

CDSS NEWS

SUMMER 2016



COUNTRY DANCE AND SONG SOCIETY
CELEBRATING A YEAR OF SONG IN 2016

Balance and Sing Store Update ~ Summer 2016

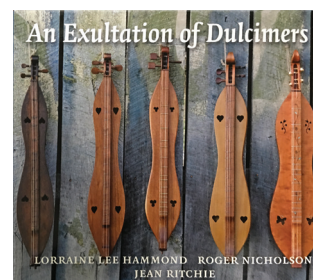


Through Many a Land

The Notorious folk duo, Larry Unger and Eden MacAdam-Somer, have released a new CD titled “Through Many a Land,” celebrating ten years of collaboration. This 14 track album features musical traditions spanning the globe from Appalachia to Afghanistan. Be carried away to the shores of West Africa with “Hambone” and then brought back to Old Virginia with “Old Bangum and the Wild Boar.” Recorded live in studio—it’s like listening to a concert in your own living room! CD \$15.00

An Exultation of Dulcimers

A re-release of the 1980 album featuring CDSS Board Member Lorraine Lee Hammond as well as Roger Nicholson, Jean Ritchie, Rick Lee, Jake Walton, Joe Gerhard, Gary Reiger, and Peter Pickow. In Lorraine’s words from the liner notes, “This recording is a classic of the Appalachian dulcimer revival—one that has been too long unavailable. With its re-release we honor the glorious voice and vision of the late Jean Ritchie (1922-2015), and the distinctive and innovative fingerpicking dulcimer style of the late Roger Nicholson (1943-2009).” CD \$15.00



Rootbound (DVD)

The long-awaited footage from the morris dance stage show Rootbound is now available! Filmed live at the Berkeley Church in Toronto, Canada on July 19, 2013, this project was a unique collaboration between two innovative young morris dance collectives: Maple Morris from Canada and the U.S., and Morris Offspring from the U.K. Through inventive and athletic dance compositions and thrilling music and song, we follow a Child’s journey through the world of North American morris, guided by her mentor, The Fool. Featuring performances by Maple Morris, Morris Offspring, Ian Robb, Amelia Mason, Eric McDonald, Emily Troll, Jo Maher, with original lyrics by Susan Cooper. DVD \$20.00

Shipping schedule

Mail orders, donations and memberships are processed each work day, Monday–Friday, 9:30 am to 4:30 pm. Books, recordings, etc., are shipped from our store twice-weekly, usually on Tuesdays and Thursdays.



B E L L S

Our new morris bells from England are now cheerfully residing in our Store and storeroom, waiting for their new homes. We’ve shipped out over 2800 bells since April 1. For size and price info, see <http://store.cdss.org/> for more info. Let the dancing continue!

413•203•5467 x 3

store@cdss.org

www.store.cdss.org

CDSS NEWS

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Contact the Board at office@cdss.org; we'll forward your message.
Board bios and photos at <http://www.cdss.org/governing-board.html>.

To receive store and office updates, please add news@cdss.org, office@cdss.org and store@cdss.org to your address book.



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

front cover: Friday English country dance, Victoria, BC, February 12, 2016, CDSS Executive Committee weekend (photo by Doug Plummer); see article on p. 12

Letters and Announcements

SUBMITTING ADS AND ARTICLES

Articles, letters, poems and photographs about contra and traditional square dance, English country dance, morris and sword dance, dance tunes, folksongs, and the dance and music community are welcome. Newly-composed dances and tunes also are welcome, as are new looks at historical dances and tunes. Please contact the Editor for guidelines or send submissions to news@cdss.org (maximum size for most articles: 1,400 words, 700 words for essays and event reviews). We may edit for length and clarity.

Go to <http://www.cdss100.org/events> to see UPCOMING EVENTS. To include an event, send date, name of event, town/state, sponsoring group, website or phone/email to events@cdss.org.

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. Please include a note saying which issue(s) your ad is for.

SENDING ADS

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

DEADLINES

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

Follow us on



<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 <http://www.cdss.org/join-renew#ways-to-give>. Your help is much appreciated.

PLANNED GIVING

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

Dancing from Your Head to Your Toes



Nancy Petrie is probably the oldest country dancer still dancing. Here is a photo of her doing Well Hall at the Ridgewood, NJ, celebration of her 98th birthday in April. What a testimonial to her and country dance! I had a lovely walk down memory lane with her recently. Here's an excerpt:

Nancy and [her husband] Carl first saw English country dance in a demo in the year 1980 at the Unitarian Church on Cottage Street in Ridgewood, NJ. She turned to him and said, "We can do that." She's been at it ever since.

"Most fun I've ever had." Back then Margaret Ann Martin on piano and Mary Cummins' teaching led the group. Nowadays, Nancy sits out a lot but "Being a visual type, I follow dances in my head. When you do the dance, you do not think about it; you dance from your head to your toes."

Nowadays, the dance is held in the same church in a nicely remodeled hall. Nancy lives across the street in a small retirement home.

Albert Blank, Pelham, NY

Buy Books, Donate to CDSS

CDSS can receive donations from amazon.com. Go to <http://www.smile.amazon.com>, where you'll be prompted to choose a charitable organization. (Be sure to select Country Dance and Song Society in *Easthampton, MA*.) For eligible purchases, the Amazon Smile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price to CDSS.



Have you heard our monthly song, posted around second Tuesdays? (Go to <http://www.cdss.org/community/2016-year-of-song>.) This spring we shared "The Bonnie Blue-Eyed Lassie," a classic traditional Irish love song; "Spring," a 19th century shape-note hymn; and "Dancing at Whitsun," a morris song with modern lyrics set to a traditional tune. We're thinking of a sea chantey for June.

CDSS Online Journal Debuts

Presenting original research on folk dance and song, CD+S Online, the modern reboot of our scholarly journal, Country Dance and Song, debuted in May (see our website, <http://www.cdss.org/programs/cdss-news-publications/cds-online>). With CD+S Online we're excited to reengage with scholarly analysis and writing and to explore the advantages of the internet, which allows us to include links to other articles, videos and audio recordings. Guidelines for submitting future articles to editor Allison Thompson are at the above link. We wish you thought-provoking reading with our new journal.

CDSS Receives Major Gift

As you may have heard, the Sage Foundation in Washington State has awarded CDSS an unrestricted grant of \$1,000,000 to continue our programs, services and advocacy on behalf of traditional dance, music and song traditions.

Support, from you and hundreds of friends like you, to our Spread the Joy Centennial Campaign was crucial in demonstrating to the Sage that CDSS is an organization worth supporting.

The extraordinary gift—the largest in our history—will allow us to fully pursue the goals of the campaign. It will fund ongoing Education and Outreach programs and North American Community Residencies, and allow us to invest in long overdue technology and infrastructure upgrades. And perhaps most significantly, as the five-year pledge is fulfilled, it will allow us to build a substantial operational reserve.

You'll be hearing more from us in the coming months about the impact of the campaign and our plans for the future. For more information, see <http://www.cdss.org/sage-foundation-gift>.

Short Notes and Reminders

Outreach Grant application deadlines for 2016 are February 1, June 1 and October 1. Questions? Contact Linda Henry, outreach@cdss.org, 413-203-5467 x 105. A list of recent CDSS grants is posted at <http://www.cdss.org/support-services/outreach/our-funds-at-work>. For more about funding, visit <http://www.cdss.org/support-services/outreach/outreach-funds>.



Country Dance & Song Society's
Summer Dance & Music Camps
2016

Country Dance & Song Society

Contras & squares, English country dances, morris & sword, great music & singing—all levels of experience welcome!

10 residential weeks in 4 lovely locations:

- Camp Cavell, Lexington, MI
- Pinewoods Camp, Plymouth, MA
- Ogontz Camp, Lyman, NH
- Timber Ridge Camp, High View, WV

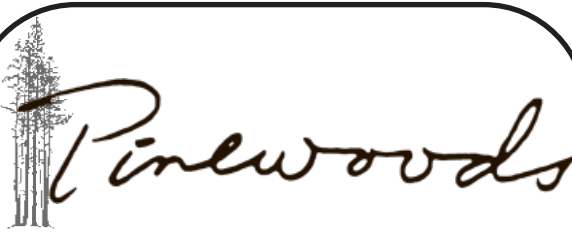
for adults and for families

CDSS Summer Camp brochure flipbook is online at www.cdss.org/camps

www.cdss.org

Dance, sing and play music with us this summer. Scholarships available!

www.cdss.org/camps



Pinewoods Camp Inc. Seeks Experienced Executive Director

This is a full-time, year-round position managing camp operations, finances, improvements and preservation.

For more information:

<http://www.pinewoods.org/jobs/executive-director-position/>

Submit resume and a letter of interest that includes salary requirements to edsearch@pinewoods.org

Applications must be received by Friday, July 1.

Long Bouts of Thinking and Then a Dance or Song: CDSS Board Meeting 2016

by Hannah Shira Naiman and Pam Paulson

It's early in the morning—the sun is shining, and for the first time in a long while, you can feel the warmth of the sun on your skin. In the parking lot at Eastworks, in Easthampton, MA, one by one, sleepy-eyed folks are emerging from their cars, clutching their travel mugs, and heading inquisitively towards the entrance. Some are more inquisitive than others—namely the nine new CDSS board members who are setting foot in the building for the very first time. Through the large glass doors, and past the bustling coffee shop, we bunch up in front of the elevator...and wait...and wait...and wait. When the elevator finally arrives, we are slowly lifted up to the third floor. Next we trod down winding halls and past many offices, and around the final bend we come to the CDSS office, a room overflowing with friendly faces...

We began our meeting on Wednesday at the CDSS office where the new board members had a chance to meet each other, the returning board members, and the staff. As with many diverse groups that come together we found that we had many things in common beyond our passion for the mission of CDSS and participatory arts. As we looked around the table, it was clear that some of the programs that CDSS has sponsored in the past are coming full circle. Rima Dael, Executive Director, proudly pointed out, "During 'New Leaders Good Leaders,' we invested in young folks and our next generation leaders—two of those young people were Katy German and Sarah Pilzer. CDSS is reaping the rewards sown from that investment by welcoming Katy in her role as a board member, full of nonprofit acumen, and Sarah, on staff, full of her programmatic, sales and data expertise."

On Thursday and Friday we moved to Amherst to meet at the Unitarian Universalist Society of Amherst in a beautiful, sunny room, perfect for brewing bright ideas, and tackling tough questions. Our meetings began at 9 am, and for two days, throughout the sunlit hours, we huddled together, tackled difficult issues, and brought forward important questions.

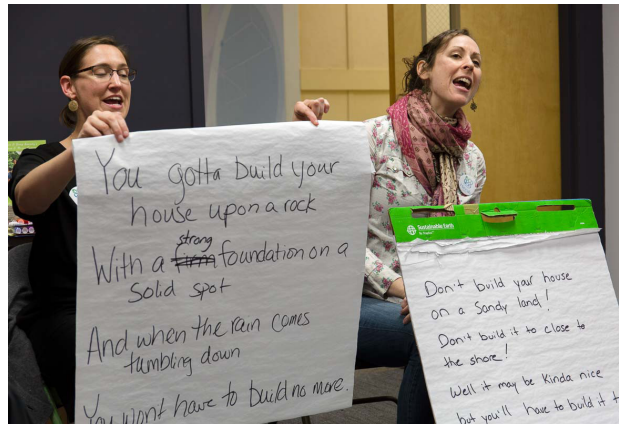
Strategic thinking or "Questioning" is truly the heart of what the CDSS Board does

The Board has a fiduciary responsibility to the organization, and as a result spent most of Thursday morning analyzing and discussing financial reports to better understand CDSS's financial position. Craig Meltzner, Treasurer; Bob Blondin, Business Manager; and Rima Dael prepared and delivered the reports to the Board. This point in the meeting was particularly interesting, as it comes in the afterglow of the announcement of the Sage Foundation grant. This \$1,000,000 grant, to be delivered in \$200,000 installments over the next five years, is a

monumental opportunity. The extraordinary gift—the largest in CDSS's history—will allow us to fully pursue the goals of the Centennial campaign. This year, it will allow us to invest in long overdue technology and infrastructure upgrades. Perhaps most significantly, as the five-year pledge is fulfilled, it will allow us to build a substantial operational reserve. The funds raised from Spread

the Joy Centennial campaign and the remainder of the Sage Foundation grant are not to be used for ongoing annual expenses. These funds are earmarked for organizational investments. The Board and CDSS staff are discussing the best ways to prioritize and make use of these gifts so that it is truly transformational for CDSS.

At the same time, we are dealing with a common issue in many participatory arts organizations: a longstanding structural deficit in our annual operations that will take time and care to overcome. Phrased succinctly, in recent years, we spent more than we earned, which is not sustainable. In different years over the past ten years, the deficit was masked by large one-time gifts to the organization. The Board provided broad guidance to Rima and the Finance Committee on how best to tackle this problem, and a smaller group of board and staff will offer specific solutions.



photos by Doug Plummer

We heard reports from all of the board committees and task groups. Lorraine Hammond, chair of the Song Task Group, passionately shared her report on the group's work, focusing on 2016's "Year of Song" theme. We were reminded that "Song" was only added to our name relatively recently, in 1962, and has become an integral part of our mission. The Task Group is organizing an American Song Symposium in November [see p. 32], and Lorraine is spearheading "The Song of The Month" on cdss.org—be sure to have a look at this month's selection!

Steve Howe, Director of Camp Programs, led us through this summer's roster of the ten diverse weeks offered this year. Camp income is a major contributor to the CDSS budget, and the CDSS staff works year round to successfully plan and execute its programs. There have been ongoing discussions over the past years and at our recent meeting on different models of camp programming that CDSS may change or pilot.

Also of active discussion with CDSS Board and staff has been the two-year turnaround plan for Early Music Week. CDSS's Camp Advisory Group and the Early Music Week advisors have worked with Steve and Rima for the past two years to increase camp enrollment and reinvigorate programming for the week. During Early Music Week this year, a small environmental group working on local trails in Plymouth will be joining the camp. They will participate in evening activities. During the day they will be off-site working on the trails near Pinewoods Camp. Ongoing planning for Early Music Week continues to determine the future sustainability of this week.

Check the CDSS website for up to date information on space availability at all CDSS Camp weeks: <http://www.cdss.org/programs/dance-music-song-camps/camp-weeks>.

Throughout our meeting, after long bouts of hard thinking, we made sure to enjoy the very things that bring us together: song and dance. We stretched our legs with a quick contra dance after lunch on Thursday, with music by Natty Smith, Doug Plummer and Martha Edwards, and calling by Frannie Marr. The meeting began with a song and ended in song: we stood in the beautiful, resonant chapel, with arms linked, and voices raised in a song of hope for bright days to come.

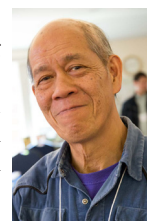
We are grateful to our departing board members for their time, passion, and dedication to this great organization. And, while we bid farewell to them, we'll leave you with a few words from some of our newest members. Thanks for reading along—stay tuned for a great year.

WEB EXTRAS! Photos of the Board meeting, <http://www.cdss.org/programs/cdss-news-publications/cdss-news>, plus photos of the February 2016 Exec Committee meeting in Victoria, BC.

NOTE: Minutes of the 2016 CDSS Governing Board meeting will be posted on our website as soon as they are approved.

New Board members speak out:

JOHN SETO: Old Chinese adage: "When drinking water, consider its source..." California is as far from the origin of American and English country song and dance as anywhere. It is therefore important that we acknowledge our foundation began in New England. CDSS has served as surrogate for hundreds of organizations in its 100 year history. It is both an honor and a privilege to serve to continue CDSS' mission to spread the joy in dance and songs.



HANNAH NAIMAN: I feel like I've been given the secret pass code to Oz. This is an amazing organization because of all the folks behind the curtain, spinning the wheels and shining the lights. I learned what an endowment is! I never thought I cared until now. I'm excited to be a part of the discussion as CDSS embarks on a new phase of its existence, one that has the support of a huge number of dancers and singers across North America. As part of the Song Task Force, I'm also excited for the American Song Symposium under Lorraine Hammond's contagious and enthusiastic direction!



FRANNIE MARR: It was great to meet all the wonderful folks who are so dedicated to CDSS. I'm excited to bring more awareness of CDSS to the western parts of the country.



KATY HEINE: CDSS is in excellent hands with this board of ferociously intelligent and deeply dedicated members. I feel honored to be among them.



NANCY BARBOUR: I see a tremendous passion among all of the board members for the community of dance, music and song, and a commitment to do all that we can to continue to advance the mission of CDSS. I am looking forward to serving on the Executive.



Other new Board members are Chris Weiler, David Roodman, Katy German and Norm Stewart.



News from Canada—What Women Wore to the Ball: From Playford to Cecil Sharp, three centuries of fashion

by Martha Burd

Two of my favourite things are English country dance and historic costumes. In September 2015, at Hands Across the Water, which opens the fall dance season in Victoria, BC, my historic fashion group, Victorian Vogue, was asked to present an illustrated talk. Usually we present fashion shows where we use our costumes to talk about local history and show the changing role of women. But for this special presentation we were given the challenge to relate the history of fashion to dance. That started me on a quest through the three centuries of fashion, from Playford in the late 1600s to Cecil Sharp in 1910, to reexamine the ball gown from the view point of the dancer. Fashion continuously evolved over these 300 years—skirts widened then narrowed, with tight waists to high waists, shoes with heels or no heels, and the whole pattern repeated again. It would be a daunting task to attempt to describe it all, so let's focus on five major fashion eras of ball gowns.

John Playford published *The English Dancing Master or Plaine and Easie Rules for the Dancing of Country Dances, with the Tune for Each Dance* in 1651. The first edition compiled 108 dances of the time. The written music provided the precise beats and measures that helped standardize the dances. It was an instant bestseller, going through 18 editions over the next 80 years. Dancing with grace became a social requirement, and anyone with social ambitions took lessons from their Dance Master. Dances and balls were a place to meet, and dancing was one of the few ways that a couple could get close in public.

But what will you wear to the ball?

In choosing a dress for dancing, our first requirement should be to choose a dress that moves with the dancer and the music. But fashion over the centuries has had a different master—ball gowns were designed for showing social status and the latest style—not designed for movement. To understand how fashion has impacted dance, we have to start at the beginning—with the underwear, specifically the corset!

From the 1600s, almost continuously to the early 1900s, women of all social classes wore some form

of “stays” or corsets. The corset was an essential support for a dress—enhancing and giving specific shape to the fashion of the era. As fashion styles changed, the structure of the stays evolved, to flatten the woman's silhouette, or create cleavage, or produce the Victorian ideal hourglass figure. Stays were stiffened or “boned” with whale bone, wood or metal strips, and laced tightly at the back. Viewed from the perspective of the dancer, the stays limited movement to only side to side motion, restricted bending forward, and reduced lung capacity. The Victorian and Albert Museum summarized the impact of corsets: “Although extremely unpleasant, the worst side-effects were probably discomfort, muscle weakness, breathing, circulatory, respiratory and digestive problems.” The story of the Sophie Waltz in my 1854 *Peterson's* magazine tells a more tragic result. Strauss wrote a special waltz for the wedding of Sophie, the woman he loved but who was marrying another. The newly married couple danced and danced to the waltz, until Sophie suddenly died—reportedly due to “the tightness of her clothing, the heat of the room and the excitement of the dance.” Despite the impact on movement and health, it wasn't until the early 1910s that emancipation freed women from the corset. (One source I found claimed that in the first world war, the US government asked women to stop buying corsets with steel boning, and they saved enough metal to build two battleships!)

The corset was just one of the many layers of undergarments. If you want to be historically correct under your ball gown, you need to start with a chemise, a long linen shift worn against the skin. The chemise could absorb body oils, and be washed, keeping the other layers cleaner. Then put on your woolen stockings held in place by ribbon garters above the knee. You need to put them on first, before the corset, while you can still bend over. Then put on the layers and layers of petticoats to help create the illusion of the small waist.

And now we are ready for our first ball gown. The common dress of Playford's time, the mantua, was termed “open robe” style. The tight fitting bodice of the dress had a wide panel down the front, called

a stomacher—a richly decorated triangular panel that filled in the front opening of the bodice from neckline to below the waist. An overskirt, attached to the bodice, was left open at the front to reveal a contrasting or matching “petticoat.” These were not the underwear petticoats of later centuries. These petticoats were “underskirts” of the best cloth that could be purchased, frequently more elaborate than the dress itself.

Everything in the construction of the mantua forced the wearer to have a formal, upright posture, back slightly arched, arms out from their body. Although worn over stays, the stomacher was also stiffened, sometimes with wooden slats, then pinned or laced to the bodice opening. The armholes were high and tight, and the sleeves were cut narrower and placed further toward the shoulder blades than modern sleeves, which forced the shoulders back. In the late 1600s the sleeves were three-quarter length, curved at the elbow, which encouraged the wearer to always keep their arm slightly bent. And if that didn’t make dancing difficult enough, the shoes of this time had pointed toes, without lefts and rights, with high curved heels placed forward under the instep—that affected balance, making intricate dance footwork a challenge.

Through the 1700s women’s dress retained a basic “open robe” style with subtle changes. Sleeves were elbow length, ending in wide lace ruffles. The over skirt was folded or tied back in various fashionable ways, eventually developing into a type of bustle shape. Expensive damasks, rich silks, stiff taffetas, and elaborate embroidery in all the colours that natural dyes could produce, were popular for ball gowns. Towards the end of the century the typical full bell-shaped underskirt evolved, becoming flatter and wider. The shape was created by another addition to the layers of underwear—panniers, two basket-shaped crinolines that hung one on each hip to increase the width of the skirt. Marie Antoinette took this to the extreme—some of French court dresses were so wide that one could only enter a room by turning sideways. Panniers affected a woman’s ability to move, let alone dance, and determined the space a woman occupied in the ballroom. Invitations to Balls had to specify: Ladies without panniers.

The end of the 1700s brought significant political and social change to Europe and the Americas. The American War of Independence began in 1775, followed closely by the French Revolution in 1789. The old social orders were thrown out, replaced by a democratic philosophy that had broad influences across society, including both fashion and dance.

Our second major style is the Regency or Empire dress that we associate with the times of Jane Austen in the early 1800s. After the French Revolution, no one wanted to appear as part of the aristocracy. Women’s fashions suddenly changed radically—the extravagant gowns made of silks and brocade fell out of fashion. Instead, gowns were made of light gauzy cottons, with vertical lines echoing a neoclassical Greek style. The typical Regency dress had a high empire waist just under the bust line, narrow cut bodice with low square neckline, and full flowing skirt. The short puffed sleeves were still set back in the bodice but with less restricted arm movement compared to earlier times. Dresses of white pima cotton were popular, with white on white embroidery or netting. Dresses were in light colours to stand out in the candlelit ballrooms. Regency women still wore stays, but the purpose was to lift the bust rather than create a smaller waist. There were short stays that resembled the modern bra. The Regency dresses were perfect for dancing. For the first time in centuries, the body was relative free to remain in its natural shape. Hemlines for dance dresses were ankle length and shoes were soft, flat slippers similar to ballet slippers, allowing the freedom to dance.

The influence of the democracy movement can also be seen in the choice of dances. The minuet had been the aristocratic dance of the 1700s. European balls opened with a minuet which functioned as a courtly introduction and processional. Only one couple danced at a time—the order of the dancers was determined by their social rank—while the other aristocrats watched the style, grace and elegance of each couple. Because the minuet was so strongly associated with the aristocracy, it quickly fell out of fashion as the democracy movements grew. Longways dances gained popularity as they symbolized the ideals associated with democracy—the changing leadership of the head couple, and treating all dancers as equal partners.

The 1800s was the century of industrialization, invention, increased transportation and communication—and ever changing fashions. Women could travel, read about fashion in their weekly magazines, obtain the silks, cottons, and trims of the latest style, and sew their own versions with the newly invented sewing machine.

The simple vertical dresses of Regency period in Jane Austen’s time were popular for only three decades. By the 1830s fashion had reverted to tight corsets that continued to the end of the century. Throughout the Victorian era, the basic bodice of the ball gown retained similar features—a boned tightly fitted

bodice, pointed in front, with a wide low neckline and off the shoulder sleeves or sleeveless. While the bodice changed little, fashion took the separate skirt from one extreme to the next. As the emphasis shifted to the small waist, the size of the skirt continued to expand, reaching its height—or should I say width—in the 1850s and 60s.

The Civil war style of the mid 1800s is our third iconic ball gown style. Wide bell-shaped full skirts were held up, and weighted down, by layers of up to ten petticoats, until replaced by the invention of the hoop petticoat and steel caged crinoline in the late 1850s. For dancing, the layers of petticoats were heavy, and affected the movement of the ball gown. The hoop crinoline was an improvement as it kept the skirts from entangling the dancer's feet and brought a graceful, swirling motion to the dance. But it also took up space and defined the distance between dancing partners. It might have even affected architecture. There is a theory that the distance between pillars on the sides of assembly halls were intentionally narrow, forcing the dancers to enter "in grand march style" from the ends of the hall, instead of from the sides.

There are many examples of how fashion affected dancing, but the polka is an interesting example of how dance influenced fashion. In the 1840s, the polka was "discovered" in Bohemia, and became an instant hit. The polka craze spread from Europe to America and into popular culture—any fabric printed with dots was called "polka dotted." That could be the inspiration for your next ball gown!

After 1865, the fashion pendulum began to swing back again to a narrower silhouette. The fashions of the next 25 years, until 1890, were definitely not designed for dancing. Country dancing fell in popularity, and one can conjecture that fashion should take some of the responsibility for the change. While the tight, boned and corseted bodice remained, the former full skirt was pulled back into a bustle of layered folds, with a train. The bustle took various styles over the era; the hoop crinoline was gone, but replaced by various "structures," of ever increasing size, to support a larger and larger bustle. Walking and dancing was constrained by the combination of layers of heavy material in the skirt and the ties or straps of the bustle supports. Then at the end of the 1880s, the bustle disappeared, replaced by a skirt so narrow and elongated that it hugged the knees like a stocking. Although some dance masters tried to maintain interest in country dance with new intricate dances, it is very likely that the fashions and the strict Victorian etiquette contributed to its decline.

The last decade of the 19th century, known as the Gilded Age or Belle Époque, brings us to our fourth classic ball gown. If you love colour and decoration, this is the style for you. Its hourglass figure was created by a tight boned bodice with wide neckline off the shoulders, and an A-line skirt with fullness at the back, and a train. Fabrics ranged from rich brocades and velvets to lightweight chiffons and organdies. The Victorians loved embellishments and this decade saw some of the most elaborately decorated dresses of the century—lace, ribbons, bows, fringe, beading, feathers—and "the more, the better." Yes, the corset was tight, and lifting the train for dancing required an elegant art, but the dresses swirled with the music, and the trims, embroidery and beading caught the ball room's gaslight or newly introduced electric lights. For fashions, alkaline dyes were an important invention in the second half of the 1800s. Victorians went crazy for colour. Instead of the muted colours from natural dyes, there were suddenly garish fuchsias, vivid greens, shocking purples. And Victorians embraced them all—usually all at once. (Unfortunately many were also caustic or even poisonous—like arsenic green.)

Finally we reach the Edwardian era of the early 1900s, the era of Cecil Sharp, and our fifth ball gown era. Society was changing—the suffragette movement was rising to give women the vote (achieved in the 1920s), and the Rational Dress Movement was encouraging women to abandon the corset and adopt a healthier style of dress. This era, epitomized by dresses of the Titanic era, had a simpler, vertical silhouette—raised waistlines and narrow skirts —echoing aspects of the Regency period. Satins and soft crepe were popular, with transparent shawl collars and sashes of chiffon and beaded netting. The extravagant embellishment of the Victorians was replaced by subtle yet elegant details, with oriental and art nouveau influences. Thus began a new century of dresses that flowed, bodies that could move, and the revival of country dances by masters like Cecil Sharp.

Now, if you have your fascinator, long gloves, fan and dance card ready, all you need to do is choose your dress. We have covered three centuries of fashion, from John Playford to Cecil Sharp—there are some exciting choices for your next ball gown!

Martha Burd is a dancer and costumier in Victoria, BC. She dances English regularly with the Victoria English Country Dance group and has just discovered contra dancing. She is always very elegantly dressed at local Balls.

WEB EXTRA! More costumes at <http://www.cdss.org/programs/cdss-news-publications/cdss-news>.

The Exec Visits Victoria, BC

by Doug Plummer

Sometimes a singular place, like a dance hall, can act like the heart of a community. When we danced English the first night, everyone said, “To really understand us, you need to see where we usually dance, at Dan’s Hall.” At the contra dance the next night: “Wait till you see what it’s like at Dan’s Hall.” At the community meeting and showcase on Sunday, we finally found out.

What is it about this Storied Hall That Dan Page Built?

Twenty years ago, he sold off the land that the original 19th century farmhouse stood on, and moved the house down the hill to a new foundation. His wife mentioned, wouldn’t it be nice to have a place to have her morris team practice, so he built an addition on the side of the house. It soon became a regular spot for community dance groups.

When Rosemary Lach started the English dance and when she finally had a contingent of musicians to play for them (which became The Dancehall Players, led by Ann Schau, now with their third CD), she moved the dance to Dan’s. He made it a homey place, with a wood stove and personal trinkets and tea at the break. Whatever was needed, Dan made it happen. There were so many musicians that there was barely room on the floor anymore. One week they showed up and Dan had built a stage off the end of the hall.

It was the antipode to the chilly, institutional basement church social halls that often function as our dance locations. It centers the community in that rare amalgam of friendship, connection and place.

Dan Page took up the fiddle late in life, in his fifties, and he became a prolific writer of fiddle tunes. The contra dance band on Saturday played the entire program of dances solely using Dan’s compositions. Rosemary says about Dan’s music: “He’s in touch with everyone’s delight. If I go away somewhere he writes a tune because I go away somewhere. He’s written a tune for Suzanne’s raspberries, and Ann’s dad, and Jen knitted him socks one year and he wrote Jen’s Socks of Many Colors. He just writes tunes of everything that people do.”

As such, the Victoria dance community has a wonderful cohesion even deeper than is typical for our tribe. The English dancers particularly are a solid, supportive group, having raised a large contingent of their own callers and musicians (it’s an island, and it’s expensive to bring in talent). There are three morris sides in the community (including the oldest morris side in Canada), there’s a Newfoundland square dance group, and a contra dance series now ten years old. At every event they serve tea at the break. These are a few of the discoveries the Executive Committee made during its February 2016 visit.

These Traveling Exec meetings have a threefold purpose. First, we have work to do and decisions to make, and it’s our face-to-face time. We get far more done than ever happens on a web conference meeting, and we get to know each other.

Then, we and a community get to know each other. A primary purpose of CDSS is to help local communities do what they do better, and we learn from embedding with one for a few days. The community puts on a ton of work to make these events happen, and it often brings them together in ways they don’t expect. For example, the contra dance had over a hundred people attending, which is double their usual attendance.

And finally, we both take away notions for how to make things even better. Rosemary sums up the results:

“I was pleased with the weekend. I think we have improved communication between the contra and English groups, both here and in Vancouver. And Bev [Bernbaum’s] workshop improved the confidence of Victoria’s contra dancers. And the potluck certainly helped develop more of a community feeling among the contra dancers. And having all the morris sides and the singing felt very inclusive.”

What did we learn about Victoria? That you’re a cohesive, well-knit and well-functioning community with a stunning diversity of dance styles for such a small city. And that you really care about your tea.

WEB EXTRA! A tune by Dan, <http://www.cdss.org/programs/cdss-news-publications/cdss-news>.



Musicians Column—Road Trip!

A Practical Guide for New Touring Bands

by David Firestine

You have a contra dance band that has been doing local/regional dances for a while, and you think you are ready to take the show on the road. Here's what you need: 1) connections with other dance communities, 2) a good band, and 3) a plan.

Connections with other dance communities

More than anything else, being hired as a band (or caller) requires relationships with other people in the dance communities where you want to play. Do you have friends in those communities? Do they know (and like) your band? Are they influential with the dance organizers? This is most often the key to getting hired. Look for opportunities to cultivate new relationships with callers, organizers and dancers.

A Good Band—Is your band really ready?

Has your band received positive feedback from other musicians, callers and dancers? Do you have good tunes, good tempos, a variety of tunes, a groove that dancers love? Do you have a stage plot for the sound tech? Do you know the personalities and habits of your band mates well enough to be optimistic about your compatibility on the road? Who needs coffee in the morning before they are happy? Most importantly, do you have a member that is happily willing to find dances, negotiate with organizers, and keep shifting logistical details organized?

A Plan

- Can you convince a remote dance organizer that you have a great band?

The person booking a new band will need evidence. Do you have a band website? Do you have a CD that you can send? Do you have good quality videos on Youtube? Can you provide references from dancers, callers, musicians from other bands, or dance organizers? Ask well-travelled (including local) callers who you have worked with successfully for a good reference. Can you describe your music well in one sentence? Can your band attract dancers? All of these things will help you get your foot in the door.

- Do you expect to make any money? What is your motivation?

I would guess that most new touring bands do not net much profit. I am happy when we break even on a tour, and really happy when we make tens of dollars. If you love to play, and love to play for dancers, love to travel, that may be enough motivation to do a dance tour. Are all of your band members motivated by the same things? If there are significant differences, be aware of them and try to resolve them.

• Book a Tour

1. Pick a time frame and location. It may be a particular dance that you have a desire to play, or just a beautiful place you would like to visit. Make sure that all band members are available for the time of the tour you are setting up!

2. Find a group of dances. This site will help you locate dances that you might travel to: <http://www.contradancelinks.com/>.

3. Start collecting data. In our band "STEAM!," Claire (thank you, Claire) builds a spreadsheet to organize information. It contains the dance locations, the day of the week of each dance, organizer contact phone numbers and email addresses. On the website referenced above, you will see the dates of dances, but it will help to know if the dances are the first Monday of the month, first and third Fridays, or every Saturday. Can you tell if there is a series of dances that might make a good tour from a travel standpoint?

4. Start small—a tour of three or four dances is enough to begin. In time, you will have more contacts and longer tours will be possible.

5. Call the organizer of what you think might be the anchor gig(s). It may be a big dance, or a prestigious one or just a dance you want on your resume. Convince this person to hire you with your fabulous negotiating skills, your references, your website, etc. The organizer may also give you insight into the other dances in the area.

6. Contact the other dance organizers, and if everything comes together well, you have a tour set up! There will be delays in hearing back from

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CDSS Sings—Singing Across the Color Line: Reflections on *The Colored Sacred Harp*

by Jesse P. Karlsberg

CDSS's Year of Song responds to current debates about cultural appropriation and the asymmetrical power structures that inform our song choices and singing styles. Although hip-hop and other popular genres have been at the center of these debates, lovers of traditional song and dance can also benefit from reexamining the racial histories of the music forms we hold dear. How might cultural, social and racial histories effect the choices we make about what and how to sing? In this issue's installment of CDSS Sings, I delve into the story of *The Colored Sacred Harp* and share a song from the book to shed light on the racial history of Sacred Harp singing, one of the traditional music styles frequently programmed at CDSS camps and dance weekends. *The Colored Sacred Harp's* history and its current use have much to teach us about the politics that inform our decisions to embrace more inclusive musical repertoires.

Diverse populations across a wide swath of the southern United States have sung from *The Sacred Harp* for well over a century. Singing conventions flourished in the late 19th-century, not only in the predominantly white southern upcountry long associated with the style, but also in areas with roughly equal black and white populations, such as the Wiregrass region of Alabama, Georgia and Florida and the red clay hill region of Mississippi. Although a clear majority of these post-reconstruction-era singings were white institutions, black singers established and maintained well-attended conventions. In the 20th-century, when different editions of *The Sacred Harp* competed for singers' attention, white and black singers in a given region typically sang out of the same version, settling on the most easily attainable edition. Yet as I explore in my 2015 dissertation "Folklore's Filter: Race, Place, and Sacred Harp Singing," only white singers participated in the regular revisions of these books that added new songs and removed those that had fallen out of favor. Frustrated by his inability to get his shape-note compositions published in a locally edited version of *The Sacred Harp* in 1927, Judge Jackson, a prominent black singer from the southeastern Alabama corner of the Wiregrass region, took matters into his own hands. Jackson compiled a supplement featuring dozens of his own songs and those of family and friends, arranging

them into *The Colored Sacred Harp*, typeset and printed in Chicago. Jackson included just a single white-authored song in the 1934 collection.

Used today at just two annual singings alongside two editions of *The Sacred Harp* and a related seven-note shape-note tunebook called *The Christian Harmony*, *The Colored Sacred Harp* never enjoyed broad popularity. At its peak, the tunebook was adopted by only a handful of local singings. Not intended to displace the other *Sacred Harp* editions in local circulation, *The Colored Sacred Harp* demonstrated black singers' separate but not quite equal participation in the Sacred Harp tradition thanks to the strictures of segregation.

The Colored Sacred Harp is well-known by contemporary Sacred Harp singers despite its minimal use. The tunebook filtered into public consciousness via folklore scholars in the 1930s and 1940s who set the stage for the folk revival of the 1960s and 1970s. A 1941 article

"The choices we make when we sing songs initially performed in a context different from our own can help bridge vast differences of time, space and culture."

by black musicologist John W. Work III on black Sacred Harp singers from the Alabama Wiregrass introduced this particular population to a scholarly audience. Folklorists in search of research subjects and folk festival acts in the 1960s headed off in search of Work's original singing subjects. Black singer Dewey President Williams, who led monthly radio and television programs featuring Sacred Harp, gospel music, and preaching, in the area, jumped at the opportunity to take the show on the road when invited to Washington by folklorists Ralph Rinzler and Joe Dan Boyd, who visited the Alabama Wiregrass in the 1960s. Performances by Williams's group at the 1970 and 1976 Smithsonian Festival of American Folklife and the 1971 Montreal Man and his World Expo primarily featured singing from *The Sacred Harp*, but always included a few selections from *The Colored Sacred Harp* as well. At these events, Williams sometimes commented on the complicated relationship between Wiregrass black singers and *The Sacred Harp*. Speaking from a Washington stage in 1970, Williams prefaced a performance of WONDROUS LOVE by noting, that "[t]his is the whites' *Sacred Harp* book. And we sing from

Remember Me

by T.Y. Lawrence, April 6, 1932

While I am in this life re - mem - ber me. While go - ing

While I am in this life re - mem - ber me. While go - ing

While I am in this life re - mem - ber me. While go - ing

The first system of the musical score for 'Remember Me' is in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. It features four staves: three for vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor) and one for the bass line. The lyrics are 'While I am in this life re - mem - ber me. While go - ing'.

through this vale re - mem-ber me. When I am gone to rest, to live with

through this vale re - mem-ber me. When I am gone to rest, to live with

through this vale re - mem-ber me. When I am gone to rest, to live with

The second system of the musical score continues the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics are 'through this vale re - mem-ber me. When I am gone to rest, to live with'.

all the blest, Please take my soul with Thee to live for aye.

all the blest, Please take my soul with Thee to live for aye.

all the blest, Please take my soul with Thee to live for aye.

The third system of the musical score concludes the piece. The lyrics are 'all the blest, Please take my soul with Thee to live for aye.'

Tune typeset by Jesse P. Karlsberg

both [it and *The Colored Sacred Harp*] in Alabama.”¹ Even as Williams asserted black singers’ claim to both editions, he describes the *The Sacred Harp* as “white,” naming the political, economic and social inequality that had historically constrained black participation in Sacred Harp singing.

The Wiregrass Sacred Harp Singers’ many performances and recordings ultimately rendered their particular style and repertoire synonymous with black Sacred Harp singing. Their popularity helped dispel the myth of Sacred Harp’s whiteness cultivated by white folklorists since George Pullen Jackson first framed the style as music of isolated Scotch-Irish southerners in his 1933 *White Spirituals in the Southern Uplands*. The group’s popularity also overshadowed the breadth and diversity of black Sacred Harp singing networks and the various tunebooks they adopted. In addition to their festival performances, Wiregrass Singers’ recordings documented the group’s distinctive style: full of ornaments and featuring regular call and response between Williams and the rest of the group, flat or neutral thirds, and other characteristics common among a range of black vernacular music forms often associated with antebellum or even West African cultural retentions. In the late 20th century, the network of black Sacred Harp singings in the Alabama Wiregrass contracted as its organizers aged and younger family members’ interest in the singings waned. *The Colored Sacred Harp*’s long decline eventually culminated in the 2009 cancellation of the last historically black annual singing using the tunebook alongside *The Sacred Harp*. As numbers at that historic singing dwindled in the 1990s and 2000s, a small number of white Sacred Harp singers from the area, including long-time editors of the region’s *Sacred Harp* edition Stanley Smith and Tommie Spurlock, joined Williams and other black singers to bolster the group’s fading numbers. Smith, in particular, took on an increasingly active role as long-time black participants died. Today, only two recently established singings in Montgomery, Alabama, use *The Colored Sacred Harp*, with each devoting about a half hour of singing to the book.

At these Montgomery singings, Smith draws on his long involvement in and support of black singings to facilitate contemporary singing out of the tunebook. Smith embraces rhythms that deviate from the book’s written notation and a pattern of dynamic emphasis called “accent” that he learned orally from years of attending singings. Smith’s longstanding involvement with the Wiregrass singers makes it

1 Sacred Harp Singers, *Festival Recordings, 1970: Wade and Fields Ward with Kahle Brewer; Sacred Harp Singers*, CD transfer, 1970, fp-1970-rr-0039, Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage.

possible for him to transmit an embodied knowledge of the repertoire and style to a largely unfamiliar and mostly white singing class. And yet, Smith sounds different from the *The Colored Sacred Harp* recordings featuring Williams’s group in both studio and festival settings. Comparing the two singers, it is clear that Smith avoids mimicking black affect or the improvisatory call-and-response that characterized Williams’s vocal leadership of his ensemble of black Sacred Harp singers.

Smith’s perpetuation of *The Colored Sacred Harp* at the Montgomery singing demonstrates both an ethical approach to the crossing of musical color lines and the challenges these crossings pose. When we sing, we make choices about matters such as how we sound and what tone to use, or whether and how to ornament our singing. These choices are not neutral—they carry the long history of cultural appropriation of black musics that extends at least to the minstrel shows that dominated the popular entertainment landscape of the mid-nineteenth century. Making historically-informed and ethically-engaged choices requires an embodied knowledge of our music’s cultural histories and legacies. In Smith’s case, decades of friendship and singing fellowship with the children of *The Colored Sacred Harp*’s compiler affords him access to the music’s intended interpretation that he tries to respectfully pass on to the next generation of white *Colored Sacred Harp* singers.

In Thomas Y. Lawrence’s REMEMBER ME from *The Colored Sacred Harp*, Lawrence pleads to God to “remember me” “while going through this vale [of life]” and “when I am gone to rest.” We might interpret Lawrence’s text metaphorically: how can we maintain the traditions we care about now and also ensure their survival? REMEMBER ME is a good song, with a flowing melody and harmony parts, and an expansive chordal palette. Singers should be able to render the song with ease. But taking our cues from Smith, we might honor and remember the community that formed Lawrence and Williams by sensitively adopting a characteristic aspect of singing from the book: accent. Like most Sacred Harp singers, black singers from the Alabama Wiregrass emphasized the third and especially the first beat of every measure while backing off the unaccented second and fourth beats. But this particular group uniquely rendered accented beats with a slightly staccato pulse. (Watch the recommended multimedia extras to hear accent in practice.) If you choose to sing REMEMBER ME, consider accenting the song in homage to the world and legacy of its composer.

The choices we make when we sing songs initially performed in a context different from our own can help bridge vast differences of time, space

and culture. Our repertoire choices can facilitate respectful tributes to dear friends while highlighting often marginalized histories. Yet these same choices, if they allow for mimicry of affect, can easily turn well-intentioned efforts into caricatures that reaffirm marginalization. As we embrace more inclusive musical repertoires, let's pay careful attention to the choices we make, drawing on our shared embodied knowledge to sensitively remember and perpetuate songs and styles with which we are intimately familiar. Reflecting on the complicated racial politics that brought *The Colored Sacred Harp* to our attention, let's also consider the histories—personal and political—of our own corners of the vast landscape of traditional song and dance.

Multimedia Extras

- Black Sacred Harp singers from the Wiregrass region sing at a celebration of Dewey President Williams's 81st birthday, and Williams speaks about the tradition, in this 1979 film shot in Ozark, AL, and directed by Landon McCrary. YouTube video of a VHS tape dubbed from a 166 mm print. 17:22. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4aCHWxc3pT8>.
- H. Japheth Jackson, son of *Colored Sacred Harp* compiler Judge Jackson, leads a 1990s-era Dothan, Alabama, television program featuring singing from *The Sacred Harp*. Stanley Smith and Tommie Spurlock (third from right and fifth from left, back row, respectively), two longtime white supporters of black Sacred Harp singing in the Wiregrass region, join an aging group of area black singers. YouTube video. 29:33. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Cat1HyEeFM>.
- Stanley Smith speaks about *The Colored Sacred Harp* and leads a song from the book at a 2012 singing in Montgomery, Alabama. YouTube video. 3:29. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Y9Kc4Y3G5k>.

Acknowledgments: My sincere thanks to Meredith Doster, Anna Rima Dael, and Lorraine Hammond for their helpful comments on this essay. — JPK

Former CDSS board member Jesse P. Karlsberg is a postdoctoral fellow at the Emory Center for Digital Scholarship, and editor of Original Sacred Harp: Centennial Edition. A resident of Atlanta, he is an active Sacred Harp singer, teacher, composer and organizer.

Musicians Column, cont. from p. 13

organizers. Some dances book out a year or more, some only a month or two. Some dances happen all year long, some take the summer off. When one or more of the dances don't work, look for others in the area. Is there a Waltz Night, or (if your band knows how to play for one) an English country dance? There are a lot of possibilities, and you may need them to build a tour. When things change, make sure that all band members are still available for the evolving tour.

To all dance musicians: Thank the organizer in your band for setting it all up, and have a great trip!

Dave Firestine plays mandolin and other string instruments with STEAM! (below) and The Privy Tippers, and can be found at the epicenter of Carp Camp at the Walnut Valley Festival (CA).



Dance & Sing Your Brains Out This Summer

PINEWOODS, Plymouth, MA

- Family Week, July 16-23
- Harmony of Song & Dance, July 23-30 (*with Contra Dance Callers Course*)
- English Dance Week, July 30-Aug 6
- American Dance & Music, Aug 6-13
- Early Music Week, Aug 13-20 (*with English Dance Leaders Training in Music & Accademia*)
- Campers' Week, Aug 20-27

OGONTZ, Lyman, NH

- Family Week July 31-Aug 7 (*with American Dance Musicians Course & Teachers Training Course*)

TIMBER RIDGE, High View, WV

- Adult & Family Week, Aug 14-21 (*with American Dance Musicians Course & Square Dance Callers Course*)

and a BRAND NEW WEEK: CAVELL, LEXINGTON, MI
Dance, Music & Spice, Aug 14-21



www.cdss.org/camps, 413-203-5467 x 2

Yoga for Dancers—Krama: Small Actions, Big Results!

by Anna Rain

In the same way that we don't introduce contra corners or a full double figure eight at the beginning of an evening of dance, we don't immediately jump into complicated yoga poses without a mental and physical warming up. Krama is the Sanskrit word which means the careful, sequential ordering of correct action, and following this concept assures that the body learns safely and at an appropriate pace. Krama is practiced for the duration of a single pose, over the course of a multi-pose practice, and throughout one's lifetime of practice.

Every yoga pose has a unique role in one's practice, and each pose plays a part in encouraging the actions necessary to access more challenging poses. Until the body finds ease in these foundational poses, other poses remain out of reach.

Practicing with krama, in careful, attentive sequences, trains not only the body but also the mind: as you master the beginning actions of a pose, you hone observational skills that serve you as you progress to more complex and intertwined actions.

The first two phases of Gate pose prepares the body for the classic poses, and all three phases of Gate pose address essential actions that prepare the body for more complicated actions in other poses. The first phase connects the hip-opening thigh rotation that is so important for good leg and back function; the second phase encourages hamstring length and side body lift; the third phase (the classic pose) strongly stretches the side body (one side at a time) and revolves and strengthens the abdominal muscles.



1



2



3

Gate Pose, phase 1

- Kneel on a folded mat or folded blanket (use enough padding that the knees aren't sensitive)
- See that the knees are about 10" apart
- Bring the hands to the waist, roll the shoulders and elbows back, and take a few breaths (*see photo 1*)
- Take the right leg out to the right at a 90 degree angle
- The right foot is under the right knee; the right foot is in line with the left knee
- Maintain weight directly over the left shin (don't lean either to the right or the left)
- With your right hand, rotate the muscles of the right thigh from the inner thigh to the outer thigh (*photo 2*), then
- Press the back of the right hand into the right thigh (*photo 3*)
- As you roll the thigh back (toward the wall behind you), move the right buttock bone forward (the direction your torso faces)
- With your left hand, move the abdomen from the right to the left
- Bring the right shin back to the floor, and
- Repeat on the second side, with weight on the right shin, taking the left leg to the left

If you are new to yoga poses, practice krama in your approach: do phase 1 over the course of several days—or weeks—before attempting phase 2. Understand the actions: external rotation of the thigh that is out to the side, buttock bone forward, abdomen rotates away from leg out to the side.

My students often ask me, "How long should I hold a pose?" Rather than thinking of counting seconds or breaths, I advise: First, if the pose has two sides, stay in the pose on each side about the same amount of time. Second, stay in the pose for as long as you are truly in the pose. Once you notice that your mind strays to an unrelated thought, you're not in the pose any more, and you should come out. Refocus, then attempt the pose again.

Gate Pose, phase 2

- Follow the sequence of phase 1
- Straighten the right leg (*photo 4*)
- Maintain weight on the left shin
- Align right foot with left knee
- Roll the right thigh back and the right buttock bone forward
- Extend both arms, palms up
- Recall the abdominal action: move the abdomen from right to left
- Press the left shin down, stretch the arms, and lift the waist evenly on both sides
- Return the right leg first to 90 degree angle, then bring the right shin to the floor, and
- Repeat on the left side, with weight on the right shin

I was in Pune, India, in November, studying at the Iyengar Institute there (RIMYI). A quotation from Prashant Iyengar during one of the classes has lingered with me, and I find that the concept applies to my dancing and musical lives, as well as in my yoga practice:

“It is better to do a small action and have something big happen than to do a big action and have only a small thing happen.”

Prashant’s idea echoes krama: proceed with focus. Move in small ways and be attentive to what happens as a result of those small movements. How precise can we be? What glorious big results might come of our fine-tuned adjustments?

This is not to say that we should avoid risk. What musician has ever been satisfied with a performance that didn’t include a bold choice of interpretation or improvisation? As a dancer, how would you know if you could make your loop bigger and still arrive on time for the next figure without a little pushing of boundaries? We can, however, explore the intricacies of small actions in a way that is innovative, creative, and supportive to our art.

The common thread between krama and small actions is focus and attention. Proceed sensitively, gaining understanding of foundational actions before moving on to more complicated concepts. Be sensitive to the small actions and what bigger effects they might have.

Once you have practiced—attentively!—the second phase of Gate pose several distinct times, observing how small actions contribute to more focused awareness on your part, move on to phase 3.

Gate Pose, phase 3

Follow the sequence of phases 1 and 2

- Inhale, lift the chest, and extend the arms
- As you exhale, bring the back of the right hand to the right shin (*photo 5*)
- Maintain weight on the left shin
- Inhale and extend from the left shin through the left fingers, then
- Exhale and turn your torso from the right to the left; turn toward the ceiling
- Again, inhale and extend from the left shin through the left fingers, then
- Exhale and take the left fingers closer to the right toes (this is the “gate” closing!) (*photo 6*)
- To come up, swing the left arm and bring the torso upright
- Take a few breaths, then return the right leg first to 90 degree angle, then bring the right shin to the floor, and
- Repeat on the left side, with weight on the right shin

Attentive, gentle repetition to the small actions in sequential phases of Gate pose serve krama and serve your expanding understanding in your body. The focus and dedication you bring to your practice will benefit not only your physical self but will also deepen your sensitivity to the small actions that can bring big results.

Anna Rain is a certified Iyengar yoga instructor. She’ll also be leading English country dance and contra at CDSS English Week at Pinewoods this summer. Anna’s current dance favorites are Under the Influence, by Jenna Simpson, to the tune Tom Kruskal’s by Amelia Mason and Emily Troll, and the Scottish Country dance, The Braes of Breadalbane.



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Hive Mind—Celebrating Milestones

a crowd-sourced column

Every group is eager for fresh ideas for particular challenges. The Hive Mind is a new column with readers sharing insights about different subjects (see next page for the Fall topic and deadline). Our thanks to caller Scott Higgs for coordinating the column, and thanks to this issue's participants.

In this issue: People celebrate birthdays, weddings, memorials, anniversaries, and more with music and dance. Please share your story of such a celebration. What elements made it special and memorable? Were there any lasting effects for the community?

Dorcas Hand, Houston, TX

The First Friday dance in Austin—they would gather in a big circle at the start of the break to sing to all birthdays for the month, and anniversaries. And then there would be cake. Simple and charming. Sadly, the building that hosted the dance was sold, so that dance is no longer.

In Houston, we have managed random celebrations advertised by email: Hawaiian Shirt Night, Ice Cream Social, Wear Green—just amusements to make the dance special.

And we have remembered an original dancer in the group by dancing the Levi Jackson Rag with his wife. She is now 90, so not always dancing, but we all think of Bill whenever we do that dance.

Mike Franch, Baltimore, MD

Eileen and I have held dances to commemorate milestone birthdays, not in honor of us but in celebration of and in gratitude to the communities of dance and music that have enriched our lives. In April, we held an English country dance for our 75th birthdays, which are only a few months apart. Eileen's band, The Geud Band of Baltimore (a rehearsed open band) played, and caller friends called a dance or two.

In addition to our friends in the Baltimore-Washington area, we invited our Pinewoods Campers' Week community. We knew that most could not come such a long distance for an evening's dancing, but the invitation was our way of telling them how important they are to us, and how they are with us even if they aren't there physically. This seemed especially important this year, as we lost one of the youngest members of the community, Angelia Ricker, and one of the oldest, Gerda Conant. It's not hard, at this point in life, to think of this community without me. All the more reason to cherish it, and to dance, sing and make music with joy.

David Roodman, Washington, DC

Early on Saturday, September 25, 1999, my wife Mai Pham gave birth to our first child. We had warned my dad, Gary Roodman, that this might happen. To celebrate, he had written a tune and dance. I think he provisionally entitled it "Little P-R," for little Pham-Roodman, because we refused to tell him the name beforehand. My dad debuted the dance that day in Philadelphia, and revealed its permanent name: Benjamin's Birth Day. Then he and my stepmother Rowena drove down to the hospital in Baltimore to meet the new guy.

Time passed.

Last fall, Mai and fellow Timber Ridge Camp mom Michal Warshow organized a Sweet Sixteen contra dance for our two boys, in the Eastern Market building on Capitol Hill. (Except really Steven was 17.) Dance friends came, along with school friends who had never contra'd before. Partway through the second half, caller Janine Smith handed the mic to Benjamin's little brother, Alexander, who taught a new dance. After the walkthrough, he revealed its name: Benjamin's Birth Day 2.0. The surprised birthday boy came to Alexander and gave him a big hug.

I didn't dance then because I was recording video. Friends say the dance has good flow—which runs in the family.

Pat Petersen, Durham, NC

After our wedding ceremony and the mummers play that followed (note: don't let the Wizard throw the best man in the lake), we danced English all afternoon. Our balloon of euphoria was punctured when we were told that we weren't really married yet! We had taken our license out in a different county from where the ceremony was held. We hopped in our minister's car with a couple of witnesses, waved to people arriving for our evening contra dance, crossed

the county line, and repeated our vows, returning to eat, drink and dance the night away with friends from many singing and dancing traditions. Insight: check local regulations!

Here are additional comments inspired by our last topic: Attracting New Participants:

Dorcas Hand, Houston, TX

Our trick to encourage new dancers to come back is to charge them full price on the first visit, but to give them a business card that gives them three more dances at the member price. We also raised the non-member price to \$10, \$4 more than members pay—that makes membership more appealing, which keeps the coffers full enough to support insurance, dances that don't break even, and basic supplies. Remarkably, that change (\$10/\$4) improved our membership numbers substantially. Oh, and there is the coupon for a free dance *if* you re-up in the first month of our fiscal year.

Rosemarie Swanson, Bryan, TX

One of our members set up a Meetup group for us, and over the last ten months our average attendance has increased from about 18 to about 24 people, and we seem to reach new faces.

Our next Hive Mind topic is COLLABORATION. With limited time and resources, it's tempting for volunteer organizers to focus solely on our own groups. Often, though, cultivating connections with related groups reaps great benefits, with modest effort—whether it's sharing sound systems, mailing lists or booking cooperatively to attract distant talent. CDSS Board members are frequently dazzled by the creative and successful collaboration of local groups when the traveling Executive Committee visits an area.

What stories can you share on the theme of collaboration? Here's an example: just this April, dancers and musicians from the English, contra and Scottish groups in Philadelphia came together for an ESCapade event, inspired by ESC week at Pinewoods. Workshops on all three-styles of music and dance attracted a wide range of participants, who then enjoyed a three styles dance party.

Your story can tell of a single event, or a series. What motivated the collaboration? How did things play out? Were there lasting effects? Please take a few minutes to share your story at <http://www.cdss.org/hive>. (200 word limit per story)

CDSS NEWS
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Friday-Saturday, November 18-19, 2016
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Friday evening, November 18—Jeff Warner and Alex Cumming in Concert

Saturday from 9 to 5, November 19—Ballads and blues, work songs, spirituals, shape-note singing, contra dancing—vital and evolving music, and the roots music that gives it strength. Come join singers, scholars and songwriters for a day of concerts, forums, participatory workshops, dancing, jam sessions and song circles.

Featured performers/presenters will include Scott Ainslie, Rev. Robert Jones, Hannah Naiman, Jesse P. Karlsberg, Bennett Konesni and Edith Gawlor, Pam Weeks and Bill Olson, and Elijah Wald.

Saturday evening, November 19—Gospel and Blues Concert

Contact: WUMB-FM, 617-287-6900, wumb@umb.edu. More details will be on the CDSS website soon.