

Florida Folk Dancer

September 1999

Tampa Trivia

I got so excited about seeing my article, I decided to do it again! First and most important I want to personally thank the groups and individuals that sent me get well notes. For those of you who don't know, I lost some weight last month in the form of eliminating part of my body -- my breasts to be exact -- via a double mastectomy. I am doing great, they got it all, no chemo to follow and I love dancing without all the bouncing!!! Thank you all again for your well wishes. I will see everyone soon with my new look".

Not as extreme, but much more exciting was my trip to Greece (pre-op) with a side stop in Israel to attend the Carmiel festival again. The dancing was amazing, the performances spectacular. Greece was spectacular without the dancing (we found one performance only, no participatory stuff), but the Aegean Sea was bluer than blue, the village houses whiter than white, the people nicer than nice and we had wonderful experiences the entire time, including climbing 11 miles down the Samaritan Gorge over huge rocks, which would have been better done 20 years ago, but done none-the-less. Enough about me.

Actually, we are almost all back from respective vacations, some on the way to an Israeli Labor Day dance camp, some back to school, etc etc. Huldah and Dick Bradenberg (who started the dance group at Eckard College years ago and brought Atanas' uncle (Mile Kolarov) in for a workshop teaching dances we are still doing) celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary -- the party was organized by Eric, Sigrid and Ingrid (Ingrid is still contra dancing). Do some of you remember any of them? I don't want to get premature, but we may get transplants from the other side, better known as Caroline and Gary Lanker -- we're really looking forward to having them in our group -- into our group instead of out of for a change... Looking forward to seeing you all at Fall Fling. L'shana tova.
Terry Abrahams

Orlando International Folk Dance Club

We are dancing again but not at Valencia Community College. The night classes are using the dance studio where we usually dance. Therefore, we are meeting every Wednesday, 7:30-10:00 pm, at our house. We are now using the dance studio that the folk dancers helped to erect 2 years ago! Please call us at: 407-275-6247 if you need directions to our house.

Several people traveled while we were on our hiatus. Joe and Lucy Birkemeier enjoyed the folk dance cruise on the Danube River. Ann Robinson traveled to Alaska with a square dance cruise. Both Ann and Lucy had their respective 50th high school reunions this summer. Juanita Schockey, a veteran roller coaster rider, enjoyed Cedar Point, Ohio. Bobby and I visited my father in Panama City in August before our kids went back to school. Our daughter, Julie, left for the University of Florida on August 15.

Pat Henderson

Coming Events

Sep 24:
Deakin Memorial Dance
Gainesville

Oct 1-3
Contra and
English Dance
Workshop
Sebring

Oct 16
Greek Workshop
Gainesville

Nov 13-14
Fall Fling
Melbourne

Feb 18-21
President's Day Camp
Ocala

Fall Fling and Other Folk Dance Activities In Florida

Dance activities seem to pick up as Fall approaches. It's good to see Coming Events appearing in the side bar on the front page.

In publicizing our events, it's easy to assume that everyone who reads the Florida FolkDancer has been continuously in touch with one another for at least forever. That's what your editor did in writing the initial article for Fall Fling. So with apologies for those who had to ask, here's a brief description of some of the major events in Florida.

Florida FolkDancer

The Florida FolkDancer 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.

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Fall Fling is not an official Florida Folk Dance Council affair. Since no one gets to dance enough, we plan on a full day of request dancing. About 40 people come each year. There may be an occasional review, something easy may get taught, but the goal of this event is to dance. We try to give people just enough time between dances to take a deep breath and say, "that was a nice dance. What's next?" Then we start the music again.

We start setting up about 11 am and begin dancing as soon as the equipment is ready. By noon enough people have arrived and we set up for a pot luck lunch. No rules on what to bring. Somehow it all works out.

As the tables are cleared away, we start dancing again until people get hungry for supper. Typically there's food left over from lunch. We play it by ear. John and Barbara plan to bring a roast turkey and possibly a beef roast. If necessary, we take a collection and run down to the store for more food.

After supper, more dancing until 10 or 11 pm. When enough people have drifted away, we clean up and go home.

This year we will convene again on Sunday about 10 am for a second day of dancing. The second day will be for those who didn't get enough couple dances the day before. If there are enough, we may try a Scandinavian dance workshop later in the year.

Spring Fling has traditionally been organized by Julius Horvath in Port Orange. I'll let Julius give us a more detailed description as Spring approaches. For now, suffice to say that

Spring Fling is also a day of request dancing. There may be more teaching with the goal of cross-pollinating dances among groups. But like Fall Fling, Spring Fling has the feel of an informal gathering of folk dancers. In recent years, about 40 people have come.

President's Day Camp is the major official event of the Florida Folk Dance Council, Inc. The goal is to have workshops by outstanding instructors who are primary sources in their fields. If you look through the list on page 5 you will see we have had some outstanding people. Anywhere from 75 to 125 people sign up each year. Cost varies from year to year, but is probably comparable to similar camps.

There will be more about Camp as February approaches. The Camp facilities are not rustic, although the cabins are spartan. The dance floor is concrete.

Registration starts late Friday afternoon, followed by a party late into the night. Saturday starts with instruction through the day. The camp serves three meals a day. Saturday night features a party themed loosely on one of the featured dance regions. Sunday is similar. On Monday the instructors review their dances, everybody picks up a bag lunch provided by the camp, and we all go home.

Other groups may host special events through the year. Take a look at the material on the Greek workshop to be hosted by Gainesville in October.

John Daly
President

Carmiel 1999

Dear Barbara,

We are former residents of North Florida that danced with Debbie Meitin, Andi, Pat and Bobbie. We now live in South Florida and dance with Connie, Peggy and Nissim. We have subscribed to the Florida Folkdancer for many years but this is the first time we're sending something for publication.

We just returned from Israel where we spent over two weeks dancing and touring. We were a group of 7, with Ruthy Slann as our leader and her knowledgeable sister, Ronit, as our guide. We danced at Carmiel (where we met Terry before her trip to Greece) and many other places throughout Israel. We met many choreographers whose dances we constantly do in the U.S. The opening festivities of the festival was a parade down the main street with all the dancers that would be performing during the festival. Among the festival's activities was a major night performance in the amphitheater followed by dancing on tennis courts from midnight till morning every night. Daytime shows included Israeli folkdance, International folk dance, ethnic group performances, modern ballet, ballet theater and dance workshops led by the different choreographers. A 2 1/2 hour ballet performance of "Zorba" was outstanding. The night performance was always followed by a 1/2 hour fireworks display. Carmiel, a cultural and arts center, had about 250,000 people present from all over the world.

Since this was our first trip to Israel, we were very excited to see many of the historical sites where Judaism, Christianity, and Islam evolved. Some of the sights we visited were the Golan Heights, Dead Sea, West Bank, Sea of Galilee, Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Wailing Wall, The Holocaust Museum and many other sights that played an important part in the War For Independence and 6 Day War. We saw excavations of Byzantine, Roman and Crusader ruins that date back over 2 thousand years. We walked on the path that Jesus took before his crucifixion. On our trip we stayed at modern settlements of Kibbutzim and saw the current community way of life. At night we were able to travel to dance with different Israeli teachers and choreographers. The combination of dancing and tourism was truly unforgettable.

Lionel and Phyllis Scheler

Memorial Dance Motley and Lydia Deakin

September 24, 1999

8:15 to 11 pm

Gainesville Florida

Motley and Lydia Deakin were among the many talented leaders of the University of Florida International Folk Dancers. They welcomed many new dancers to Norman Hall Gym and were gracious hosts at many happy dance parties in their home. The UF International Dancers will host a dance party in their memory on Friday September 24th at Norman Hall Gym. Norman Hall is their usual meeting place. It's located at SW 13th Street (US 441) and SW 8th Ave just on the outskirts of the University of Florida Campus in Gainesville.

The program hasn't been published, but is sure to feature many of the dances which the Deakin's loved. Their interests covered a broad range, so there will be something for everyone, but perhaps with an emphasis on classic couple dances.

The event is open to all. However, the University does require that visitors from off-campus produce a picture ID and sign a waiver stating that "they are not going to sue UF for any injury they might sustain when practicing folkdance".

Tina Komaniecka has offered to be a contact for those who need lodging and have other questions. Her phone is: (352)332-3367. Email to: Valentin@ufl.edu

Further details about the University of Florida International Dancers and some maps to aid in getting to Norman Hall Gym are on their website at grove.ufl.edu/~folkstep

Greek dance workshop
Nicholas Gavallas
Saturday October 16 1999
(morning & afternoon sessions +party)

Florida Gym, Gainesville , FL
\$15 for all day,
7\$ per individual session
3\$ for party only

Nicholas Gavallas was born and raised in Pensacola, FL. where he graduated from the University of West Florida majoring in History and Political Science.

Being the son of Greek immigrants he made innumerable visits to Greece as a youth taking part in various dance groups and Folk seminars. While still in the USA he attended many dance conferences taught by George Mavropoulos of the Dora Stratou Dance Company of Athens Greece. he was instrumental in reawakening the Folk Dance groups of the Greek communities of Pensacola, FL. and Ft. Walton Beach, FL..

In 1989 Nicholas moved to Greece after being offered a job as English teacher in the school of his beloved village of Naoussa, Paros, Greece. On Paros he devoted much time to learning the Greek Dances with special emphasis on the Island Dances of the Aegean and the Ionian Seas. He became a key member of the "Folkdance Group of the Community of Naoussa Paros which has won international acclaim touring most of Europe and many countries of Asia and Africa. He attended seminars on Greek Folkdances conducted by Nellie Demoglou of Rhodes and Panayiotis Mavropoulos formerly of the Dora Stratou Dance Company. His special interest however was in learning the particular dances from their sources, and therefore travelled at his own expense and that of the Folkdance group to many Islands learning the regional dances from the "natives" who exemplified local color and mood of the dance, something Nicholas felt was imperative for the authentic presentation and execution of these dances. So he learned dances of Naxos Isle on Naxos from Naxiots etc.

As a member of the Folkdance Group of the community of Naoussa Paros, Nicholas was head of the "laographic department, studying and documenting songs and dances from their sources and supervised the group's publications and worked closely with the folk musicians of the group, attempting to unite authenticity with showmanship, a task far more difficult than it sounds. He has also conducted many dance conferences and seminars on Paros Isle Greece, Lefkada Greece, Veria Greece, Athens Greece, Aradipou and Nicosia Cyprus, Vienna Austria, Aarhus Denmark, Treviso Italy, Varna Bulgaria and Pensacola, FL.

After a ten year stay in Greece he has returned to the USA to be closer to his parents and family who live in Pensacola and continues to share his knowledge on Greek folk dancing with the youth groups of the local Greek community.

He is a teacher at Little Flower Catholic school in Pensacola, a Greek Language teacher at the Hellenic Academy of the Annunciation in Pensacola, chapter secretary of the American Hellenic Educational Association (AHEPA), a byzantine church cantor and a lover of his culture and roots and enjoys assimilating these into American society.

For more information contact: Raluca Rosca (352) 846 5487 or the University of Florida International Dancers website at grove.ufl.edu/~folkstep