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Florida Folkdancer

FFDC NEWS LETTER

AUGUST 1995

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE- *Andy Pollock*

Our Presidents' Day Camp will again be at the Christian Conference Center in Silver Springs on February 16-19. Please mark your calendars now. I believe that we have two very fine teachers confirmed, Dick Crum and Steve Kotansky.

I picked up my favorite book on food and exercise recently--Fitness Without Exercise by Stamford and Shimer (Warner Books) and made some quick calculations. The good news is that if you dance four times per week (as some of our retired members do), you are getting 90% of the aerobic exercise you need. The bad news is that as dancers, we don't work our arms enough or develop our fast-twitch muscles, so most of us should be lifting light weights (get expert advice) 2-3 times per week. For now, I am designating August and September as "ARMSWING MONTHS" and encouraging all groups to teach as many dances with arm motions as they can fit into their schedules.

ERROR: I meant to congratulate the Babiaks on a year with 50 performances in it, not 50 years of performing which would also of course be a great accomplishment.

DANCING IN CHICAGO

While I was in Chicago for the annual conference of the American Library Association, I took advantage of the situation by dancing three of the nights I was there. I attended a Scottish, contra, and the group which Vyts had started at the International House. First, the Scottish dance experience was the first time I had gone to an all-Scottish group. It was a good thing they had planned to have beginner's night because they did not walk thru the dances. They read the pattern and then put on the music. I positioned myself so I did not have to start. There were about 13 people there and they were very friendly. Since they dance in Oak Park, the dancer who was giving me a ride, gave me a tour of some of Frank Lloyd Wright's structures including his studio.

Second, the contra group had about 50-60 dancers on a Monday night at an Irish pub in a back room with a wooden floor. There were about ten librarians there including the guest caller who was from Portland, Oregon. Contrary to our stereotype, the librarians were not all women. I danced with one librarian who worked at the Library of Congress and another was from Phoenix.

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The Florida Folk Dance Council is a non-profit corporation which coordinates events, disseminates information and encourages education and appreciation of international folk dances and related cultural activities for group and individuals in Florida. Membership is \$10.00 per calendar year collected in January.

The editor reserves the right to edit material submitted to the newsletter. All material must be dated and signed.

DEADLINE FOR MATERIAL IS THE 15th OF THE PRECEDING MONTH

Order of preference for article formats:

- 1.) To make life much easier, send articles via Prodigy at user # RKHD58A. OR E.MAIL it to rkhd58a@prodigy.com. E.mail may be accessed through most common on-line carriers as CompuServe, Prodigy, America Online, America, any Internet carrier or connection, and others that are emerging almost weekly.
- 2.) Mail it to me via floppy disk (IBM compatible formatted disk). The density can be 360 , 720, 1.2, or 1.44. The file

formats can be almost any popular word processor. I can import Word Perfect, Word for Windows, Peachtext, Wordstar, plain text, & many others. I am using Lotus Ami Pro. I will even mail your disks back if you wish.

3. Send it to me by mail. I have to retype it into my word processor, but that's my job, I guess.

Mail information, articles, & change of address to:

FFDC NEWSLETTER
BOBBY J. QUIBODEAUX
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ORLANDO FL 32825

NEW MEMBERSHIP \$5.00, July - Dec '95

EDITOR'S NOTES:

The newsletter is thinning a bit this month. I made up as much as I could, or as much as I dared. I didn't want to push it! I can only print what I get, so those of you who are not on vacation this summer or just returned, please send in some newsworthy articles. I desperately need filler for the quiet summer months. With several clubs not active in the summer and others with dwindling numbers, I guess there is just less to talk about.

Your editor just returned from Folkmoot, a great international performance in the cool mountains of North Carolina. Great gathering this year!

- Bobby J. Quibodeaux -

Finally, I decided to go to the original international folk dance group at the International House since I had not danced there in over 10 years. The group had moved from the International House since they wanted \$300 a night to rent the hall. At the Quaker House, close to the University of Chicago campus, only 10 people met to share dances. Ages varied from two in their 20s & 30s to one woman who had been dancing for 50 years. They enjoyed having me visit especially when I led Floricica! However, it was sad to see the group which represents the origin of international folk dancing to be so small.

--- Pat Henderson ---

HOGTOWN HYPERBOLES

(Gainesville)

Sometime in October, Barbaros Tansel will be coming to the U.S. to attend a conference in New Orleans, and we are hoping that he has time to stop here in Gainesville. He said that he very much misses international folk dancing and would have started a group but his tapes are very degraded. He would like to get some CDs with folk dance music. Does anyone have any information about the availability of CDs and sources? Please let me know if you do.

One of our folk dancers, Beth Strickland, will be leaving shortly for her new job at Purdue. Toshi hosted a farewell party in her honor this past Sunday evening at which all had a wonderful time eating, playing

volleyball, and dancing. We shall all miss Beth. Even though she was a member a relatively short time she became an integral part of the group. Tom Whitmore, with the help of several others, printed up the first batch of T-shirts and they are very nice. The front has a design of dancers with the words "UF International Folk Dancers" while the back has the logo design developed by Karen and Jack. The shirts were so popular that Tom will be doing another run. The shirts are a good advertisement for the group - I wore mine to work on Friday. I need to correct some misinformation in the July newsletter. Russell May received his masters in entomology (not geology). Andy Pollock visited our group last Friday evening and taught a dance and Gary Dockter, who was also there, taught two dances. It is always a pleasure to have other teachers teach as it gives the dancers more variety of teaching techniques as well as dances. I was in Maine recently. Had a great time but was unable to hook up with any folk dance or contra groups. Hope everyone is having a happy restful summer.

--- Joyce Dewsbury ---

SARASOTA GRAPEVINERS

Ann Kessler and Fred Miller enjoyed their send-off soiree and are off to the Keys and Canada. Meanwhile, the beat goes on and John and Marie Millett are carrying us through the sizzling summer. Speaking of

sizzling, we had what seemed similar to an equatorial evening shortly after Marie resumed teaching. The air conditioning went on the fritz on an unusually sweltering night. Do you think we limited our dancing to sedate lesnotos or the like that evening? Definitely not. It seems some of our dancers are afflicted with a malady called Kolo-itis and kolos were on the program 'weather' or not it was too damned hot. Some say this affliction may have originated in our own state--PensaKolo.

Marie and John announced that they would be out of town for a week and asked if we should cancel a session or perhaps pool our resources and have a group teaching session. What would we do without our weekly fix? Eva Stunkel agreed to lead the evening. Eva was first introduced to international folk dancing at Maryann and Michael Herman's in New York City. She has also studied and taught modern dance and has performed with a number of modern dance companies. She is also a certified aerobic dance instructor. As you can see, we'll be in good hands while Marie and John are gone.

--- Ann Paige ---



CLEARWATER CALLING - LONG DISTANCE

By the time you read this, Fred and I will be - somewhere - far from Clearwater! Our final trip in our motor home is leading us to Branson, Mo.; Utah and Bryce Canyon, etc.; Seattle, and then on to Vancouver, and as always, culminating on L.I. in September before returning to Florida. Of course, we expect to dance in a lot of exciting places along the way. All my classes and teaching ended for me at the end of May and I miss everyone. But the time off gives me an opportunity to get dancing equipment back in order: to complete or start other projects: check out the body to make sure all the parts are working correctly and, of course, to travel.

Ann Paige, the new scribe of the Sarasota Grapeviners (who is doing an excellent job following in the "dance" steps of our beloved, John), has inspired me to write of some old dance experiences. She has been telling you of some of my funny dance episodes (Say, Annie, maybe we should start a column "A Funny Thing Happened to Me on the Way to the Dance Floor?"). But here is one she hasn't heard. I always share this with my elderhostel folk dancers when I teach "Zemer Atik". OF COURSE, you are all familiar with that second step which consists of knee-bends with arms reaching to the sky (a form of prayer...). Well, "Uvau HaOvdim" has a similar step and was once

part of the repertoire of my performing group on L.I. One dear friend, George Alpine - his arms made it to a little above his waist when all others were high in the air. Finally, one day in desperation, I said, "George - God is not down there - He's way up here!" To which George replied - "Well - I'm agnostic!"

As one of the old show biz saying goes - "always leave them laughing." So with that, I bow out. Both Fred and I wish you a wonderful summer and we look forward to dancing with all of you again in October.

HAPPY DANCING - Ann Kessler

P.S. This article comes via floppy disc and I'm so proud of myself (with Audrey's help). I saw a "box" in Staples about E-Mail and the box didn't look too formidable, but if I bought it and opened it --Bobby, do you make housecalls? By the way, Bobby - the newspaper looks GREATTT!!!

TEXAS FOLKLIFE FESTIVAL, San Antonio, TX August 3 - 6
 Contact: Institute of Texas Cultures (210) 558-2243

BOUNTIFUL SUMMERFEST INTERNATIONAL, Bountiful, UT August 10 - 13
 Contact: Bountiful-Devis Arts Council (801) 292-0367

UTAH POLYNESIAN FESTIVAL, Salt Lake City, UT August 19
 Contact: Salt Lake Community College (801) 538-8691

WYOMING POLKA AND HERITAGE FESTIVAL, Rock Springs, Wy August 25 - 27
 Contact: (307) 352-6789

HUMBOLDT FOLKLIFE FESTIVAL, Eureka, CA August 26
 Contact: Craig Karumada (707) 822-8045

ORLANDO NEWS, OIFDC

We are trying to survive the mass exodus that the extreme heat of Orlando causes every summer. It is easy to see why some groups do not dance in the summer. This month Juanita Schockey is visiting her friends and family in New York and West Virginia. Ellie Hall is off visiting children and grandchildren. The Crosses returned to their cabin in North Carolina overlooking the Nantahala Gorge. Bobby and I and the kids packed up to join them for Folkmoot again this year. They had two extra tickets for the gala preview since they are sponsors. After the fantastic show, we enjoyed dancing with the performers as musicians from most of the countries alternated playing their own music. Most of the performers were 16-25 years old so we could see a lot of "foreign relations" developing as these young people from all over the world shared their dance styles with each other. We happened to notice a particular affinity between the Irish girls and the Egyptian guys! Bobby enjoyed the Macedonian group immensely.

While most of the regular dancers were out of town, Joy Herndon was going to run the show on our regular Thursday gathering. However, she came down with the flu and the evening was canceled. Of course, this was the only night this year the OIFDC did not meet.

Pat Henderson & Bobby Quibodeaux

A FIRST-TIMER (CAMPER) ATTENDS THE 43RD FLORIDA FOLK FESTIVAL

(PART 2)

We learned from Fred and Mary Holmer that Cubby Whitehead had badly wrenched his knee and was doubtful for dancing. Since we were already patching partners for the 4 Scottish performances, this was alarming news. Marion took me on an orientation tour of the Stephen Foster Park and then I was on my own. After carefully studying the 6 times and locations of the two performing groups I would need to dress for, Scottish and international, I retraced and timed the hike from the campground to the various performing stages: anywhere from 10 to 20 minutes.

Back at the campground, two young women with their two 18 month old daughters soon had me surrounded with 4 large tents and a van. The little ones were busily toddling off in all directions to greet and check everyone out. A day later, the husbands and other friends joined them with additional van and were a cozy group.

During an initial campground stroll, I stopped to visit with Chuck, an ample fellow who played many unusual instruments and told stories, & his 3 friends: Bob (guitar and harmonica), Bob (guitar and banjo) & Paul (guitar and a lovely bass voice). We sang for one another, I contributed an ill-remembered song in Welsh amidst much chaffing. Meanwhile the voices of dozens of instruments, ensembles and singers rose

around us in harmonious discord. When I admired his miner's lamp for reading in the dark, Chuck shuffled around in his gear to produce one for my weekend use! Listening to conversations, music and arriving campers, I finally got to sleep about 2:30AM.

Friday and Saturday were a blur of costume changes, hikes back and forth in the dust and heat, meeting with familiar faces (for me, those of folk dancers), first and only rehearsals, and impromptu dance along with other groups. I discovered with horror that I had carefully learned the tricky Bulgarian dance footwork slightly different than was agreed upon. Alarm! Nobody else seemed much concerned so, wearing my resplendent-with -ribbons Ukrainian costume, I danced the quickly corrected version and hardly missed a step--I was very pleased with myself.

We had two hasty Scottish rehearsals for newcomer, Steve McClure from Clearwater. Nancy, Cubby, Jeannie and I hopped into 7 positions to teach Steve the unfamiliar dances and then ten minutes before the performance, we had a quick run-through on a paved road near the Marble Stage. Besides the others mentioned, Bob Mowll and Jim and Carol Chisholm also danced. Other than forgetting to return to the 4th person in Mauri's Wedding, Steve came through with accolades from his buddies in the Dunedin Pipe Band, with whom he was a drummer. Our grateful thanks for his participation, which kept us dancing since two of our

couples had to leave before the last performances. He's a beautiful dancer, besides!

By Friday night, numb from the concentration necessary to be everywhere at the right time and in costume, I headed gratefully for the campground showers. A lively night, that one--dominated by a full-volume, smooth as silk, driving contra band that played each tune for 20 minutes over and over, from dusk till near dawn with barely a pause.

Saturday was the test of my organization and stamina, since I had two costumes to play with. The greatest hardship was not having a cool place to stretch out for an hour or so and replenish my energy. I had lots of fun jumping into the "join-in" parts of other performances: Macedonian & Colombian dancers, and keeping the Klezmer clarinetist company along with a dozen FFDC members. I didn't learn of the evening dances (not printed in the schedule) until much later, and attended one on the Saturday night program. To me the hi-tech rock & roll cynicism of Bo Diddley and Jim Billy were inappropriate at a festival devoted to preserving the traditions upon which they were developed.

Sunday, I watched the Gainesville group rehearse outside their tents and learned from Karen B. von O. that she is moving to St. Pete -- a resource that we West Coasters should take advantage of. Also on Sunday, we were joined by some 60 people

for our last Scottish presentation, a teaching of the Cumberland Reel. Cubby's knee, though painful, was holding up. My partner was a little girl with merry, steady eyes who came only to my hip. At the end, when I leaned over to tell her what a good dancer she was (she followed instructions like a trouper!), to my surprise and delight she leaped into my arms to give me a vigorous hug! Some 20 minutes later as I walked toward the car for our return to Sarasota, this same wee miss raced across the lawn toward me and launched herself into my arms to cover me with kisses and hugs! Wow! What a good-bye to a great weekend!

Many times, on Friday in particular, when hundreds of school children were bussed to the festival, I was stopped and surrounded by children who eagerly asked about doing the dances. HERE, friends, is where we need to focus our efforts: grade school children are open and receptive. They're the ones we need to be teaching!

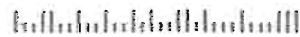
Though I wasn't able to do everything (missed the concerts in the Bell Tower), I visited many of the craft areas, the museum and exhibits. Would I camp again? It's an experience whose potential I barely touched. I was sick for 4 days from inhaling so much dust, so something would have to be changed. But surely I'd like to return--and as a participant! Thanks ALL for a great time!

--- D. A. Tyler ---

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Secretary (last I heard we are still looking for a volunteer)

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