

ISSN 2368-7134



Folk Dancer Online

The Magazine of World Dance and Culture



PUBLISHED BY THE ONTARIO FOLK DANCE ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 54 NUMBER 5

December 2023

Folk Dancer Online

Acting Editor Karen Bennett
Production Bev Sidney
Advertising Paula Tsatsanis
Dance Calendar Terri Taggart
Distribution Judy Deri



Proofreaders
.....Blima Dreezer
.....Rachel Gottesman
.....Adam Kossowski
.....Shirley Kossowski
.....Kalina Serlin

Folk Dancer Online (formerly *Folk Dancer*/the *Ontario FolkDancer*) is the magazine of the Ontario Folk Dance Association. The December 2023 issue marks the final issue of the publication.

All rights reserved. Material may be reproduced with written permission of the editor, provided that magazine and author are acknowledged. Opinions expressed in this magazine are those of the individual author and do not reflect the views of the *Folk Dancer Online* and its staff or the Ontario Folk Dance Association and its Board of Directors.

Visit OFDA's Website
for local information and links to other
dance-related sites.

www.ofda.ca

Web Design: Noemi Adorjan
friendlyweb@gmail.com
Web Maintenance: Helen Winkler



Ontario Folk Dance Association (OFDA) is a non-profit organization. Established in 1969, incorporated in 1986, the OFDA's aim is to promote folk arts and particularly folk dancing of many cultures.

Steering Committee: Riki Adivi, Bev Sidney, Helen Winkler

Treasurer Efrim Boritz
Membership Mirdza Jaunzemis
Secretary Marylyn Peringer

Executive Members at Large

Stav Adivi ~ Devianée Caussy ~ Judith Cohen
Naomi Fromm ~ Roz Katz ~ Gary McIntosh
Janis Smith ~ Mary Triantafillou ~ Paula Tsatsanis

For **MEMBERSHIP RATES** and **SUBSCRIPTIONS** see <http://ofda.ca/wp/about/membership/>

- *With the December 2023 issue, Folk Dancer Online magazine ceases publication, to be replaced by the website-only The OFDA Times, which will aim to present material of a similar nature in a less formal structure.*
- *We welcome articles, and other content of interest to folk dancers, to be emailed to TheOfdaTimes@gmail.com.*
- *At this time we do not plan to have paid advertisements, but inquiries can be made via TheOfdaTimes@gmail.com.*

Cover Image: *Dancers swinging in Tavira, Portugal. Men are holding their hats in their left hands; women hold their free hands in a common position for Portuguese dances. See p. 21.*

In This Issue

(Click on bolded titles to go directly to the page or article.)

FOR THE DANCE CALENDAR

<https://ofda.ca/wp/calendar/>

FOR DANCE CLASSES/GROUPS INFO

<https://ofda.ca/wp/dance-groups/>

FOR MEMBERSHIP INFO

<https://ofda.ca/wp/about/membership/>

.....

1. **Editorial** ... 4
2. **Notices** ... 5
3. **Add Another String to Your Bow, Part II** ... 7
4. **Videos Worth Watching** ... 11
5. **What Do Dancers Do for Hobbies?** ... 12
Stefania Miller Keeps Records and Journals
6. **The “Problem” of Lerikos** ... 14
7. **Bulgarian Dance Tour** ... 17
8. **Reconnecting** ... 19
with the Joy of Macedonian Tambura Music
9. **Celebrating** ... 21
the Carnation Revolution in Tavira, Portugal
10. **OFDA’s Yves Moreau Memorial Café** ... 23
11. **Fieldwork, Talks and Concerts,** ... 25
Summer 2023
12. **Grapevine** ... 27

[RETURN TO OFDA WEBSITE.](#)

With Love and Thanks, Over and Out

by Karen Bennett, Acting Editor

The Executive of the Ontario Folk Dance Association made the decision in October to discontinue the publication of *Folk Dancer Online* after the December issue, no successor for me as Editor having been found. As might be expected, I feel extremely ambivalent (including sad and guilty) about this development. Instead, there will be a dedicated section on the OFDA website, called The OFDA Times, to be established by Helen Winkler and Bev Sidney, where articles written by members and others will be posted, starting approximately in February 2024. Submissions may be sent to TheOfdaTimes@gmail.com. Details are still being worked out, but they will be announced in emails to OFDA members.

Among the host of those who must be thanked for their efforts are previous staff and contributors who have worked so hard on the magazine under all eight of its titles since its first issue in 1969. It was a gigantic labour of love. It's impossible to single any one person out, but I can easily highlight a region as one whose dancers never failed in their support: Toronto/Hamilton. And in 2023, I was delighted to work with dancers from Ottawa and Edmonton.

In this issue, Jan Łętowski's column On Costumes is absent, but I was able to cajole, with surprisingly little effort, an article from former musician and IFDC dancer Chris Aston, who went on an interesting trip to Austria and Macedonia in September. After a couple of decades of not playing a folk instrument, Chris has taken his tambura up again and rediscovered his love of Balkan music.



Photo: Pixabay/Bulgarian National Radio.

Bulgarian folk dancers.

Diversity and Land Acknowledgement Statement

The OFDA recognizes the population diversities in Ontario's communities. We actively promote the exploration of Ontario's cultural diversity through the related dimensions of dance and music.

We recognize that our activities take place on traditional territories of many Indigenous Nations and acknowledge this understanding at our events. Everyone is welcome to participate in our activities, with the expectation that their rights and dignity will be respected.

SOCIETY OF FOLK DANCE HISTORIANS

Archiving and disseminating the
history and practice of international
folk dancing

Publishing each year (free to members):

- *Folk Dance Directory*
- *Folk Dance Problem Solver*
- *quarterly Report to Members*



SFDHist@gmail.com / SFDH.us

Write:

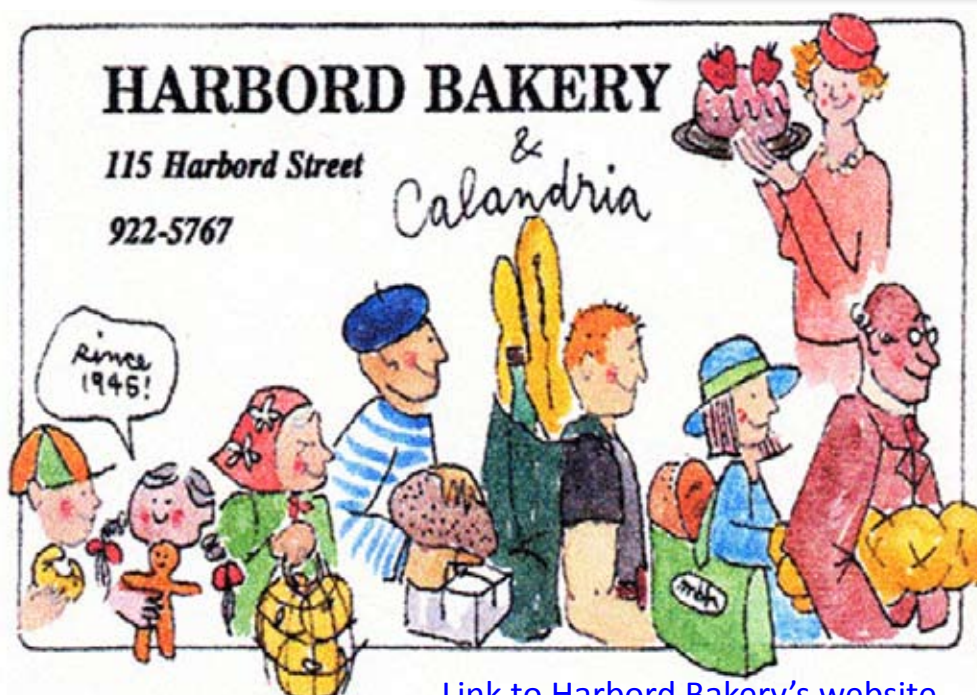
SFDH, 1506 Rainbow Bend, Austin TX 78703



Sheryl Demetro, who lost her husband, Chuck, in early June, wrote on September 17:

"I received many cards of condolence from folk dancers on Chuck's recent passing. It was so kind of people to contact me and my family at this time."

"I wanted to put a few lines in the Folk Dancer magazine to express our thanks for their thoughtfulness."



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



Jim Gold International Folk Tours 2024

Our trips are for folk dancers, non-dancers
and anyone with a love of travel, culture, and adventure

www.jimgold.com

NEW YEAR'S EXTRAVAGANZA in ALBANIA and ITALY

Dec 27, 2023 to Jan 9, 2024; Led by Cathie Dunklee-Donnell

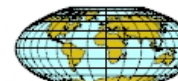
Dance instructors: Lee Otterholt and Genci Kastrati



Middle East

EGYPT: February 23-March 3, 2024 Cairo, Nile River cruise, Luxor, Aswan

ISRAEL: March 3-13, 2024 Jerusalem, Masada, Tel Aviv, Galilee, Haifa,
Safed, Golan Heights. Led by Lee Friedman and guided by Joe Freedman



Travel
broadens
one!

North America

WESTERN CANADA: April 11-23, 2024 Calgary, Banff, Vancouver.

Led by Cathie Donnell-Dunkel, with Lee Otterholt and Genci Kastrati

EASTERN CANADA: June 28-July 10, 2024 Montreal, Quebec, Saint John,
Halifax, Charlottetown, and more. Led by Richard Schmidt

Eastern Europe (The Balkans)

ALBANIA, GREECE, MACEDONIA and KOSOVO:

May 22-June 3-5, 2024 Tirana, Durrës, Vlorë Folk Festival, Krujë,
Gjirokastër, Saranda, Berat, Lake Prespa, Ochrid, Kosovo
extension. Led by Lee Otterholt and guided by Kliti Zika

BULGARIA and Black Sea Coast:

July 22-August 4, 4-8, 2024 Sofia, Plovdiv, Bansko,
Veliko Turnovo, Varna. Led by Ventsi Milev, with Bulgarian folk
dance teacher Niki Enchev, and musician Ventsi Andonov



ROMANIA: Sept 29-Oct 13, 2024 Bucharest, Brasov. Sibiu,
Cluj, Sighet Marmatiei Led by Nancy S. Hoffman/Virginia O'Neil

GREECE and the GREEK ISLANDS: Oct.19-Nov. 1, 2024,
Athens, Nauplia, Sparta, Olympia, Delphi, Meteora, Greek Island cruise.
Led by Lee Otterholt and guided by Maroula Konti



Western Europe

SCANDINAVIA: June 18-July 1, 2024 Oslo, Gothenburg, Helsingborg
(Elsinore), Copenhagen. Led by Lee Otterholt

IRELAND: August 3-15, 2024 Galway, Connemara, Aran islands, Kerry,
Cork, Blarney, Dublin. Led by Lee Friedman and guided by Kay Clear

SPAIN: Sept 12-25, 2024 Malaga, Ronda, Cadiz, Seville, Cordoba, Granada

South America

PERU with Nazca and Peruvian Amazon: May 20-29, 2024 .

Lima, Cusco, Machu Picchu, Puno, Sacred Valley, Lake Titicaca, Peruvian Amazon,
Nazca extensions. Led by Martha Tavera

BRAZIL: October 21-November 1, 2024 Rio de Janeiro, Salvador, Iguassu Falls.
Led by Hilary Almeida

TOUR REGISTRATION: Reserve my place! \$200 per person deposit.

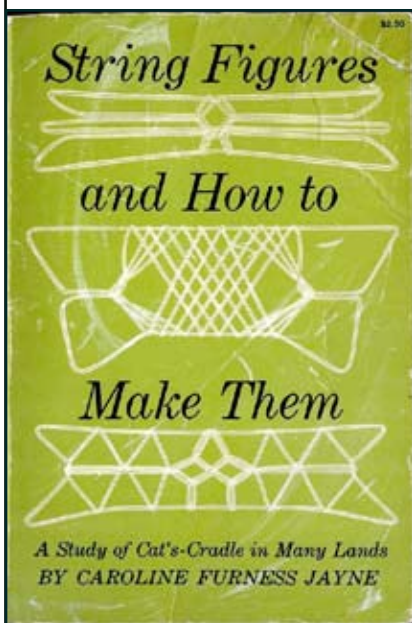
Looking for a Hobby? Add Another String to Your Bow, Part II

by Nancy Nies

[Continued from [October 2023](#)]

A Subject of Studies Both Ethnological and Anthropological

As components of culture, both folk dances and string figures are researched, documented and described by ethnologists and anthropologists. According to the International String Figure Association (ISFA), anthropologist Franz Boas was the first to document a string figure—one from the Inuit culture—and to describe how to make it, in 1888. Zoologist Alfred C. Haddon devised a scientific language for describing how a string figure is made. Since then, instructions for creating more than 2,000 traditional string designs have been published, and new ones are still being invented. The late 19th and early 20th centuries are known as the “golden age” of string figures, since so many were collected during that time.



Caroline Furness Jayne (1873–1909), a US ethnologist, wrote *String Figures and How to Make Them: A Study of Cat's Cradle in Many Lands* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1906), the first and best-known work on string figures. Based on papers from anthropological and ethnological journals, it provides instructions on how to make 129 string figures from traditional societies.

Ethnologist Julia Averkieva (1907–80), born in Russia, lived with the Kwakwaka'wakw of British Columbia and recorded what Mark Sherman calls “the most comprehensive Native American string figure collection ever assembled from a single tribe (or nation).” Sherman's writing and editing led to its being published as *Kwakiutl String Figures* (University of British Columbia, 1992).

Cover of *String Figures and How to Make Them* by Caroline Furness Jayne.

Anthropologists were once described, writes Camilla Gryski, as “people with their pockets full of string.” In Virginia Morell's 1996 *Ancestral Passions*, anthropologist

Louis Leakey credits string figures with saving his life, recalling a piece of advice given him by his Cambridge professor and mentor, Alfred C. Haddon, on travelling in Sub-Saharan Africa, where tribes were suspicious of Europeans: “You can travel anywhere with a smile and a piece of string.”

Steps Both Simple and Complicated

Folk dancers know that when learning a new dance, you must at first consciously remember the steps, but that your feet will eventually do the steps automatically. They will be able to relate to what Camilla Gryski has to say about learning to do a string figure: “At first you will have to remember all the steps it takes to make a figure, but very soon your fingers will remember for you.” She also recommends beginning with the easier figures before moving on to the more difficult ones.

String games, like folk dances, can vary greatly in complexity, involving multiple people, multiple parts of the body, and multiple steps. (The word “step” has a different meaning, of course, when applied to dances than when applied to string games.) Also, just as some folk dances are done solo and others with partners or a group, string games can be played by one, two or more people. And just as dances involve the whole body, string games can involve the mouth, wrists, elbows, knees, feet and toes as well as the fingers. String games can also feature moving elements, as well as vocalizations. Alfred C. Haddon wrote in 1905 of witnessing in the Torres Strait Islands, 17 years before, “some of those elaborate string figures ... that put our humble efforts to shame. They can make much more intricate devices than ours and the manipulation is correspondingly complicated, toes and teeth being at times pressed into service.”

Aboriginal string games from North Queensland, now part of Australia. They represent:

- (left row, top to bottom) two men descending a valley; two rats side by side; four boys walking in a row, shaking hands; a walking emu; a bat; and two resting cockatoos;
- (middle row) a cassowary, a crocodile, a man climbing a tree, and a turtle; and
- (right row) a turtle, two white cranes, two women fencing with sticks, a flying duck, two fish, and a kangaroo.

From Die Sitten der Völker by Georg Buschan (1863–1942). Stuttgart, 1914.

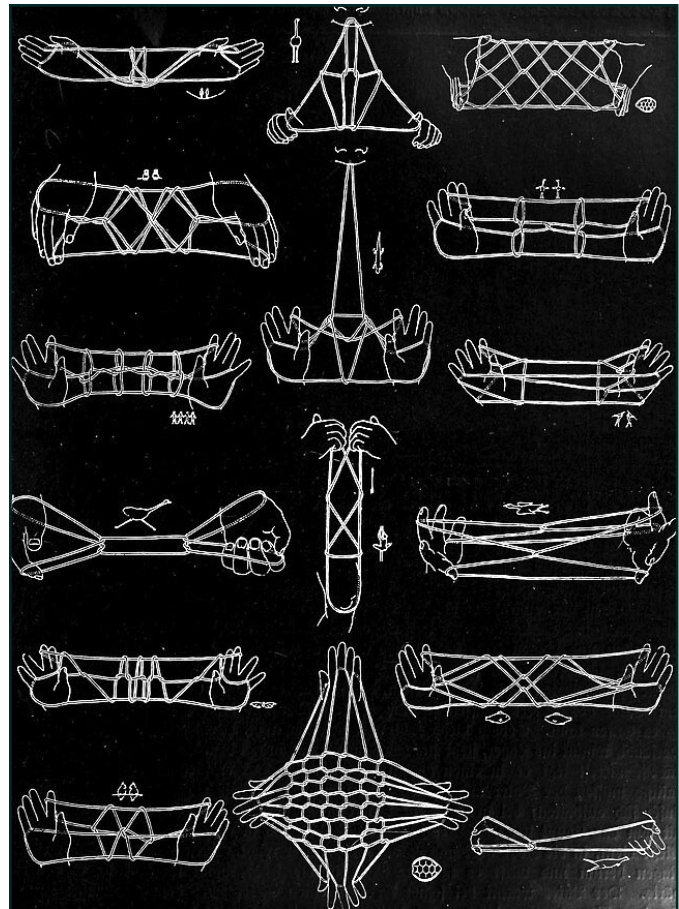


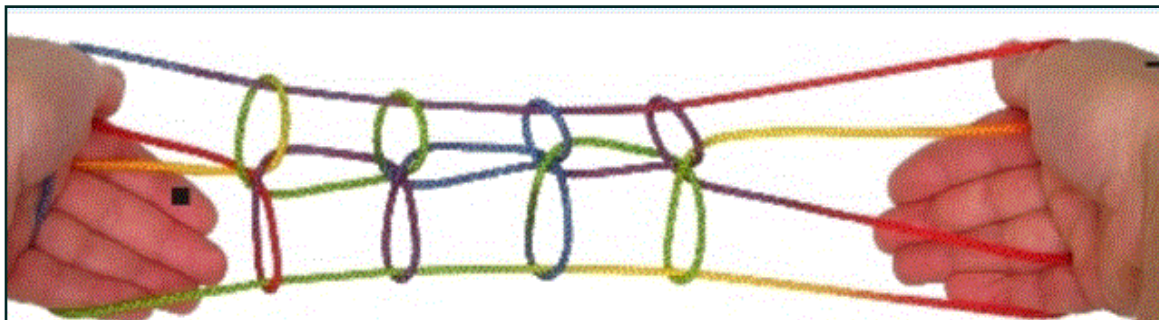
Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

Joyce Cohen, in her article “String Games: More than Just Child’s Play” (*New York Times*, 3 February 2000, <https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/library/tech/00/02/circuits/articles/03revu.html>), writes that one of the simplest string games is Cat’s Cradle, played by children all over the world. If you’re a beginner or need a refresher, here’s a lesson in Cat’s Cradle: <https://www.youtube.com/watch/VpHTPnrYLzQ>. (Incidentally, the name Cat’s Cradle is often used not only to that particular string game, but also to refer to string games in general.) One of the most complex string figures, says Cohen, is the Inuit Whale and Fox. It tells the story of a fox who nibbles at a whale carcass, but who runs away when a man arrives on the scene. The following video shows the intricate steps involved in making this figure: <https://www.youtube.com/watch/v9kjYfaFRxo>. The Inuit have created what Camilla Gryski calls “some of the most complicated and beautiful string figures ever recorded.”

Strings on Your Fingers, Tricks Up Your Sleeve?

String figures can be made into what is known as a string game or a string trick, or, presented in a particular sequence, a string story. You can also find string figures featured in an exhibit at the Museum of Jurassic Technology in Culver City, California, as my husband Paul did a few years ago. There are many books and online videos available to teach you how to make individual designs.

It seems appropriate to close with an image that combines string figures and folk dancing: a figure called “Masked Dancers,” collected by José Braunstein from the Maká people of the Gran Chaco region of South America. According to *String Figure Magazine* (Vol. 12, No. 4, December 2007), “The South American action figure, which represents four masked dancers strutting from left to right, resembles a North American action figure called ‘Eskimos in a Dance House.’ However, the method of manufacture is entirely different!” To see the North American version of the creation of the “dance,” go to https://www.youtube.com/watch/SRmTil9Cz_A&t=10s.



“Masked Dancers,” a moving string figure collected by José Braunstein from the Maká people of the Gran Chaco region of South America.

When I met Paul, one of the first things he said to me was, “Maybe you’d like to go folk dancing with me sometime,” to which I replied, “Maybe ... just to watch.” At the time, I would never have imagined how folk dancing would change my life over the next four decades. Paul and I have enjoyed dancing with groups here in Bakersfield, elsewhere in California and the US, and during extended stays in Toronto, Denmark and France. Add to that the pleasure of attending many performances in North America and abroad and, for me, writing many articles for *Folk Dancer Online*. Like Louis Leakey’s smile and piece of string, folk dancing has been our key to unforgettable experiences around the world.

Like Paul’s invitation to join him at folk dancing, librarian Camilla Gryski’s chance encounter at a long-ago folk festival with children “playing with string” had far-reaching consequences. One is that Bill Russell is still enjoying the hobby after 50 years. If you’re inspired to try your hand at making string figures, you’ll be engaging in one of the world’s most widespread pastimes, learning about cultures around the globe, participating in a form of performance art, and carrying on an ancient tradition handed down through the millennia—not to mention having fun. And, as with folk dancing, you never know what doors it may open and what experiences it may bring.



Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

“Beauties Playing Cat’s Cradle,” detail of woodcut print by Suzuki Harunobu (1724–70). Tokyo National Museum.

Videos Worth Watching

by Karen Bennett

From Aotearoa (New Zealand) comes this Māori song and dance (haiata, also spelled waiata) called *Te iwi e*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=29S3N0Nqw9w>. In the video, which includes the lyrics as untranslated subtitles, teenagers are performing what they learned

around age seven. Beneath the video, one commenter said, “It is so comforting to hear this waiata. I used to sing this at primary many years ago and had forgotten it.” A Hawaiian version of it exists as well.

From a group of singers whom I’ve featured in this space before comes a sea shanty called

Santiana: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rf_TfHK3-3g. The lyrics can be seen if the word “More” under the video is tapped, but there’s a mistake in the third line: “Now pull the yan up the west they say” should be “Napoleon of the west, they say.”

Filmed in 1959 is a video on the revival of Welsh clog dancing and the making of clogs in the once-thriving town of Portmadoc on the coast of North Wales: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YGRn1XDYIVc>. Note that what sounds like “slave trade” is really “slate trade.” The dances were originally done solo by sailors and local Roma.

Proshchai Odessa (Goodbye Odessa), a Yiddish song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O2TQ2ehSsKs>. The words in translation are: “Oh Odessa, goodbye Odessa/I will miss you so much/I will never forget you/Farewell my friends/Let’s shout together:/Odessa Mama, I love you so much!”



The first verse of the song Te iwi e.



Youngsters in Portmadoc, Wales, performing clog dances in formation.

Screenshot: Karen Bennett.

Screenshot: Karen Bennett.

Keeping Records and Journals

by Stefania Szlek Miller

My hobby is keeping records and writing journals. It started when my mother developed vascular dementia in 2007 though the symptoms were there even before she had to be placed in a long-term-care home with severe physical as well as cognitive disabilities. As her advocate (my father died in 2008) in dealing with medical and other staff, I also started a journal of all our conversations, some of them prompted by what I knew about her life: terrible poverty in rural inter-war Poland, her teenage years spent as a forced labourer in Nazi-occupied Czechoslovakia, and the six years in German Displaced Persons Camps waiting for immigration to a country willing to accept refugees.

My parents, younger brother, and I (another brother is buried in Germany) arrived in Canada in 1951. I was old enough to remember the difficulties that my parents experienced as new immigrants. The photos that I scanned for the journal generated more memories but also showed missing links: there are no photos of my parents before the age of 20. As my mother's memory faded—near the end, she called me by her younger sister's name, Stasia (still living in Poland at that time), rather than by my diminutive, Stefcia—I realized that it was up to me to record her life as well as that of my father and our family. This was completed by the time of her death in 2013—a fitting memorial.

Virginia Woolf wrote journals throughout her life so that she could look back at her younger self. This stimulated me to write my own journal, the foundation of my earliest childhood already being sketched out in the one for my parents. The dread was probably also there that I too may start losing my memory as I age, and that I needed to record my life, first for myself and then perhaps for my family. I have now written more than 200 pages (single-spaced), with the most recent being Chapter 9, covering the years from 2019 to 2022. The latter year includes the death of John (Jack) Evans, my long-time husband and friend. I anticipate that the next chapter will be easier to write.

In re-reading my journal, passion for international folk dancing beginning in 1977 is a dominant part of my life. I accidentally stumbled on the McMaster International Folk Dance Club by hearing music in a university cafeteria late in the evening. It was a time when I was feeling particularly vulnerable following separation from my first husband, struggling as a single mom and as a sessional academic not yet achieving that rare beast, a tenure-track appointment (got it in 1979). The music and diversity of the dances transported me out of myself—the best therapy, and the

price was only 25 cents' admission. I recall my first Ontario Folk Dance Camp in Waterloo in 1979, with Yves Moreau teaching Bulgarian dances (from the Red Album) and Una O'Farrell's Irish step-dancing, which nearly killed my legs. I was in awe of the experienced dancers, their intricate footwork and the energy that was exuded from their circles and lines. There was joy in the bonds of friendship among the dancers. I wanted to be part of that community. My journal then records a five-year break after the McMaster club folded in 1979 and I concentrated on my academic career. My promotion to a tenured university instructor coincided with the beginning of the Hamilton International Folk Dance Club in 1984.

Each of my journal chapters thereafter includes long sections on folk dancing in Hamilton as well as participation in many workshops and camps in the local area as well as Quebec, the US and Macedonia. I continue to insert excerpts in my journal from some of the many articles that I have written about folk dancing for OFDA's *Folk Dancer* magazine (these articles are noted in Karen Bennett's excellent magazine index). Countless photo albums supplement my writing. What comes through is the joy of dancing with people who have become some of my dearest friends.

ARMENIA tour (May 15-June 1st) & BALI tour (June 17-July 1st)
with Tineke & Maurits van Geel



ARMENIA DANCE & CULTURE TOUR € 1890 (land only) a 14-day trip in which you will visit the highlights of the country, but also see its hidden gems. Enjoy dance classes with local teachers.

BALI DANCE VACATION € 1980 (land only) a 15-day dance vacation to Bali means a tropical cocktail of beach, nature, handicrafts, Hindu culture, beautiful weather and hospitable inhabitants. International folk dancing with Tineke and Maurits.

Both tours are also suitable for non-dancers. Details: www.tinekevangeel.nl

www.tinekevangeel.nl

The “Problem” of Lerikos

by Karen Bennett



Joe Graziosi talks about the international folk dance called Lerikos in a December 2022 Zoom class.

Joe Graziosi mentioned in his Zoom class of 21 December 2022 that what international folk dancers do as Lerikos is an inauthentic dance choreographed to a Hasaposervikos tune in the 1960s. The word “Lerikos” can refer to either a dance or a tune from Leros (an island in the Dodecanese chain), and what we know as Lerikos is neither.

The music we use is a 1950s bouzouki tune sung by Rena Ntalia. I learned the dance in Toronto at a Mary Ann Herman workshop in January 1977. Much, much later, I learned that the dance had gone through several transformations since the original, simple choreography (<https://sfdh.us/encyclopedia/lerikos.html>), and that what we do is the Herman version: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ruHc9DCOCvA>.

It is now embedded in international folk dance. People like the tune, they like the dance, and for teachers it’s a very useful dance for beginners.

The invented Lerikos “got in” before Joe Graziosi started teaching Issios/Issos—the real Lerikos—around 1986.

I transcribed the following excerpt from Joe’s class (he used “Leriko” and “Lerikos” interchangeably):

“Last week, when I worked with young kids, they were putting together a suite of dances from one of the Dodecanese islands—the island of Leros. They had the Leriko, they had the Sousta from Leros, they did a couple dance called Giavri, they did a little game-dance, the Skoupa—the Broomstick Dance....

“The dance that they call Lerikos (which means ‘the Lirian dance’) is a form of a dance that a lot of people know as Issios or Issos, which are the names that you find mostly on the neighbouring island of Kalymnos. They can call the dance Issos also on Leros, but they usually use the term



The Nina recording used to teach in Toronto in 1977. The song is spelled “Empa Sto Karro Koukla Mou” and is sung by Rena Ntalia, who renders “Sheepshhead Bay” in the first verse as “Sipste Bay,” but “Rockaway” can be clearly heard.



Screenshot by Karen Bennett from [here](#).

A Greek Orthodox priest leads a line of dancers performing Issios as part of an Issios-Sousta suite on the island of Kalymnos, 2011.

Lerikos. Lerikos can refer to both the dance itself and specifically to the tune that they play. The most common tune that they play on the island of Leros is also called Leriko. So when a Kalymnian or someone from the neighbouring island of Kos plays this tune from Leros, they call it Leriko. It doesn't mean that they're going to change the dance the way they know it. On Kos and Kalymnos, they have a different style for basically the same type of dance, but it's a typical Kalymnian or Kos style. But they play the tune from Leros as part of a medley, often. They may play a Kalymniko tune into a Leriko tune into another tune. They almost always segue into a Sousta (as here, with Issios moving into a Sousta, from Kalymnos: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iHKjNxfHeys>). It's very typical in those three islands: They start with a slow dance, whether they call it Leriko or Issos or Sianós or whatever—on the island of Kos, they call it Sianós (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oPZqPxn9f8U>)—and they go right into a Sousta....

“There is a really common international folk dance that is called Lerikos—from the 1960s, I think. That was a choreography that came out of international folk dance circles here in the United States. I think the choreographer was—it might have been Oliver ‘Sonny’ Newman, but I’m not sure. That Lerikos is a made-up dance. It doesn’t exist in Greece; it certainly doesn’t exist on the island of Leros. I’m not sure why they called that one Lerikos. The tune that they used is a Hasaposerviko tune from the 1950s, composed by the great rembetiko bouzouki player Yannis Ioannou. They just do a medium-speed Hasapiko to it in Greece.

“It has an interesting history—the tune for the international folk dance Leriko. It was first recorded in the United States when Yannis came and lived in the United States for many years in the 1950s. The lyrics that

were recorded here go, 'Get in my car, my doll. We're going to go off to Sheepshead Bay [in Brooklyn, New York], to Rockaway [in Queens, NY], and we're going to have a good time.' Back in the early 1960s when he was back in Greece for a visit, he rerecorded it with a very famous female singer, and they changed it.... they're going to go off to these seaside areas near Athens instead. So the common tune that most folk dancers use says, 'Get in the car, my doll. We're going to go off to Sheepshead Bay and Rockaway,' which a lot of people don't know. It's kind of cute.

"But that has nothing to do, musically, with the Leriko dance of Leros. On Leros, they would never conceive that the two have any connection."

More exhaustive versions of the story and lyrics of the international folk dance known as Lerikos were published by Ron Houston in the 1995, 2004 and 2017 editions of the *Folk Dance Problem Solver* [See ad on p.5]. Ron says that Sonny Newman (mentioned above by Joe) was taught Lerikos by Ted Petrides, the choreographer. Mary Ann Herman later taught a more complicated version "as done in New York."



Dance On The Water

IRELAND
ICELAND

The North Atlantic

August 4 – August 18, 2024

Ten days circumnavigating **Ireland** (including three stops in England) on Oceania's *Nautica*, followed by four days exploring **Iceland** – with folk dancing nearly every night!



Check out our website for all the details, including an illustrated Itinerary:

www.folkdanceonthewater.org

Please write to get on our email list: folkdanceonthewater@gmail.com

Marija & David Hillis 2147 Parker Street, Berkeley CA 94704 (510) 872-5066

Bulgarian Dance Tour with Iliana Bozhanova, April 2023

by Murray Forbes



All photos: Murray Forbes.

Some members of the women's recreational dance group Fidankite in Vidin. Iliana Bozhanova is fourth from left.

Our destination of the year was to be a dance tour to southeastern Turkey. This was cancelled following their devastating earthquake. Luckily a Swiss group was organizing a Bulgarian dance tour with Iliana Bozhanova and her excellent accordionist, Todor Yankov. We don't speak German or Bulgarian and cannot decipher Cyrillic, but Iliana is an excellent teacher and does so in English, so at least we had one ally.

Spring in Bulgaria differs remarkably from spring in the south of Spain, where we live. We packed everything warm and rain-resistant that we could find, but in the event the weather was much better than forecast.

We were to work our way, in excessive luxury, from Vidin in the north beside the Romanian border (formed by the river

Danube) through the centre of Bulgaria, staying in Sevlievo, Lukavitz and Etropole. I am generally allergic to tours, but for dancing they are a practical option. As an antidote we decided to start our trip in a lovely ramshackle apartment overlooking the Orthodox cathedral of Theotokos on the edge of the old city of Varna by the Black Sea. It was a most interesting stopover in which we were helped through our language impediment by just about everyone we appealed to. We loved Varna and made many discoveries, including the value of a woolly hat when walking the four-kilometre-long park above the seafront, along which we found an exceptional Ukrainian restaurant with its own vineyard in Ukraine producing very drinkable wine.

The language deficiency came to a head when we discovered that it would take us an entire day and two trains to get to Vidin to join the tour. Using a Cyrillic-Roman conversion chart and Google maps and a lot of asking, we did actually make the connection at the right station, albeit with some trepidation.

Our 18-participant tour was mostly even more elderly than us but not dead yet. We managed some pretty challenging dances, although, out of consideration for our group's ears and not at all total exhaustion, we opted out of the nightly singing lessons.



Iliana's accordionist, Todor Yankov, in Sevlievo. Two ways to wreck one's knees: doing Bulgarian dancing anywhere, or climbing down weird rock formations.

Our tour included some priceless moments, such as a visit to an elderly and very proud group of dancers and singers in Gamzovo village and the village fête in Koshava village near the Serbian and Romanian border and also near a very fine vineyard, judging by the jugs of wine that they regaled us with.

We spent five nights in Sevlievo. In addition to visiting caves and monasteries we were there for the national Seme Balgarsko [Ed. note: "Balgarsko," with an "a," is not a typo] festival—two days of extremely varied local entertainment. The great thing about travelling with Swiss Germans is that when you are not wrecking your knees on Bulgarian dancing you get to slip and slide down muddy mountainsides to look at waterfalls, weird rock formations and rivers, go on boat rides, and so on.

On our way to Lukovit we got to participate in another festival in Ugarchin village. It was truly exhausting just watching the young Bulgarians performing their traditional dances. During the feast after the show I got talking to a couple of very pretty young dancers who spoke some English, and it was truly heartening to realize that they are actually doing these high-performance athletics for their own enjoyment and not under duress.

This was a most enjoyable tour, even if by the end of it we were breathing in lockstep and waddling under three gigantic meals a day. It was definitely time for some unstructured disorder. We had rented an apartment in a very lived-in part of Sofia a few minutes' walk from the magnificent old downtown. Historic Sofia is an eclectic mix of cultures with an impressive Sephardic synagogue, an ancient mosque, Russian Orthodox churches and an extensive array of palaces and other monuments, including Roman ruins. Although the Zhenski Pazar (Women's Market) was closed for renovation, we stumbled on an enormous street market by the synagogue. We even managed, with some extreme challenges involving buses and a lot of walking, to make our way to Boyana to see the National History Museum and the 13th-century Boyana church with its 90 murals that have survived since 1259.



Young performers in the village of Ugarchin.

Reconnecting with the Joy of Macedonian Tambura Music

by Chris Aston

From September 18 to October 6, I visited Austria and Macedonia. The main reason for going was to pick up a new Macedonian tambura from a luthier in Štip, Macedonia, and to meet face to face two musicians from whom I've been taking online lessons: Aleksandar (Alek) Arabadjiev and Bajsa Arifovska.

Photo: courtesy of Bajsa Arifovska.



Bajsa Arifovska.

Bajsa is a multi-instrumentalist who plays tambura with Tanec amongst other musical pursuits. Originally from Berovo and now living in Skopje, Bajsa is from a Roma family and has been immersed in music all her life. This video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iHj6bOTsXHA>) starts (0–2:14) with a collage that displays her talent and musical achievements—including conducting. (The rest of the 44-minute video is an interview of her in Macedonian. For a much shorter video that consists of Bajsa playing gaida, here's Gajdarsko Oro [a.k.a. Pravoto Oro]: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ywr43Uo85wk>. A short bio of her may be found here: <https://www.onassis.org/people/bajsa-arifovska-folk-group>.) It's very exceptional for a woman, especially a Roma woman, to have a career as an instrumental performer in Macedonia. Women sing but rarely play instruments professionally, especially gaida.

Alek is a PhD student in Vienna. Alek's topic is the Macedonian diaspora and how culture is transmitted through dance, songs and music. After the Greek civil war (1946–49), the Macedonian population was in upheaval. Many of them left and went to neighbouring European countries as well as Canada, the US and Australia. A large number of the diaspora ended up in Vienna. Alek has written a long master's dissertation on the topic—a 150-page book.

Last winter, I was researching Macedonian music, looking for new versions of old music so I could steal some ideas. I came across Alek's YouTube page (<https://www.youtube.com/@aleksandararabadjiev2956/featured>), and one thing led to another. He has a variety of music and dance videos on the channel—some of it very traditional.

Both Bajsa and Aleksandar have been a great help to me in my rekindled interest in tambura. I've had only a few lessons with Bajsa, but since



Photo: Selfie by Aleksandar Arabadjiev.

In Chris's words, "This is a photo of me and Alek holding up records. I couldn't even give them away to anyone in Toronto, so I packed up a bunch of these 45s and a bunch of LPs of Tanec and Selyani and another American band from the 70s—Novo Selo—and gave them to Alek."

I found it difficult to keep up with both her and Alek, I've put my lessons with her on hold for a while.

Aleksandar, in addition to his academic studies, plays a variety of Macedonian folk instruments and leads a folk orchestra and dance ensemble that has performed throughout Europe. Its membership is drawn from the Viennese Macedonian community as well as people like me who love the music.

The tambura was made by Tomislav (Tomče) Petrov in Štip, which is about 70 km outside of Skopje. Tomče is an excellent luthier. Recommended by my teacher Aleksandar, I took a leap of faith and booked a flight to Vienna and another to Skopje and found someone to drive me from the Skopje airport to Štip. With €500 in my pocket we tracked down Tomče in his workshop ... after a few detours. Then, on to Skopje.



Chris Aston, right, and Tomče Petrov in Štip. Prior to 2023, Chris had given his old tamburas away as he hadn't played them for many years. The new Petrov tambura, he says, is "a much better instrument than I've had before."

Then I could relax. I had a very nice apartment in Skopje for a week. I met up with Bajsa for a lesson. She told me about an upcoming Tanec performance that I was lucky to get a ticket for. It was sold out not long after I booked the ticket. It was a very exciting show. Tanec performed with the orchestra and choir of the Macedonian Opera and Ballet. I spent my days practising music and wandering around Skopje. I especially liked the bazaar in central Skopje, with good restaurants and so many shops. It still retains its character as a centuries-old bazaar.

Then after a week I was on to Vienna again. A beautiful city—the most livable city in the world, according to a recent study. Impressive but not overwhelming architecture. A public transit system that works. Music everywhere. I managed to score a ticket to the Vienna Philharmonic. I saw the Lipizzaner stallions perform to the (recorded) music of Strauss in the Spanish Riding School.

I sat in with Orchestra Aleksandar for a rehearsal.

And I've been invited to return in May 2024 to take part in an annual concert that commemorates the anniversary of the death of Goce Delčev (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gotse_Delchev) on May 4, 1903.



Chris (back row, left) rehearses with Orchestra Aleksandar in Vienna.

Photo: courtesy of a kind stranger.

Celebrating the Carnation Revolution in Tavira, Portugal

by Elaine McKee

Time to travel again. My husband, David, and I decided to have a look at Portugal in April 2023. We explored Lisbon, then went off down to the Algarve region for a few days of relaxation. As it happened, we found ourselves in the Algarvian town of Tavira during a national holiday.

Portugal had shaken off its authoritarian-style government in 1974. This was a regime that had been in place since the dark days of 1933. The country achieved a transition to democracy with almost no bloodshed. Called the Carnation Revolution, the event is commemorated by a national holiday called Freedom Day (Dia de Libertad) every April 25.

When the big day arrived, the main street of Tavira was lined with large red



Musicians and singers performing on Freedom Day (Dia de Libertad) in Tavira on April 25, 2023

All photos: Elaine McKee.



Dancers in Tavira.

plastic carnations. The main square of the town was filled with crowds of townspeople mixed with tourists come to enjoy the festivities. There were booths selling crafts and snacks. There was an assortment of parades and other entertainments. In the afternoon, we were lucky enough to catch a wonderful

folk dance performance. This was not a polished professional performance, but rather a group of local dancers who were thoroughly enjoying the opportunity to don their traditional costumes and dance up a storm.

I am sorry to say that I cannot comment with any authority on the music or the dances. Although I love dancing, I have not made a proper study of it. There was live music on the stage, consisting of a couple of singers, a couple of musicians, and a caller. There were at least a dozen couples performing circle dances and couple dances. Karen Bennett helped me to identify that the music for one of the dances was Malhão—although what they were doing to it differed from what we do. They didn't do any dances in contra lines.

The dancers were of varying ages. Many of the men were dressed in traditional black and white. They would have black hats that they could take off and hold high while spinning the women around. Some of the men had red neck-kerchiefs. The women all wore colourful skirts and blouses and kerchiefs. Some of them wore aprons as well.

Toward the end of their performance they reached into the crowd to pull a few of the spectators in to be their partners. At the end, young children, also dressed in traditional costumes, joined the final promenading around the circle.

The performance must have lasted about an hour. We happened to be in a heat wave that day, with the temperature approaching a high of 31°C. I noticed that many of the performers were wearing heavy wool stockings in that full afternoon sun. They showed no signs of flagging. What stamina!



Getting younger generations (both performers and audience members) to dance.

OFDA's Yves Moreau Memorial Café

by Rachel Gottesman



Photo: Allen Katz.

About 50 people gathered at 25 Old York Mills Road (the Agricola Finnish Lutheran Church/Swedish Lutheran Church) in Toronto to celebrate the life of Yves Moreau, our beloved teacher of Bulgarian and other dances. As a teenager, Yves went to Bulgaria and then enrolled in dance school there. He went on to teach in his native Québec and around the world. He organized festivals and folk dance cruises. He also played music, sang, and produced folk dance music LPs, DVDs and CDs.

Dances we learned from Yves and the teachers who reviewed them at the café were: Adam Kossowski: Liljano Mome; Anita Millman: Žensko Kapansko Horo; Helen Winkler: Koledarsko Horo; Helga Hyde: Dramskoto; Judy Silver: Srebranski Danec; Karen Bennett: Plataniotiko Nero; and Riki Adivi: Koga me Mame Rodila.

Tasty refreshments were provided by OFDA.

It was great to reunite with friends we haven't seen for years such as Peter Renzland and Kevin Budd; with Conrad and Patricia Stenton, who travelled from Midland; a group of 10 from Hamilton; and all our local folk dancers. Ninety-four-year-old Olga came with her walker and did some dances, as did her caregiver and a couple of other people who used canes when they weren't dancing.



Olga Sandolowich.

Photo: Allan Katz.

We were happy to be able to celebrate Yves Moreau and to share his dances with our friends.



Photo: Bev Sidney.



Photo: Allan Katz.

More photos can be viewed on the website: <http://ofda.ca/wp/photos/>

OFDA MEMBERSHIP ENTITLES YOU TO:

Significant preferred fee structure to OFDA events. Café fees are \$5 members/\$10 non-members, and similar preferential fees for other OFDA events (i.e. New Year's Eve Party, Workshops) will pay for the cost of a membership.

Fieldwork, Talks and Concerts, Summer 2023

by Judith Cohen

Photo: Judith Cohen.

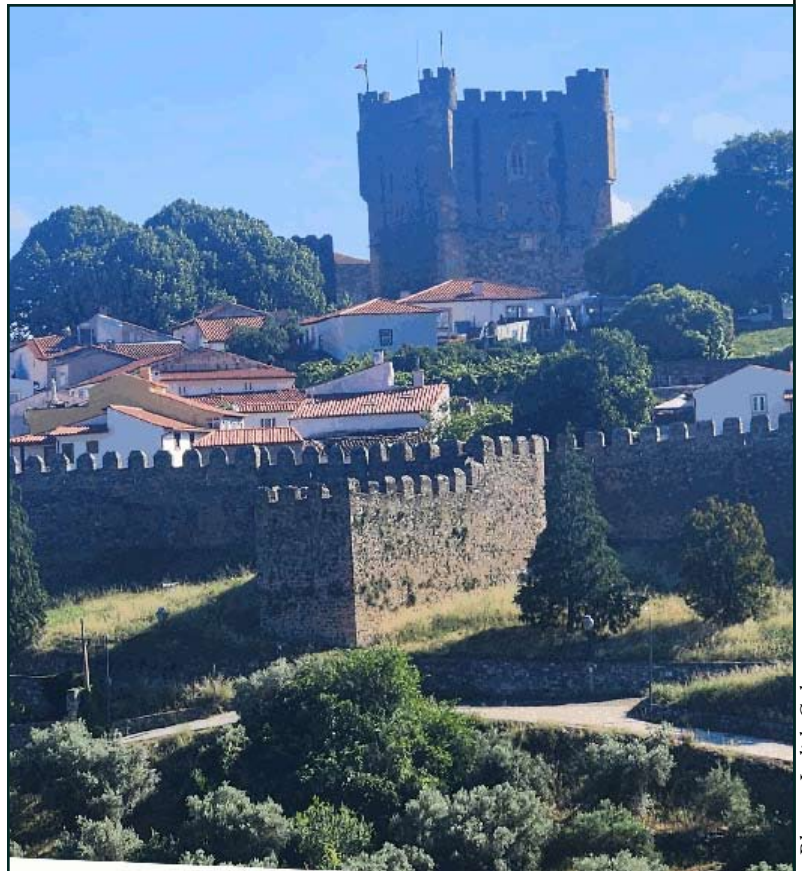


Bragança, with Judith's daughter, Tamar, aged 10.

Bragança is a northeastern Portuguese town, historically a small but crucial Crypto-Jewish hub near a mountain pass with the Spanish border. I first went about 50 years ago just because it was on my hitchhiking way back to Spain and had (still has) a remarkably preserved ruin of a hilltop castle with little houses huddled around it. Now the houses are mostly cool little cafés and

souvenir stores and Airbnbs, but a few families still live there. It was late but very efficient in joining the Jewish tourism boom, but I have a few good friends there and I can usually stay with one.

In 2023, it was awkward because the available friend lives on the steepest street going up to the castle—even cars have a hard time going up, and in winter, it's almost impossible. I have bad plantar fasciitis and my ankle had entirely collapsed, so it wasn't the easiest place to stay. Even when both feet are operating normally, going up and down that street is a challenge, and stepping out right into the steep incline this time was tricky. But I did hours of interviews with Antonio, whose existence had mysteriously escaped me the other times—he's from an old hidden Jewish family and also knows old narrative ballads usually now sung only by



Bragança, 2023.

Photo: Judith Cohen.

women a generation older than his (he's in his 60s). I met him briefly last year and this year he decided he trusted me, and his niece drove me around and became a fine young friend.

Antonio was astonished that I could fill in, from memory, some words he'd forgotten to certain ballads. When I left, he came up to the bus stop with a bottle of water for me in one hand ("I thought you wouldn't have thought of bringing one"—he was right) and in the other an envelope with five pages of a ballad he'd meticulously written out from memory the night before. I have to talk with folklore archive people about it. Iva, the niece, said that this was astonishing because, if anything, he gave visiting anthropologists blank pieces of paper in an envelope if they pressed him to write things down for them and then they were too embarrassed to complain. But then, they don't sing him missing words from his grandmother's repertoire or send him scans from old editions of versions of those ballads from the region, which I did for the ballad I had around and will do for more.

The son of a Crypto-Jewish woman whom I interviewed many times and with whom I used to stay in her little house in the village (she died in 2014) lives there too, and he filled in some family background for me.

That was in just two days. For the rest of June and July I was doing fieldwork and giving talks and concerts in various towns and villages in Italy, Portugal and southern France and a few places in Spain. At the end, I spent over a week just at my friends' place in Madrid because my foot was protesting. I had x-rays and went to a mobility centre to see what the best ankle brace was while they prepared better orthotics—because early in August I left for three weeks doing (decently funded!) fieldwork, and giving a few informal talks and concerts, with the Moroccan Jews of the Brazilian Amazon (though the last event was with the Brazil Klezmer society.)

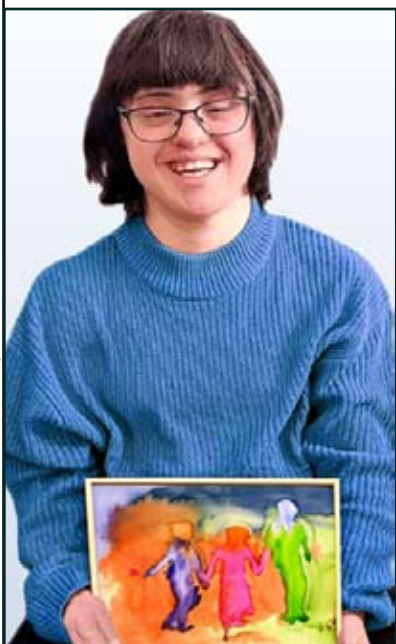


Judith doing field research.



The Grapevine

Photo: Screenshot from Rita's website by Karen Bennett, with the permission of Helen Winkler.



Rita Winkler holds the original of her watercolour *Folkdancers in the Park*.

Helen Winkler reports that another *Folkdancers in the Park* work by her daughter, Rita, has been sold as an enlarged print of the original. Says Helen, "This time it's going to hang in a dentist's office in New York," as one of about 20 prints that Helen framed for shipping to the same dentist, who has a good eye as well as good teeth. Rita may be spied holding the original painting at left. Helen adds, "The work has been enlarged and printed on a large canvas—several people have purchased the large canvas in various parts of the USA." Congratulations to Rita! Her website is <https://www.ritawinkler.art/>.

Marg Murphy recently spent three months in Australia, working as an au pair.

Although Ye Acting Editor had vowed to stop going to Stockton Folk Dance Camp (in part due to the contribution of air travel to climate change), she was somehow persuaded to attend it this past summer. The only other Canadian in attendance was Dale Adamson of Surrey, BC. Some of Karen's favourite teachers were there, including Roberto Bagnoli and Željko Jergan. And she has a new favourite: Greek teacher Kyriakos Moisidis (who lives in Thessaloniki). Murray Forbes reported on attending one of Kyriakos's seminars on the island of Leros in the December 2022 issue.

Roberto taught the same dances at Mainewoods camp in August that he had taught at Stockton in July. At Mainewoods was Anita Millman, among other Canadians such as Riki Adivi, Walter Zagorski, Lynda Vuurman, Lynne Smiley, Mirdza Jaunzemis and Martina Freitag.

Anita, accompanied by Helga Hyde, Mirdza, Denise Colton and other dancers (six from the Toronto/Hamilton area in all), went on a trip to Morocco in September.

On September 24, Riki Adivi did a podcast entitled, "Riki Adivi Talks About International Folk Dancing Creating Openness." Riki's focus was Richmond Hill, and her talk was part of a York Region podcast series called "Connecting the Community": <https://marjaw.podbean.com/e/riki-adivi-talks-about-international-folk-dancing-creating-openness/>.

Željko Jergan taught a very well-received Croatian workshop at the Hamilton group on November 17.



Kyriakos Moisidis, left, with Roberto Bagnoli at Stockton camp 2023.

Photo: Loui Tucker.