

Florida Folk Dancer

August 2003

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

by Ann Kessler

Dear Fellow Folkdancers -

Had a visit from one of our former presidents, Andy Pollack. He came to return a Michai David tape that he borrowed. (By the way, 5 tapes are available for loan for any member who wants to review his dances. Too many dances to name them all, but if you are interested in any particular ones, just email me at Annie8@aol.com and I will let you know what tape they are on. Any member may borrow them for one month's time by just paying for postage and the mailing envelope - just let me know - they are the property of FFDC). Anyway, back to Andy - we had a very visit and we ran the gamut of computer business, watching dance video tapes, talking FFDC business, and dancing. Thanks for the visit Andy.

Hope you are all enjoying your summer vacations. I left for L.I. on August 8th to visit family and friends (and do a little teaching at my group that I originated and that is still in existence - Annie's Coop), and will be back in Florida on the 27th of August. However, I do not teach in Sarasota for the months of August and September, but the amazing group of the Grapeviners in Sarasota goes on through the summer heat. I believe they are the only group in Florida that dances through the summer (correct me if I am wrong). Marie will be there along with Evaso that the fine teaching continues along with from 12 to 20 dancers (I repeat - amazing!)! So if your feet are twitching from lack of use - go on down! If you don't

know how to get there, give Marie a call at (941) 351-6281.

But summer is quickly waxing - gone! - and time to think of renewing our groups and teaching. In my studio on L.I., I tried different ways to make the teaching exciting, and, because we learn so many new dances and have such little time in the course of an evening to cover too many - I tried to devise different ways to cover as many as possible. Sometimes we would do JUST the dances of two or three countries. Another time we would only do dances in units of the alphabet - names of dances starting with from A - H, and then next time from I - N, and so forth (sometimes when someone was just eager to do a dance, all of a sudden it began with a new letter in front of it. Also tried this in Sarasota and it did not go over very well).

But one thing I always did and still do, is to do dances "indigenous" to the particularly time of year - seasonal, holiday time, etc. Because that is one of the main things that folk dance is all about. Before we get into that, a little bit from an article I once wrote on why people folk dance...

"FOLK DANCE is ancient - the oldest form of body expression we have! From it came ballet, ballroom, contra, square, and round dance, etc. And today it still encompasses line, country western, contra, and couple dances, but most of all, it is a FAMILY CIRCLE OF FRIENDSHIP... And it is the about the only, unique kind of dancing that does not require a partner, so ALL can enjoy at anytime...

We know that primitive man danced. The many ancient, archaeological discoveries of engravings in stone and on walls and other objects have revealed this.

My own main folk dance logo (which will be on the cover of the syllabus at FFDC Camp this coming year) depicts 4 "stick" figures in dance - a leader at the end waving a handkerchief, and a musician seated on a rock playing some type of drum. It was found engraved on a rock in the Negev Desert in Israel in 1933 and has been determined that it dates back to early Macedonian life).

And we know they danced in Biblical times because the Bible tells us so, (Exodus 15:20 - 'And Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand and led all the women in joyous song and dance...' - and Samuel II 6:14-16 - 'and David danced before the Lord with all his might...' (even describes the "type" of steps he did - turning, leaping, etc.).

But Why Do We Dance?

1. Ethnological Dance - performed by trained people or religious leaders to instruct; perform some religious or ritual act, or just to entertain.
2. Folk Dance - performed by everyone who is eager to dance. It is the property of a folk, performed by a folk for its own expression and belongs to the folk who created and still perpetuate it.
3. ... to express all human emotions: fear and the ways and necessity of war/yearnings of the heart/religious rites/agricultural themes with the apprehensions and hope of the success of crops/ health and healing and the joyous and sad "cycles of life"...
4. ... to communicate/for the need to be with others/to exercise the body and release physical energy, or just to relax – and also for the sheer joy of moving rhythmically - with or without music!"

So with that in mind, would like to share with you some of the dances I do starting with the fall season (will put the other seasons, and holidays in other articles as we go along in time).

Remember – THESE ARE NOT WRITTEN IN STONE (as my logo was). Strictly your choice as teachers or suggestions from the dancers to do or not to do. And if you have any of your own that you would like to share with me, PLEASE - would be happy to know!

In September or the High Holy Days (pardon me while my Jewishness hangs out):

Following are all Israeli Dances:

Hatishma Koli - Hear My Voice

Zemer Nuge - A plaintive melody

Kol Nedari - All Vows

Tefilah - Prayer

Ve Hashiv Le Avot - And the hearts of the fathers...

Tefilati - My Prayer

Ani Ma'amin - I Believe...

Fall and Harvest Season / Succoth and Thanksgiving:

Mayim, Mayim (Israelil) - Water, Water

Malu Asamenu Bar (Israeli) - Our Barns are Full...

Al Sedenu (Israeli) - In Our Fields

Riepe Riepe Garste (Holland) - Bringing in the Harvest

Teddy Bear's Picnic (USA and just because it sounds "spooky") - Halloween

Texas Freeze (USA,CW - but done to the song "Wild Turkey") What else- Thanksgiving.

Happy dancing and see you on the dance floor - I hope soon

- Ann Kessler

REFLECTIONS ON DANCE

By Dan Lampert

A close friend of mine (who's not a dancer but an insightful person!) once suggested to me that dance comes from the rhythms of the earth, the moon, and the stars. Is there much difference between our feet making steps and the waves lapping on

the shore? Isn't it amazing that we beat drums and our hearts carry a beat also? This is big stuff, and we don't have room in this humble newsletter to cover it all.

For this month's column, I'll review a special movie "Pulse! A Stomp Odyssey" and impart some excerpts from an interview with Keith Middleton, a Brooklyn native who is the star of this movie. That's right – yours truly actually interviewed this star during his visit to Central Florida to debut film at the Orlando Science Center.



My interview with Keith Middleton at the Orlando Science Center (yup, that's a dinosaur skeleton in the background).

The movie "Pulse!" is not a normal film with actors and a plot. Instead, it's a wide screen IMAX presentation of "the global beat, an exploration of the sights and sounds of continents and cultures". Our guides are Middleton and the other performers of the off-Broadway show "Stomp".

In the movie, we see and hear the rhythms and humanity of musical dance groups from around the world... from the Timbalada of Brazil to the Kodo drummers of Japan, from the American Indian Dance Theater to the Jackie Robinson Steppers of New York. These groups dance to many forms of catchy percussion, and they create the beats using conventional drums and anything else around them. (When I exited the film, I felt the desire to be a drummer – to create rhythms on walls and tables!)

Middleton explained the gist of this movie to me, "we speak the same language: rhythm, music, we understand

dance." In his presentation before a large audience, he added "we are a people of rhythm, we have a heart beat, a pulse." That's how the movie got it's title, but repeat those words again. I think they're very philosophical! "We are a people of rhythm, we have a heart beat, a pulse."



Keith Middleton with young local dancers from Orlando, Florida, who came to see his movie and to perform impromptu dances with him.

If you'd like to hear the complete Middleton interview, it's in audio format on the web. Access it at the FFDC archive site: <http://www.folkdance.org/archive>

To learn more about Keith Middleton and the movie, see the official web site: <http://www.pulsethemovie.com>

The movie is currently playing at the Orlando Science Center, Orlando, Florida. For times and prices, see the OSC web site: <http://www.osc.org>

For the locations of other theatres and times around the U.S., see the movie web site whose web address is shown above.

AMERIKAPPLEIK

This is the name given to the 2003 meeting of the Hardanger Fiddle Association of America (HFAA), the group that celebrates and fosters interest in and use of the exotically decorated Norwegian folk fiddle with extra resonating strings played for Norwegian springar dances. In recognition of the group's twentieth anniversary, and also to commemorate the final fiddle competition or Kappleik held by Norwegian immigrants in the

United States, the HFAA brought the foremost Norwegian music and dance instructors to St. Olaf College of Northfield, Minnesota to teach and inspire some 350 participants in five days of music and dance classes, lectures, concerts, and evening parties.

Each of these specific dance traditions were presented in one or more 50 minute classes: Halling, Hallingspringar, Gammeldans, Numedal Springar, Rorospols, Setesdalgangar, Telespringar, Telegangar, Valdresspringar, Vossarull, and Vossaspringar. The schedule allowed for the more challenging dances to be taught from the beginning a second time to accommodate weekend registrants arriving on Friday, so in these few days all participants would have an equal experience of learning from highly regarded teachers and the foremost musicians in the several Norwegian traditions. The many fine American dancers in attendance were an added benefit as additional role models and as knowledgeable partners. At the same time, the experienced dancers appreciated their opportunity to observe and glean the fine points of styling from the master teachers, all to the tune of wonderful fiddling.

Amerikappleik was a huge undertaking for a small organization, so we don't expect next year's annual meeting to be on anything like the same scale. However, it certainly will take place in late July, and offer excellent Norwegian music and dance teaching in at least one of the traditions. Refer: www.hfaa.org

CA FOLK DANCING

from joy077@webtv.net

Our friend Joy in California sent this web address. It's a nice site to experience, even if you're not in California...

<http://www.danceawaysb.com>

EVA'S PARTY - AUGUST 9, 2003

by Dan Lampert

I went to Evas Gabor's birthday party at the Greek Restaurant called "Olympia" on Colonial Drive in Orlando. Many folk dancers came, and Bobby and Pat were there, too. Bobby was having his usual good time, and I joked with him by asking "what wine are you drinking?!?!"

Eva and all had a great time eating, drinking, and dancing. Some customers (of the restaurant) smiled when they saw us dancing. I wonder if they thought we were professional entertainment for the evening? I was tempted to ask some of them to dance with us. Although this would easily fall within dance etiquette, it didn't fall within public dining etiquette -- so I didn't do that!!

DANCE ON THE WATER UPDATE

Some important new changes have been reported for Mel Mann's forthcoming DANCE ON THE WATER cruises.

HAWAII CRUISE Dec 8-22, 2003

There is a good group of dancers signed up for this trip and several dancers are seeking to share a cabin. There are still spaces available on this trip but the cruise line reports they are selling out fast. IT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA TO MAKE YOUR RESERVATION NOW BEFORE THEY ARE ALL GONE. You can sign up for this trip and, if you have to cancel prior to September 26th, receive a full refund of your deposit. This cruise is offered at half the published price. Sandy Starkman, master teacher, will lead the dancing.

NEW ORLEANS / MISSISSIPPI RIVER
Jan 18-24, 2004

There is an optional three-night French Quarter extension prior to this cruise that is very popular. Space on this trip is still available and there are several persons

seeking a share. This is the largest steam driven paddle wheel boat in the world and is very comfortable. Marianne Taylor will lead dancing. One can sign up for this trip and cancel prior to November 17, 2003 without penalty.

LOWER DANUBE TO THE BLACK SEA July 1-12, 2004

The cruise line has altered their published schedule for 2004. As a result the trip is now a twelve-days instead of ten. It will sail down river rather than up river. The cruise now begins in Vienna, with an over night in Budapest. Due to the two extra days the cruise line raised the cost by \$300 but Mel Mann arranged for an increase of only \$150 for his DANCE ON THE WATER group. The port charges went up a little as did the cost of cabin up grades. Lee Otterholt will lead dancing and he is already making contacts with dance artists, performers and groups to share their love of dance. There is still space on this exciting adventure in a most interesting part of Europe.

For more information contact Mel Mann at (510) 526-4033, meldancing@aol.com, or go to www.folkdancingonthewater.org

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From Jenneine

The photos (of Rang Tang in the last newsletter) brought back great memories. What it is about dancing is also the rhythm and the unity within the rhythm - a connectedness.

I love your patterns analogy.

Also it's like being a blade of grass but the wind is moving all the blades of grass together, or a sand pebble all being moved by the water's tide together.

Where else can you hold hands with a perfect stranger? Especially men holding mens hands - it's a beautiful thing.

From Doris Wolman

Dear Dan, I have been dancing on and off since 1951. I enjoyed your musings re what makes folkdancing and folkdancers so special. Here are a few more thoughts on the subject. I came across them many years ago in a sale of bumper stickers.

*FOLK DANCERS GO AROUND IN THE
BEST CIRCLES*

FOLK DANCERS HOLD HANDS

PALM COAST

By Jan Lathi

A few weeks ago, Eva Stunkel and Bob Ramsey visited our group for Thursday afternoon dancing. Eva brought her music with her so we did "Serbian Medley" which we had not done for many years. We made sure to do a few English Country dances since Bob enjoys them most. It was wonderful to have them visit.

Earlier in the summer, we had a visit from Bonnie Olsen and Jeannine Lambert who were visiting Arleen Kaufmann, living in Flagler Beach for the summer. We ate Greek food at the Athena restaurant afterward.

On July 31st, after our regular dance session, we had a going away party for Ruth Roth, who will move to Pennsylvania soon. We will miss this bundle of enthusiasm and lover of folk dance tremendously! We sincerely hope that she will return from time to time to dance with us. The following was inspired by the fellowship of dancers at Ruth's party.

DANCING OUR DANCE

Jan Lathi, 8/1/03

*Scattered arrivals of hopeful folk
Prepare their feet for exercise.
Music emanates from speakers to sound
the call to participate,*

*And hands from many parts of our Earth
 reach out to join each other in our
 Endeavor
 To lighten our loads, share our enjoyment,
 And hope that more and more folks will
 learn to dance our dance.
 Dancers weave a kaleidoscope of
 patterns,
 Hearing musical beats that unify.
 Sharing love for moving to music is like
 increasing one's family.
 There is love enough for a longer line and
 a larger circle.
 How blessed we are to know these
 secrets!
 We hear marvelous things!
 We see each other smiling, swaying,
 spinning and raising our hands to that
 which is beyond our comprehension, but
 not beyond our pleasure.
 We sense a unity of humans joining to
 express our happiness to be a part of
 the Earth.
 And the good news is we are only one
 village!
 All over the world many villages are
 dancing our dance!
 And when we move or travel to another
 village, those hands reach out to
 enfold us as if we were always there.
 What a concept!
 Earth, hear our message! Dance!*

TERRE RETURNS TO TAMPA

By Terry Abrahams

Was this title too tricky? I'm still trying to be clever, but my mind can only do so much! At any rate, I'm in between my travels - back from South America, headed for Atlanta to fence and Asheville to dance at the Play Shop - will expound on that next month.

But my trip was fantastic. We started in Peru, the highlight being Machu Pichu of course. On to Ecuador - highlights: mountains, volcanos, waterfalls, villages with marzipan, leather, ice cream,

cheviche, jungle, markets, markets, markets (I brought home everything possible), folk dance shows in both countries; Gallapagos Islands - beautiful aqua water, volcanos, sea lions, iguanas, crabs, turtles, blue footed boobies! A great trip, although I am still with a queezy stomach. Ain't travelin' grand?

I can't speak for the group. Haven't seen anyone since before I left. I found a mistake in my last column. It's Ursula that is attending the dance camps with her grandchildren, not me. Hope if something exciting is happening, someone else will tell it. I assume the article about the Scan camps was written by Judith (it didn't have a name on it), and it was a great article - actually the whole issue was one of the best, don't you think? I thought I wrote something for it, but sometimes things get lost, and you didn't need my prattle anyway. Later...

HUMOR FROM MIT'S DANCE GROUP

Frequently Asked by First-Timers

What in the world is going on here? This is one of the regular sessions of the MIT Folk Dance Club, and these people are folkdancing. You can do it too. Please read on.

How do people know what to do with their feet? Many of them don't. The rest know this particular dance and are doing its steps.

What do you mean by "this particular dance?" The dance that belongs with the song now playing. Each dance is about three minutes long and has its own name, music, and steps. So everyone in the room is theoretically doing the same thing at any one time. In the course of an evening of folkdancing we play about sixty different dances.

For the rest of this article, see online...

www.larry.denenberg.com/catkism.html

FOLK DANCE TERMS

From: joy077@webtv.net (Folk dancer)

Terms that are common in dance names

Bouree* - France
Cacak - Baltic
Cocek - Gypsy
Czardas - Hungary
Choros – dance
Debka* - Israel
Coro – dance
Hambo – Scandinavia
Dans – dance
Hasapiko* - Greece
Das – dance - Germany
Hornpipe – UK
Devojce – girl - Baltic
Jig – UK
Dins – dance
Kujawiak* - Poland/Austria/Hungary/Germany
Dremes, Drmes – dance - Croatia
Les Noto* - Baltic
Erev – Eve – Israel March
Eretz – land - Israel
Mazurka – Italy, Spain, Austria, Poland
Hora – dance – Israel, Romania
Horo – dance - Baltic
Pajdusko* - Baltic
Kol – all - Israel
Polka – Germany, Poland
Kolo – dance - Baltic
Pravo* - Baltic
Joc – dance, song - Romania
Racenica/Rucencia - Baltic
Mechol – dance - Israel
Reel – UK, USA
Moja – my - Baltic
Schottische – Scandinavia
Mome/Moma – girl - Baltic
Swing - USA
Oro – dance - Baltic, Middle East
Syrto* - Greece
Quadrille – set of 4 – N Europe
Tarantella – Italy, France, Spain
Shir – song - Israel
Usest* - Baltic
Sirba – stamp or step - Romania

THE ORIGIN OF THE CONGA LINE DANCE

A member sent this in... it's a paraphrased excerpt from a church newsletter....

The line for dancing la conga is one long chain. left, right, left, and kick are the instructions for each person, with hands on the hips of the preceding dancer, and trying to stay in rhythm of a spanish beat. As the line circles the room, awareness of the necessity of unity in movement is paramount. The dance originated from the movement of slaves chained together as they carried gold and silver through the jungle. left, right, left and kick the chain, they moved together in a long line.

THE GAINESVILLE DANCE LIST

You can search the site easily!

<http://www.lists.ufl.edu/cgi-bin/wa?S1=folkdanc&D=1&T=1&H=0&O=D>

- Raluca

ISRAELI FOLK DANCE WEEKEND

Here's a special reminder about Israeli Folk Dance Weekend with Dany Benschalom, instructor. It's September 5-8 from Friday 4:30 to Monday 1:30. Note: It is NOT Labor Day Weekend this year. Location: Camp Coleman, Cleveland, GA. Cost: Quad cabin: \$185, Double \$215, Single \$235. If you are interested please e-mail Ruthy Slann at: kibbutz@slann.com

ORLANDO INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING RETURNS - Pat Henderson

Remember, we start our regular dance night on Wednesday, Sept. 3rd. Cross your fingers for drier weather. We received one and half inches in 30 minutes today!

FLORIDA FOLK DANCER

Florida Folk Dancer is a monthly publication of the Florida Folk Dance Council, Inc., a non-profit corporation whose purpose is to further knowledge, performance, and recreational enjoyment of International Folk Dance.

President: Ann Kessler
3295 Gorse Court
Palm Harbor, FL 34684
Phone (727) 789-6480
annie8@aol.com

Editor /
Historian: Dan Lampert
PO Box 151719
Altamonte Spgs., FL 32715
dan@webuniv.com

VP: Nancy Wilusz
3880 El Poinier Court
Sarasota FL 34232
edwardnan@webtv.net

Secretary /
Treasurer: J.P. Miller
2006 Oak Street
Melbourne FL 32901
jpmiller@cfl.rr.com

Committees: Advisors to the Board:
Pat Henderson
Terry Abrahams
John Daly

Nominating Committee:
Terry Abrahams

Send all submissions to the Editor by the **15th of the month** prior to publication.

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Subscriptions are \$15 per year and include membership in the Florida Folk Dance Council. The membership year runs from one Annual Camp (usually February) to the next. Members can receive the newsletter electronically if desired.

Check our web site for further information on folk dancing in Florida: www.folkdance.org

Return Address

FFDC Newsletter Editor
Post Office Box 151719
Altamonte Springs, FL 32715-1719
USA

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- Orlando Int'l starts up again Sept. 3rd.
- FFDC Camp is Feb. 20-23, 2004.

FIRST CLASS