's danced contra in big cities, maybe this dance might have seemed less than impressive. It certainly featured more reboots than the average contra event might. There was much milling about, and giggling. But there were also these magical moments where everyone got it and the whole hall moved as one. We even got to conclude several dances with proper swelling of music followed by the swinging of partners (rather than the usual "dance until it dissolves" model). And, in the photos, there are grin after grin of people thinking "we've finally got it". It was a hard win, but it was a win. More dances are already being planned for the fall!

We're not yet sailing through events the way they do in big cities, but we've accomplished something we're proud of. We have a community born out of a love for a dance and a belief that, with enough patience and a good sense of humor, Contra can be homegrown anywhere!

**Liz James** is a Canadian Writer, [LizJamesWrites.com](http://LizJamesWrites.com). She's a member of the Saskatoon Contra community, which can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/contrasaskatoon/>. Photos courtesy of Liz James.





# CDSS Sings: A Timeless Song Remains

by Lorraine Lee Hammond

This song complements Kathy Westra's beautiful tribute to Caroline Paton on the following pages.

By 1975, Sandy and Caroline Paton had established Folk-Legacy recording company and moved to Sharon, Connecticut. They were interviewed at the time, and that interview opens with a verse of *Watch the Stars*. The interview is now available online as part of the Historic Films Stock Footage Archive. Using the phrase "Folk Legacy interview 1975" will pull up the clip on YouTube via most search engines.

The couple sang their version of the Georgia Sea Island-derived, "Watch the Stars". I offer it here both because of the connection with the Patons and Folk-Legacy, and to introduce a song that feels timeless, and exists in many versions as it remains in oral tradition. I have given simple notation here as a guide to the basic song.

The group Ranky Tanky, whose music has strong Georgia Sea Island roots, has recorded *Watch that Star*, a striking version of the song. You will find it on YouTube as well, and I highly recommend it.

## Watch the Stars, See How They Fly

Traditional song from the Georgia Sea Islands  
- transcription based on the version sung by Caroline and Sandy Paton

The musical notation is written on a single staff in 4/4 time. It consists of four lines of music. The first line starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody begins with a quarter note on G4, followed by a quarter note on F4, and then a quarter note on E4. The lyrics 'Watch the stars,' are written below the first three notes. The fourth measure contains a triplet of eighth notes on D4, E4, and F4, with the lyrics 'see how they fly' below them. The second line begins with a triplet of eighth notes on G4, A4, and B4, with the lyrics 'Watch the moon' below them. The melody continues with a quarter note on C5, a quarter note on B4, and a quarter note on A4. The lyrics 'see how it climbs,' are written below the next three notes. The third line begins with a quarter note on G4, a quarter note on F4, and a quarter note on E4, with the lyrics 'moon climbs high' below them. The fourth measure contains a quarter note on D4, a quarter note on C4, and a quarter note on B3, with the lyrics 'as the stars' below them. The fifth measure contains a quarter note on A3, a quarter note on G3, and a quarter note on F3, with the lyrics 'pas - on by,' below them. The sixth measure contains a quarter note on E3, a quarter note on D3, and a quarter note on C3, with the lyrics 'watch the' below them. The fourth line begins with a quarter note on B3, a quarter note on A3, and a quarter note on G3, with the lyrics 'stars,' below them. The seventh measure contains a triplet of eighth notes on F3, E3, and D3, with the lyrics 'see how they fly' below them. The melody ends with a quarter note on C3.

Watch the stars, see how they fly.

Watch the moon see how it climbs.

The moon climbs high

As the stars pass on by,

Watch the stars, see how they fly.

# A Beloved Voice Stilled, a Folk Legacy Preserved

## Remembering Caroline (Swenson) Paton

August 31, 1933–March 18, 2019

by Kathy Westra

Folk music lost a beloved voice—and many of us a personal friend—when Caroline Paton died on March 18, 2019.

Caroline's passing was not unexpected, but it was a blow to all of us nonetheless. Losing Caroline marked the end of an era, one that began in 1961 with the founding of Folk-Legacy Records. Caroline, along with Folk-Legacy co-founders Sandy Paton and Lee Haggerty, played a pivotal role in fostering the folk community of which CDSS and so many other folk organizations have been a part for more than 50 joyful years.

With her sweet voice, enthusiasm, and love of traditional song, Caroline helped weave a community of song and tradition and friendship. I like to think of Caroline as the “golden thread,” weaving—in Pete Seeger's words—a “magic spell of rainbow design.” She was not the whole design, but she was certainly a bright, glimmering thread complementing the other brilliant colors of the Folk-Legacy tapestry.

Over the years, Caroline became our extended community's folk-music “mother”—hosting housefuls of friends, cooking meals for multitudes, and adding her distinctive harmonies at singing gatherings and on recordings. She cared deeply about the disenfranchised, contributed her music to support political candidates she believed in, and gave new meaning to the term “political junkie.” Though she was legally blind for much of her adult life, she was a devoted listener to NPR and cable news, avidly following the nuances of U.S. political drama, chatting for hours (and sharing her strong opinions) with friends on the phone, and occasionally tracking down a new protest song or two to keep the tradition strong.

*“The woman who couldn't see made everyone she touched feel truly seen.”*



**Above:** Caroline Paton. Undated photo courtesy of the Paton Family.

Most importantly, though, no one was more welcoming than Caroline to new singers in a song circle, or more enthusiastic about a newly discovered singer or song. Her openness and enthusiasm were what drew me to her at the beginning of our friendship. Caroline made everyone she met feel as if they were the only person in the crowded room. She wanted to find out how things were going for you, talk about a version of a ballad she was learning, ask what YOU were learning, and tell you about a new artist that she and Sandy had invited to record. Her special gift was the gift of friendship, of connection, of listening, of enfolding everyone she met in a magic circle of belonging. The woman who couldn't see made everyone she touched feel truly seen.



As in Caroline's life, the crowd that gathered to mourn Caroline's passing in Sharon, Connecticut, this past May was not limited to blood relatives, although Caroline's siblings, sons, grandchildren, great-granddaughter, nieces, nephews were there in force to remember their mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, sister, and aunt. The rest of the crowd, like me, considered Caroline our "family of choice," coming from near and far to celebrate the myriad ways she touched our lives. We were a motley crew of young and old, amateur and professional, recording artists and living-room singers, concert organizers, radio hosts, loving friends, and devoted fans.

The Patons' singing tradition is alive and well in Caroline and Sandy's sons Rob and David, and their grandchildren Eric, Hannah, Linnea, Shannon and Juli. Now great-granddaughter Adaline has joined Caroline and Linnea and Shannon and Juli in the line of talented singing Paton women.

Thanks to Folk-Legacy, Caroline's granddaughter Linnea, and generous donors, Smithsonian Folkways label acquired the Folk-Legacy catalog and archives earlier this year. Caroline, Sandy, and Lee's life's work of more than 140 Folk-Legacy recordings will be available in perpetuity to new generations of singers and scholars eager to explore the sources and interpreters of folk music during

the company's heyday in the 1960s, 70s, and beyond.

What a legacy. Thank you, Caroline Paton, for the life you lived and shared. We will miss you, but your life's work—and that of Sandy, Lee, and your children and grandchildren—will live on in the future generations who will sing together. What a wondrous gift!

**Kathy Westra** is a Folk-Legacy recording artist (with partner George Stephens, CD-146, "Birds of Passage"), singer and folk concert organizer who met Sandy and Caroline Paton as a 17-year-old in 1971. That meeting launched four decades of friendship and led to a lifetime of involvement in the folksong community. An environmental writer by profession, Kathy served for many years as a volunteer board member and president of the Folklore Society of Greater Washington (DC), and currently runs Rockland Folk Arts, an all-volunteer collaborative dedicated to presenting live folk music in Midcoast Maine, where she and George make their home. She has played cello on Folk-Legacy recordings by Scottish singer Archie Fisher and the late Helen Schneyer. Contact information: [Kathy.Westra@verizon.net](mailto:Kathy.Westra@verizon.net)

**ONLINE BONUS:** Read more about **Folk-Legacy** and some of the recordings that helped inspire so many to sing traditional songs. Read the full, **unedited** article on our site [www.cdss.org/carolinepaton](http://www.cdss.org/carolinepaton)

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[www.amherstecd.org/new-home-ball/](http://www.amherstecd.org/new-home-ball/)

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## 2019 DANCE WORKSHOPS

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### French Bal Folk Dance Sampler

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Try a sampling of dances from various regions of France, ranging from high-energy to slow and sweet, from circular in form to partner dances (partner not required), all to fantastic live music and song. Dances will be accessible, but previous dance experience is helpful, and be prepared for moderate exercise.

October 25–27, 2019

### Fall Dance Weekend with Beth Molaro & Cis Hinkle

Join two amazing callers for a wide range of dance styles, including squares and contras, with live music from Boom Chuck (Laurie Fisher, Nic Coker, & Géraud Barralon) and Evening Star (Steve Hickman, John Devine, & Claudio Buchwald). All dances will be taught and walked through in advance. The weekend also includes free entry to our annual Halloween community contra & square dance on Saturday night. Some previous contra or square dance experience is recommended, but not essential. Singles and couples welcome.

November 22–24, 2019

### Learn to Contra Dance

with Bob Dalsemer & Charlotte Crittenden

Discover why so many people are enjoying this modern form of a centuries-old dance tradition. After learning basic moves with expert instruction, you'll be ready to participate in the Saturday night community dance.



December 26, 2019 – January 1, 2020

### Winter Dance Week

with Instructors: Susan Kevra, Joseph Pimentel, Greg Canote, Jere Canote, Sarah Henry, and Michael Gorin

Musicians: Daron Douglas, Karen Axelrod, Rachel Bell, Eileen Nicholson Kalfass, and Kristen Planeaux

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## 2020 DANCE WORKSHOPS

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April 24–26, 2020

### English Country Dance Weekend

with Kalia Kliban

Experience the joy of English country dancing from the "Playford" dances of the 17th and 18th centuries to 20th century dances and contemporary dances. Live music by Bare Necessities (Earl Gaddis, Mary Lea, Peter Barnes, and Jacqueline Schwab). Previous English country experience is required.

May 17–23, 2020

### Dancing, Playing & Singing Appalachian Style!

with Aubrey Atwater

Delve into the wonders of traditional Appalachian dance, singing, and music. Experience flatfooting and freestyle clogging steps, as well as traditional play-party games and dances geared to young people and older adults. We'll learn and sing beautiful and joyous traditional songs and ballads as a means to explore the remarkable cultural history and heritage of the region. As time and access allow, try instruments such as the mountain dulcimer, limberjack, and banjo. All levels welcome.

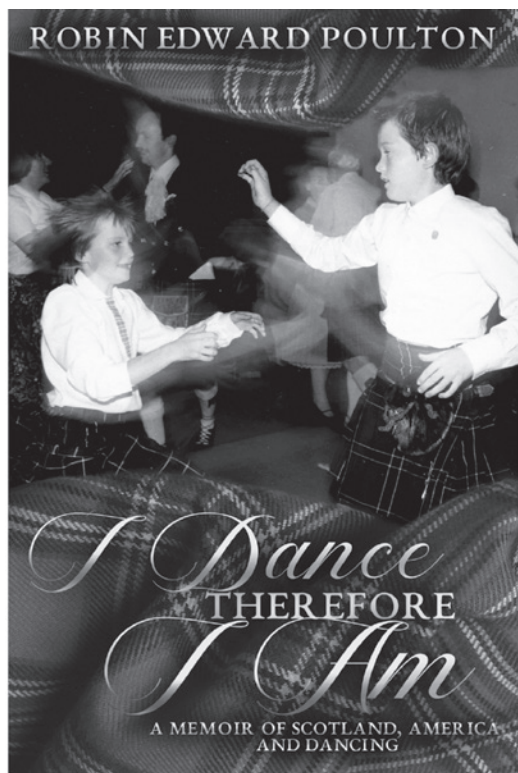
June 21–27, 2020

### Dance Callers' Workshop

with Gaye Fifer

This workshop for beginning to intermediate callers offers a supportive environment designed to help students discover their strengths and explore new ideas. We will cover such topics as teaching techniques, recognizing good choreography, planning a program, leading effective walk-throughs, improving performance presence and vocal skills, and working with musicians. Gain direct experience as you practice calling/teaching actual dances, followed by dancer critique and observations using a safe and supportive feedback model.

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**Tropical Contra Dance Week ~ February 5-12, 2020**

Wild Asparagus with Ann Perceival, David Cantieni, Becky Tracy, Keith Murphy,  
Harry Aceto, George Marshall with callers Lisa Greenleaf & George Marshall

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Tropical Dance Vacation PO Box 602 Belchertown, MA 01007 (413) 575-6283 Contact: [tdv@wildasparagus.com](mailto:tdv@wildasparagus.com)

*Tropical Dance Vacation is created & organized by George Marshall.*



# BAY AREA

Fall Frolick • October 18 - 20, 2019 • [bacds.org/fallfrolick](http://bacds.org/fallfrolick)

Join us in the hills above Aptos, CA for two days and two nights of English dancing & singing, including English Country Dances old and new. Workshops for musicians, callers, and singers. Contra and Scottish country dance and music. Happy hour, parties, and an auction!  
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Susan Worland

# COUNTRY

Alan's Birthday Ball • November 16, 2019 • [bacds.org/alansbb](http://bacds.org/alansbb)

A mostly-English ball with dances choreographed by Alan Winston.

Music provided by StringFire.  
Sound technology by Eric Black.  
Calling by Alan Winston and friends.



Hill and Valley Club, 1808 B Street, Hayward, CA.  
Free admission; bring a potluck contribution to supplement the provided refreshments.  
Ball preview at Palo Alto English November 15 (regular admission).

# DANCE

The No Snow Ball • December 8, 2019 • [bacds.org/events/NoSnow](http://bacds.org/events/NoSnow)

At the Lake Merritt Dance Center at 200 Grand Avenue in Oakland  
Gender-free calling by Frannie Marr



Music by Mavish (Jaige Trudel & Adam Broome)  
6-10 pm  
\$20-30 sliding scale  
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Workshops, concerts, surprise  
guests, dances, songs, and loons!



JUNE: Wkend 19-21 • Week 21-26 • Wkend 26-28  
AUGUST: Week 9-14 • Week 16-21

**[www.maine-fiddlecamp.org](http://www.maine-fiddlecamp.org)**



# **Pilgrims Progression Dance Weekend**

## **November 15-16-17, 2019**

Set in historic Lawrence, Kansas. Enjoy a thriving downtown with great local restaurants, breweries, art galleries, and shops.

**Dance to Old Time Music at its Finest**  
Experience our open, energetic & welcoming community!

**Dances • Workshops • Afterparties  
Brunch • Concert**

Workshops will include; Appalachian Clogging with Ellie Grace, Contras that Borrow from Squares, and a Family Dance for all Ages

**Sign up Early and Save!**

Sep. 1 thru Oct. 31 - \$80  
after Nov. 1st - \$95

Weekend pass includes: Friday, Saturday and Sunday  
dances, all workshops, after-parties,  
Sunday brunch and concert.

For a complete schedule see our website

Caller: Sue Hulsether

**Fri November 15**

**Short Round Stringband**

With the collaboration of  
Betse & Clarke & the Aching Hearts

**Sat and Sun November 16-17**

**Katy Flyers**

Roger Netherton with Spencer & Rains

UNMISTAKABLY  
**LAWRENCE**

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



*We still have space for you!*  
*Register now for*  
**FOGGY MOON**  
*Contra Dance Weekend*  
 Nov 1-3, 2019

*Dance to the fabulous:*  
**Stringrays**  
**& Syncopaths**  
*Calling by:*  
**Lisa Greenleaf**  
**& Susan Petrick**  
*in scenic, historic Monterey*

**Register online or by mail today!**  
[montereycontradance.org](http://montereycontradance.org)




*photo by Dale Rempert*

**Fire Ant FROLIC**  
 CONTRA DANCE WEEKEND

**Oct. 25-27, 2019**

*Dance with* **Toss the Possum**  
 LAURA ZISETTE on keyboard,  
 ROB ZISETTE on fiddle  
 and special guest MIKE GUGLIELMO on percussion

**Lindsey Dono** calling

 Taada registration available online, more info at [fireantfrolic.org](http://fireantfrolic.org)

G • O • D • S



**"WE ARE AS GODS AND MIGHT AS WELL GET GOOD AT IT" -STEWART BRAND**  
**GAINESVILLE OLDTIME DANCE SOCIETY**  
 GAINESVILLE FLORIDA

Plan your Winter 2020 getaway now. Escape to our annual **Dance With GODS Weekend February 21-23, 2020**. Dance to the music of **Contra Sutra** and **The Dam Beavers** with callers **Frannie Marr** and **Dana Parkinson**. Register online now to avoid disappointment!

GODS dances are not gender-balanced. All your partners will be divine!

**Why dance with mortals when you can dance with the GODS?** Leave earth behind to bask in the warm afterglow of heavenly dances!

**Gainesville Oldtime Dance Society (GODS)** dances are held first Sundays 4-7 pm, third Saturdays 7-10 pm, and fifth Sundays 4-7 pm at the historic Thelma Boltin Center, Gainesville's authentic Swing-era dance hall. Waltz with us to live music by our waltz band 'Stay Tuned' starting 90 minutes before every contra dance event.

Visit [godsdance.org](http://godsdance.org) for dance schedule. Follow Gainesville Oldtime Dance Society on Facebook.

# FORM THE OCEAN

CONTRA DANCE & CREATIVE RETREAT FOR WOMEN+

FORM THE OCEAN is a contra dance weekend and creative retreat for folks who identify as female, nonbinary, genderfluid, genderqueer, trans, and/or gender nonconforming.

We want you to leave this weekend feeling more connected to the North American contra dance community and more able to meet the needs of your communities, your body, and your spirit.

1/3 DANCE + 1/3 SHARING CREATIVE SKILLS + 1/3 CONVERSATIONS THAT MATTER



**FEEL BRIGHT AND BOLD**  
FOR MORE INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION  
**WWW.FORMTHEOCEAN.COM**

**MAY**  
**29 - 31**  
**2020**

FEATURING:

**CALLER**  
SARAH  
VAN NORSTRAND

**MUSICIANS**  
AUDREY KNUTH,  
AMY ENGBERG &  
ASHLEY BRODER

**ASHOKAN**  
OLIVEBRIDGE, NY

 SEE THE JOY  
@formtheocean

*The Houston Area Traditional Dance Society presents*

The 26th Annual  
**Bayou Bedlam**

**February 14-16, 2020**

featuring **Susan Michaels**  
calling to **Pete's Posse**

*Includes Saturday lunch, Sunday brunch,  
and snacks throughout the weekend!*

Details & Registration @ **BayouBedlam.org**

Both events take place on the **sprung wood floor** of the  
Knights of Columbus Roemer Dance Hall in Houston, Texas.

For information about our regular dances, visit **hatds.org**.

Annual English Country Dance Weekend  
**Set for Spring**

**Joanna Reiner**  
**Foxfire+Anna Patton**

Special guests Joseph Pimentel & Kendall Rogers

**March 20-22, 2020**

Delectable Fare  Attendance Limited

Details & Registration at **SetForSpring.org**

*Join us Thursday, March 19 for our local English dance!*

**HOUSTON AREA  
TRADITIONAL  
DANCE  
SOCIETY** 





Sun Assembly presents:

## Spring DanceFest

March 14-15, 2020

a weekend of English Country Dancing  
with **Melissa Running**

music by **Julie Gorka, Dean Herington,  
Joey O'Donnell, Walt Robinson,  
and Mara Shea**

Shared Visions Retreat Center  
([sharedvisions.org](http://sharedvisions.org)) **Durham, NC**

*Saturday morning and afternoon workshops  
Saturday evening and Sunday dances*

**Information & Registration:**

<http://sunassembly.org>

**PITT'S  
MAGGOT  
March 13<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>  
JOSEPH  
PIMENTEL  
And  
GOLDCREST  
See [CDSSP.org](http://CDSSP.org)  
Pittsburgh PA**

### SUBMITTING ARTICLES, PHOTOS & ADS

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: 1,100 words, 600 words for essays and event reviews). We may edit for length and clarity. Photos should be 300-600 dpi (print resolution).

**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  
half page horizontal, 7-1/8" wide x 4-3/8" high, \$250  
half page vertical, 3-3/8" wide x 9-1/4" high, \$250  
quarter page, 3-3/8" wide x 4-3/8" high, \$175

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. Rates are slightly lower for the Summer digital issue.

### SENDING ADS

Ads must be black and white or grayscale and in PDF format. To reserve, fill out and submit the form at [cdss.org/cdss-news-insertion-order](http://cdss.org/cdss-news-insertion-order).

### DEADLINES

Spring–February 1<sup>st</sup> (issue mailed early March)  
Summer–May 1<sup>st</sup> (issue online only in June 2019)  
Fall–August 1<sup>st</sup> (issue mailed early September)  
Winter–November 1<sup>st</sup> (issue mailed early December)

The **EVENTS CALENDAR** is online at [cdss.org/events](http://cdss.org/events). To include an event, navigate to the bottom of that page and click on the words "Add an Event" in the blue box. You can also email [events@cdss.org](mailto:events@cdss.org).

### BE SOCIAL WITH US!



<http://www.facebook.com/cdss.org>  
[@CDSSorg](https://twitter.com/CDSSorg)  
<http://blog.cdss.org>

### 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 [cdss.org/join-renew#ways-to-give](http://cdss.org/join-renew#ways-to-give). Your help is much appreciated.

### LEGACY OF JOY SOCIETY

Does your will include the Country Dance and Song Society? Please consider ensuring that the programs, publications, and services that matter to you continue in the future with a bequest. Read more about the CDSS Legacy of Joy Society and sign up at [cdss.org/legacy](http://cdss.org/legacy).

## CDSS NEWS

Country Dance and Song Society  
116 Pleasant Street, Suite 345  
Easthampton, MA 01027-2759  
[www.cdss.org](http://www.cdss.org)

*Change service requested*



JULY 18-25, 2020  
FAMILY WEEK at Pinewoods (MA)

JULY 25-AUGUST 1, 2020  
HARMONY OF SONG & DANCE at Pinewoods (MA)

JULY 25-AUGUST 1, 2020  
FAMILY WEEK at Ogontz (NH)

AUGUST 1-8, 2020  
ENGLISH DANCE WEEK at Pinewoods (MA)

AUGUST 8-15, 2020  
AMERICAN DANCE & MUSIC WEEK at Pinewoods (MA)

AUGUST 9-16, 2020  
DANCE, MUSIC, & SPICE at Cavell (MI)

AUGUST 10-16, 2020  
CASCADE OF MUSIC & DANCE at Louise (MD)

AUGUST 15-22, 2020  
EARLY MUSIC WEEK at Pinewoods (MA)

AUGUST 22-29, 2020  
CAMPER'S WEEK at Pinewoods (MA)

**Experience our 2020 summer  
dance, music, & song camps**

**Choose from nine weeks  
and four locations!**

**Scholarships available!**

**COUNTRY DANCE & SONG SOCIETY**  
**[cdss.org/camp](http://cdss.org/camp)**



## CDSS Web Chats for Organizers!

Facilitated online discussions of  
hot topics in traditional dance,  
music, and song organizing.

*Sign up for our organizers' email list!*

Recordings of all previous web chats are available online. For the most current news about CDSS web chats and grant applications, refer to the "New and Noteworthy" section on the homepage of [www.cdss.org](http://www.cdss.org). Contact Linda Henry at [linda@cdss.org](mailto:linda@cdss.org).