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 Santa Barbara Country Dance Society
 

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## Books in Review

With the recent publication of a book of tunes by myself and former Southern Californian Anita Anderson, I found I have quite a few books of music that I use in putting together my repertoire. Some are collections of old standards; others are collections of music composed by talented contemporaries. Here's a brief list of some of my favorites.

The two standard books for traditional tunes (at least in Santa Barbara) are: David Brody's *The Fiddler's Fake Book* (Oak Publications, 1983) and Randy Miller & Jack Perron's *New England Fiddler's Repertoire* (Fiddlecase Books, 1983; distributed by Front Hall Enterprises, PO Box 307 Wormer Rd., Voorheesville NY 12186).

Both books contain an excellent selection of tunes. The *Fake Book* covers a wide variety of styles (including bluegrass, contradance, Irish, etc.) taken largely from recordings. The discographic information allows the interested musician to find and actually listen to the tunes. The *Fiddler's Repertoire* presents only the basic melodies, but includes most of the tunes a contradance fiddler should know.

Two other collections of note are, *One Thousand Fiddle Tunes* (M. M. Cole Publishing, 1940) and Peter Barnes' *A Little Couple-Dancemusik* (\$20 + \$3 postage from: Peter Barnes, 5 Sandy Pond Rd., Lincoln, MA 01773). Cole's *Fiddle Tunes* has been around for over 50 years, and is a great book for practicing your sight reading; you'd be surprised what you'll find in there! *Dancemusik*, a compilation by Barnes (one of the best dance piano players on the planet), will be a classic in the very near future. It's an amazing collection of waltzes, polkas, tangos, hambos and other dances for all occasions. *Highly recommended!*

On the contemporary front, there are a number of musicians writing and collecting tunes, and there is even a publication for such activities. *The 3/4 Times* (\$10/yr. from: Out of the Blue Publications, 446 East Washington Ave., Newtown PA 18940) publishes new and old tunes four times a year. Recent issues have included tunes by Mark Simos, Jay Unger and Grey Larsen.

As for collections of original music, three come to mind: Larry Edelman's *Timepieces*, Mike Richardson's *Crossing the Cascades*, and Anita Anderson & Michael Mendelson's *Tunes from the Western Edge*. Each of these books offers a variety of tunes, many of which seem to be entering the tradition. *Timepieces* (available from: D & R Productions, c/o Larry Edelman, 3106 Barclay St., Baltimore MD 21218) and *Cascades* (Mike Richardson, 2511 Perkins Ln. West, Seattle WA 98199) represent what's going on in other dance communities.

Although as co-author I am obviously biased, *Western Edge* (\$10/ea. + \$1. Order from: Michael Mendelson, PO Box 90957, Santa Barbara CA 93190) is a great collection of tunes from southern and central California.

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## What's Up?

Winter is coming on, the days are shorter, and there's plenty of dancing. What follows is just a small sampling of things for which you might want to mark your calendar.

**Sixth Annual Christmas Night Dance**, Saturday, December 25, 6:30 - 10 at the Carrillo Ballroom.

The California Traditional Music Society's **New Years Camp** on the Malibu coast. Full of both music and dance; on hand for teaching dance are Boston's **Tony Parkes**, and LA area's **Susan Michaels**. Dates for the camp are Dec. 30 - Jan. 2. For information call, **(818) 342-7664**.

Or from Dec. 28 - Jan. 2, there's the musical **Camp Harmony**. It's held in the hills near Santa Cruz. Lots of great music and some dancing. Call **(415) 661-2217** for more info.

On New Years eve, there are two dances, Ojai's **New Year's Dance**, going from 8 pm to 1 am. It's at the Ojai Art Center, and LA's **New Year's Dawn Dance**, going from 8 pm to 7 am. The Dawn Dance is at the War Memorial hall, on Fair Oaks in So. Pasadena. For Ojai get info at: **(805) 969-1511**. For the Dawn Dance: **(818) 951-2003**.

Other things to watch for are: the **Santa Cruz Dawn Dance**, on the Sunday of Presidents Day weekend; applications to both LA's **Fiddling Frog**, a weekend festival held on the last weekend of February; and for **Monte Toyon**, BACDS great camp, held close to Saint Patrick's Day in March.

## On the International Front

The pre-contra folk dance class will be on hiatus for the winter quarter. It will return in full force, February 6, from 5:30 - 6:30, with instruction by long-time folk dancer and musician, Linelle Glass, and Live Music by Kitchen Junket. A variety of eastern European dances will be taught and then danced to music from the same. Beginners are welcome, as all dances will be taught. Partners are not needed, so just come join in the joy of the dance. Call Linelle at 682-1593 for more info.

## Please, No Lifts

For numerous reasons, liability included, aerial dance movements, that is lifting of partners, will no longer be permitted during set dances at our regularly scheduled dances.

## More on Men with Men

Last issue included the letter from John Parkinson addressing his concern on men dancing with men. Included here are some of the responses we have received.

So far, the majority of those who have responded to me have a positive feeling about men dancing with men. Of all the people who have written, called, or spoken to me personally, only three out of 25 or so agree with John's viewpoint. Due to lack of space, more responses will be included in a future *Dance*

*Continues, Page 2. Men with Men*

## Books

A final mention is of a book for the contradance pianist. Peter Barnes' *Interview with a Vamper* (\$15 + \$1.50 postage from: Peter Barnes, 5 Sandy Pond Rd., Lincoln MA 01773) is a collection of essays on backup technique taken from Peter's workshops over the past 10 years. His writing style is truly entertaining, and the information is invaluable. Like Peter's other books, this one is *highly recommended*.

Well, there you have it; a brief, eclectic collection of material for dance musicians. I hope this provides some direction to musicians and dancers. Keep the music coming, and **support your local musicians!**

*Michael Mendelson*

Erik Hoffman adds: you might also want to check out *Gems*, from the Country Dance and Song Society (17 New South St., Northampton MA 01060). *Gems* is the result of CDSS' 75th anniversary competition, and includes the dances and tunes that were tried, tested, and judged the best of those submitted.

## Men with Men

*Star*: So, here is what's come in the mail.

*Letter From Vince Semonsen:*

I can see his side of the issue, if you are uncomfortable dancing with men you will feel it is an invasion of your "space," and therefore consider it Bad Dancing! I do agree with you [Erik] that if you contradance you are giving permission to dance with other men, because within many dances men do execute dance steps together.

Personally I really enjoy dancing with other men during the course of normal contra-dancing. I don't seek out male partners but I really like allemanding and swinging with men. I applaud the SBCDS for saying OK to same sex partners. Also, I'm an average sized man and cannot get first hand knowledge of what it's like for women, but I have been surprised at the strength of some men and I've tried to remember that when dancing with women.

Also where is the rule that says men shouldn't dance with men? If majority rules, let's take a vote at a dance sometime and see how the men and women feel about men dancing with men. I bet it would be an overwhelming yes. ...

Our social rules are not an ecosystem, long established and subject to evolutionary principles. The rules against "men may ask men" were established by our uptight, puritanical ancestors and it's high time for a little social reform."

*Letter From E. D.:*

As a female contradancer I was appalled to read that someone considers participation in a dance tantamount to acceptance of a sexual invitation. I certainly permit everyone in the lines (male or female) to enter my personal space, but exclusively to follow the calls - to swing, star, gypsy - and to share a smile. I am not issuing a blanket invitation to men to do anything that I wouldn't be comfortable doing with the other women or the children!

Flirting is part of dancing, but there I reserve the right to be selective. The letter in the fall *Dance Star* implied that men need to be shielded from other men; the ladies are up for grabs.

**Please continue to make the point that anyone may dance with anyone.** After all, we are all dancing together.

*Letter From Mark Mueller:*

John V. Parkinson's ignorance of the nature and traditions of contradance disqualifies any serious considerations of his views. [...] To be brief I should like to take up only a couple of his points which exhibit the grossest breaches of logic and common sense.

He assumes that, "unless we reject democracy, it is NOT okay for men to ask men to dance..." I propose that, when viewed politically, a situation where a leader (the caller), backed by a select squad of henchmen (the band), causes an entire group of people (the dancers) to move in a precise way and in strict time has more in common with fascism than democracy. To assume that a dance is either a democracy or a dictatorship or a religion or anything else is equally absurd. A dance is a dance. It is one human activity that has successfully survived the ephemeral pressures of politics and religion and the passing prejudices against age, race, and sex. One of the reasons it has done so is because it has always mattered less whom you dance with than who you are as a dancer.

Furthermore, attempting to conjure "tradition" to his side, he erroneously appeals to an ecological paradigm: "Like a long established ecosystem, traditional social rules have evolved to a state of delicate balance, refined by centuries of fine tuning." Allow me to suggest that Mr. Parkinson's, "traditional social rules," (which, when put in plain language read as homophobia, insecurity, and what seems to be an almost pathological inability to enjoy oneself) are not traditions at all, but symptoms that first began to appear in homunculi that were dancing exclusively the gent's part, somewhere in the mid 1980's, at about the same time that JFK's portrait first appeared on Mars. They are not features of traditional dance.

On a completely different issue...

Dr. Ruth's article, "Preventing Dance Injuries," is the best, most concise compilation of healthy dance practice I've ever seen in print, showing that moving in ways that maintain good physical condition while dancing is also, coincidentally, good dance style. Thanks, Ruth, we've needed this for a long time.

I can't help but reflect that the juxtaposition of these two articles in the same issue of *Dance Star* illustrates clearly the difference between ignorance confused in ill-feeling, and knowledge which leads to good feeling -- and feeling good.

*Letter From Tracy Smith:*

I go rarely to the dances, once a month or less, and when I go I absolutely Love It! The men treat the women like women and the men act like men! I'm not terribly traditional but as a single woman - I feel safe, have fun and treasured as a dance partner. Please don't make us have to compete with men for our male dance partners. Most heterosexual men do not feel safe in this sort of environment either and we will lose those men. I realize this view may not be, "totally fair," to a certain minority which is sad, but please don't mess with the balance here - it's hard enough to get men to dance as it is!

*A Final Note*

There's more. As stated earlier, more responses will be included in upcoming issues of *Dance Star*. Please give us your thoughts if there is something you feel we've missed!

# Old-Time Contra Dance Calendar



## Winter 93/94



Santa Barbara Country Dance Society, P.O. Box 21904, Santa Barbara, Ca. 93121 (805) 969-1511  
*co sponsored*

Come dance on the finest floor in the west at the Carrillo Ballroom, or at the Main School dance hall in Carpinteria. Join the fun! Dance to the irresistible rhythms of live old-time string bands. **INTRODUCTORY WORKSHOPS** before each dance! Come a half hour early to learn the basic steps. No prior experience or partner are necessary. All dances are taught and prompted. Generally dances become more complicated as the evening progresses. Wear comfortable shoes and clothing, and have a good time!

Dance: 7-10 pm Introductory Workshop: 6:30 pm

Admission: \$5 unless otherwise specified

For the latest dance information call the SBCDS 24-Hour Dance Hotline: (805) 969-1511

<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Caller</u>	<u>Band</u>
Sun.	Dec. 5	CB	Drew Tronvig	Tecolote Tune Twisters
Sun.	Dec. 19	CB	Carl Magagnosc	Drastic Measures
Sat.	Dec. 25	CB	Erik Hoffman	Ken and Jeannie McLerie
Sun.	Jan. 2 	CB	Gary Shapiro	Drastic Measures
Sun.	Jan. 16	CB	Erik Hoffman	Growling Old Geezers
Sat.	Jan. 22	CARP	Jonathan Southard	Turtle Creek
Sun.	Jan 30	CB	Carl Magagnosc	Michael Mendelson, Anita Anderson, and Mike Mullins
♪♪♪☆	This is a special dance with a unique group of super-talented musicians including one of the best contra dance pianists in the U.S. - a combination not to be missed! (\$6 admission.)			
Sun.	Feb. 6	CB	Jonathan Southard	Kitchen Junket
	The 2/6 contra dance will be preceded by folk dancing from 5:30 to 6:20 with <i>live</i> music by Kitchen Junket. (A separate admission of \$3 will be charged for the folk dancing.)			
Sun.	Feb. 20	CB	Carl Magagnosc	Swing Easy
Sat.	Feb. 26	CARP	Erik Hoffman	Hot Flashes
Key to Locations:		CB - Carrillo Ballroom, 100 East Carrillo Street, Santa Barbara. - <i>Co-sponsored by SBCDS Adult Pros</i> CARP - Main School, corner of 8th and Palm, Carpinteria. 		

### \*Other Events in the Area

**Ojai** - Friday, December 31, 8 pm to 1 am. New Year's Eve contra and folk dance. Ojai Art Center, Montgomery Street, Ojai.

**San Luis Obispo/ Pismo Beach** - Second Saturday of each month, SLO Grange Hall, 2880 S. Broad Street, San Luis Obispo. Fourth Friday of each month, except Friday December 24th. Pismo Beach Veterans Hall, 780 Bello Avenue, Pismo Beach. 8-11 pm, introduction at 7:30. Information 805-541-1148 (Dave and Katherine) or 805-546-0518 (Cynthia). Admission: \$5.

**Los Angeles Area** - Contra dances every weekend and every Thursday. Call the L.A. Dance Hotline at (818) 951-2003.

Join the **Santa Barbara Country Dance Society**. Members of the **Santa Barbara Country Dance Society** receive a \$1 discount at all regular dances (generally those in the main listing). Membership is \$18 per calendar year, from January 1, to December 31. The cost is pro-rated for each calendar quarter, so, from April 1 - December 31, the cost is only \$13.50. From July, \$9. And during the last quarter starting in October it's \$4.50. To join simply send a check to:

**SBCDS**  
PO Box 21904  
Santa Barbara, CA 93121

### *COORDINATIVE COMMITTEE INFO*

SBCDS has board meetings, and you are welcome to attend. They generally happen on second Wednesdays, although the December meeting will be December 1, the first Wednesday. Call and leave a message on the *Dance Hotline, 969-1511*, and we'll get back to you with exact time and location.

Also, we need someone who would like to help by taking notes at the meetings and/or type them up afterwards. If you'd like to help in this way, again, call our *Dance Hotline, 969-1511* and leave a message.

Lost something? Our lost & found is kept at the Carrillo Ballroom, ask at the front desk at one of our dances.

### *Dance Star*

Got something you want to write about or say about dance? The *Dance Star* is always looking for articles, letters, artwork, or ? All communication and contributions should be sent to SBCDS, or call and leave a message at (805) 969-9777.



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You will not receive SBCDS mailings after date on label unless you sign in at a dance or notify us.