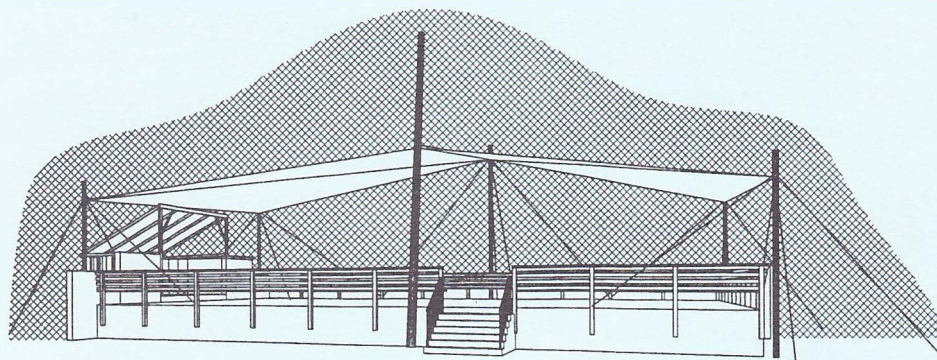


'Cover' Story: Dancing Under the Big Top



by Autumn Brook

Who could imagine Harvest Moon *without* the parachute? Our trusted shelter from sun and dew, giving form in its graceful billowing way to the magic of the music and dance we share each September under the sun and stars. Well, the unimaginable has come to pass.

This year a group of dedicated volunteers (some say they should have their heads examined) undertook the single largest endeavor in SBCDS history: to design and construct a new canopy to cover the Oak Park dance platform at Festival time.

FORMIDABLE CHALLENGES

The necessity for such an endeavor had become abundantly clear after ten years of hoisting our beloved but cumbersome 250 lb. cargo parachute. Every year the construction crew had to come up with a different rigging scheme to accommodate changes in the surrounding trees and deterioration in sections of the parachute. The time required for a large crew to put up (7 hours on Friday) and take down (3 hours on Sunday) was so onerous that it threatened to put an end to the Festival.

The challenges to be overcome in developing a new system were formidable enough to stymie several attempts over the last few years. The ideal system would include:

1) No permanent changes to the platform and surrounding area;

2) No internal supports on the dance platform so the canopy could span approximately 45' x 60';

3) Strong and durable support posts light enough to be carried by one or two people;

4) A permanent rigging system that would make each support post free-standing and allow the canopy to be raised and, more importantly, lowered quickly by one person in case of wind storm;

5) A canopy of very lightweight, durable fabric to provide sun protection, shed water, be fire retardant, allow light through, and be sewn to fit the space exactly without stretching (so no mid-festival adjustments would be required to maintain at least an 8' vertical clearance);

6) A design that would provide shade on the south side while not interfering with welcome southerly breezes and also provide an exit for built-up heat;

7) And hopefully, a system that would retain the living, breathing, voluptuous feel of our old parachute.

8) Oh yes, and do all this at a cost that the SBCDS Board could justify.

Nobody knew if such a solution was even possible. There were no prototypes and no guarantees of success even if we came up with a design and appropriate materials. Nobody knew how long it would take. But we certainly did find out!

LEAPING INTO THE BREACH

Last November at the 1993 HMF review meeting a few of us foolhardy types leaped into the breach, agreeing to become The Canopy Committee. These were Rick Beers, John Redding, Vince Semonsen, Lawrence Wallin, and myself. Choosing this as my last act before retiring from volunteering for the indefinite future, I agreed to head the committee. It was easy to agree to the task because I felt great confidence in the talent and com-
see CANOPY, next page

Star Gazer

Got No Snow? Think 'Do-Si-Do'

Yes, wintertime fun is available without having to travel to a ski resort. Let's take a look at some of our local dances and several events taking place elsewhere in California. Chains not required.

First, a serious, yet fun and uplifting event. On Sunday, December 18, please join us for a magical night of music and dance to benefit the Make-A-Wish Foundation of the Tri-Counties. Proceeds from the door, private donations and a bake sale during the break will help make a

Wish come true for children in our area with life-threatening medical conditions. With calling by **Susan Michaels** and music by the **New Young Buzzards**, this promises to be a very special evening for all.

MORE LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS

Our annual Christmas dance features caller **Erik Hoffman** and musicians **Ken Keppler** and **Jeannie McLerie**. Ken and
see STAR GAZER, page 3

Canopy from front page

mitment of this team. It proved to be well founded.

We started meeting in January with the understanding that we would work at a comfortable pace with no expectation of having a system for 1994 HMF—just explore the possibilities for a solution. In years past it was the sense of being too pressed for time that short-circuited all efforts. Michael Gutin joined the team in June. By July, with lots of research and five or six meetings behind us, we were ready to go to the SBCDS Board with preliminary design ideas, material evaluations, and ballpark costs. They were enthusiastic and gave us conceptual approval.

We were soon able to put out bids for the fabrication of the ripstop nylon canopy to hot air balloon manufacturers and a local sailmaker. Meanwhile, the support structure and hardware design were only roughly outlined. (There were times we fantasized holding the canopy center up with hot air balloons or dancing in an inflatable structure! Common sense got the best of our visions.) When we got back the bids, we found that North Sails in Oxnard could do the work most reasonably *and* have it done in early September. Of 1994! Suddenly we could imagine having a new system for this year's Festival.

LEAPS OF FAITH

Carl Magagnosc, my husband, had been studying welding and we had set up a shop in our garage during the summer. Always enthusiastic for new challenges and opportunities to create things, Carl volunteered to help out "some" with hard-

ware fabrication. That was the turning point. Almost without thinking we all took a leap of faith and committed to making everything come together in just seven weeks—hardware design, research, construction, and pre-Festival testing of the whole system. And the Board took a leap of faith with us, agreeing to commit the funds needed.

Of course August was when everybody on the Committee had vacations, and then just about everyone had signed up for Alta Sierra over Labor Day weekend. But when you don't know how long everything will take, you just work on what you can and hope that everything will work out. You hope...

Kevin Miller at North Sails proved invaluable in helping us choose our canopy rigging lines and pulley blocks from the latest hi-tech nautical catalogues. We eventually settled on five- and six-inch aluminum irrigation pipe for our poles. Then it was down to the nitty-gritty of designing the guying system and steel collars for attachment points for all the canopy rigging and guy lines. We spent hours, no, days reading hardware encyclopedias till I could dream about nothing but thimbles, ferrules, quicklinks, turnbuckles, hairpin cotters, and sheathed cable.

A LIFE OF ITS OWN

The project began to assume a life of its own, consuming the time of more and more honest hardworking volunteers. Scott Swain spent Labor Day weekend laboring in the shop with Carl. Gary Shapiro suddenly got sucked in. Committee members came by to work after work. We had work parties on the weekend. Rick commuted long distances in addition.

Carl and I were working full time every day on the project. Thanks to Lily Bastug's picnic feasts we managed to keep going. We discovered the original meaning of the term "working stiff." And it wasn't just the canopy which would get tested for "working load" and "breaking strength." In fact it was our camaraderie, the steady stream of bad puns, and John's airs on the penny whistle, that kept me and, I think, others going long after we wished we'd remembered to "just say No." We were racing the clock to meet the system tryout date of September 11—the only weekend day on which the platform at Oak Park was not previously scheduled. Kevin completed his first-rate work on the canopy—the largest project he'd ever sewn; it engulfed his entire work space.

SNAP!

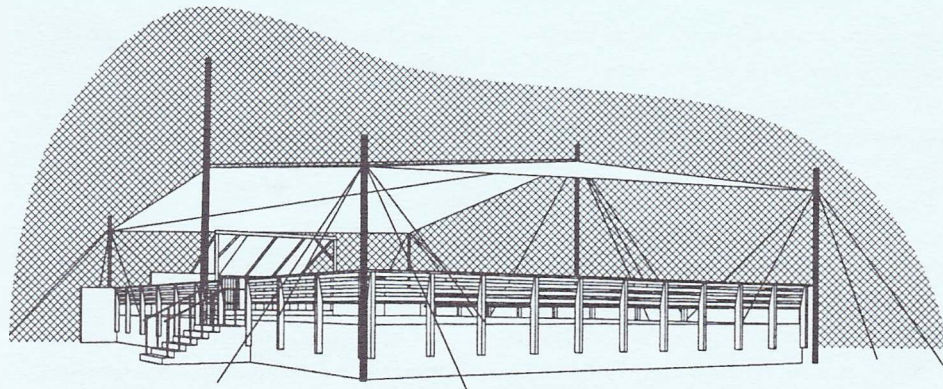
But we didn't make it. Our bandsaw broke the morning of September 11 and we just didn't have everything ready. Bertine Wallin, Dave Kary, and John did scrub the entire platform clean, which made our job easier later on.

So our prospects for having a trial run looked pretty dim—weekdays are just about impossible to get 8 or 10 volunteers together. Then I found out that the Mexican Festival scheduled at Oak Park for September 17–18 had suddenly been moved to downtown! We set our sights on the 18th. Then there was getting the bandsaw fixed...

Somehow by the 18th almost everything *was* ready and the whole committee (original and additional), along with Peter Glatz, managed to get the poles temporarily guyed. The beautiful white canopy came out of its stuff sack for the first time to be christened with dust from the Oak Park dance platform and hoisted, if somewhat awkwardly, for its maiden flight.

A MILLION DETAILS

All that was left were four days and a million details like permanently setting the guy lengths, and providing safe attachments for the guy lines at ground level. Thursday night found Gary, Scott, John, and myself working till midnight on the final hardware adjustments, giddy with
see 'COVER' STORY, back page



Star Gazer

from front page

Jeannie are the core members of **Bayou Seco**, a band from New Mexico. We're fortunate that this crew makes a pilgrimage to play in Santa Barbara for Christmas every year. And in the spirit of giving, Erik and the band are giving us an extra half-hour of music and dance. We'll dance till 10:30.

Our first Sunday dance in January falls on New Year's Day. You may fondly recall our Halloween band, **Kristina Gibbs and the Ghoul-Tones**; for New Year's we have another great one: **Kristina Gibbs and the Resolutions**.

Because January starts on a Sunday, our second Saturday Carpinteria dance (January 14) is one day before our third Sunday Carrillo Ballroom dance (January 15). Here's an opportunity to test our assertion that if you attend two dances in one weekend, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. So we'll see you there. And there! So there.

TRIPS WORTH TAKING

Look for flyers for these events at our dances or call the number listed.

Dance in the New Year at the **LA New Year's Eve Dawn Dance**. Start at 8 pm on New Year's Eve and dance until you collapse, or 7 am New Year's Day, whichever comes first. Bring your pillow and \$15 to the War Memorial Hall, 435 S. Fair Oaks, South Pasadena. Callers include **Lou Dow, Cris Miller and Chuck Galt**. Bands are TBA. Note that you could attend the Dawn Dance *and* make it to the Santa Barbara dance that evening. Whether you could actually *dance*, however, is another story. (818) 504-9518.

For a longer New Year's celebration, the California Traditional Music Society offers their annual **Malibu New Year's Camp** at Camp Hess Kramer, December 29-January 1, featuring folk music and dance including contra. This year's staff features **Mike Richardson, Susan Michaels, the Volobogtrotters, Dot Kent, Brad Leftwich, Linda Higgenbothan, Kathy Barton and David Para**. (818) 342-7664.

Here's another Dawn Dance for you sleep-deprivation junkies. This one's in Santa Cruz, on the Sunday night-Monday morning of President's Day weekend.

Our LA contra colleagues present the seventh annual **Fiddling Frog Dance Festival** in Culver City, Friday evening, February 24, through Sunday, February 26. **The Hillbillies from Mars** and **For Old Times' Sake** crank out the dance tunes and **Susan Michaels** calls contras, squares and a few surprises. \$45 if you register in 1994, \$50 in 1995. (818) 785-3839.

Dance Awakening is a new contra



dance weekend April 7-9 at Harbin Hot Springs, located above the Napa Valley near Calistoga. Dance to the music of the **Hillbillies from Mars** and the **New Young Buzzards**, and the calls of **Mike Richardson** and **Susan Michaels**. (805) 649-5189.

BAY AREA CAMPS & WEEKENDS

The Bay Area Country Dance Society (BACDS) sponsors a number of quality dance camps. In 1995 they are offering even more.

In March think **Spring Monte Toyon**, and think of a weekend of contra and English country dancing. This popular annual BACDS event takes place near Santa Cruz March 17-19. Application deadline: January 18. (415) 856-3038.

This summer, for the first time ever, the BACDS is sponsoring two week-long camps at the Alta Sierra Armenian camp near Kings Canyon National Park. June 24-July 1 is a week of Contra, Square and Swing dancing dubbed **Sierra Swing**. Featured talent is the **Horseflies**, the **Hillbillies from Mars**, **Cats & Jammers**, callers **Frank Hall** and **Lisa Greenleaf**, and a swing dance teacher TBA. \$450 for the week, food & cabin housing included. Registration deadline in April 1. (415) 864-6911.

July 1-7 is **Family Camp** at the same location, a camp run by families for families for fun. Price varies according to age. (707) 765-6559.

English Dance Week is at the woody Mendocino Woodlands camp July 8-15. (415) 878-8785.

A Dance



to benefit the
Make-A-Wish Foundation
of the Tri-Counties

Susan Michaels will call contra dances from New England and elsewhere, with music by the New Young Buzzards

All proceeds will help make a Wish come true for children in our area with life-threatening medical conditions

Sunday, December 18, 1994
6:30 to 10 pm
Carrillo Ballroom
100 E. Carrillo St.
Santa Barbara

CDSS: a Society Worth Joining

by Steve Shapiro

Contra dancing, as you may have found out, is a country-wide phenomenon. At the center of this activity is a national, nonprofit organization, the Country Dance and Song Society (CDSS). It is a membership organization which promotes contra dancing, English country dancing and other types of folk music and dance. The Santa Barbara Country Dance Society is an affiliate of CDSS.

A yearly publication, the *Group Directory*, lists our group as well as most contra, English and Morris dance groups around the country. Individuals can also become members of CDSS. The annual membership directory is a listing of dancers, like you, who have chosen to support CDSS. Joining CDSS is a good way for folks that you meet at out-of-town dances to find you when they come to your town (and vice versa).

BENEFITS OF JOINING

Among the benefits of becoming part of the CDSS "family" is receiving the *CDSS News*. This is a bimonthly paper that presents discussions of issues that concern dancers nationally, new dances, tunes and songs. It also includes announcements of marriages, births, deaths and events around the country.

Included in the *CDSS News* is a color pull-out of the latest offerings from the CDSS Store. Here you will find the latest recordings of various bands around the country complete with a short description. This is actually a supplement to the full-line catalog that members receive occasionally. As a member, you will get a 10% discount off store merchandise.

Membership in CDSS is only \$25 a year. It is well worth the expense. For information, look for the CDSS brochures at our dances or write to CDSS, 17 New South St., Northampton, MA 01060.

••••

Modified and reprinted with permission from Contra Corners, newsletter of the California Dance Co-operative (Los Angeles).

The author, the editor, and that lawyer fellow are all unrelated.

Heard It on the Contra Line

by Gypsy Meltowne

On Halloween, perspiring minds all wanted to know, "Who is Igor?" So we inquired around, and one of our anonymous yet reliable sources told us that Igor was none other than the legendary **Tony Johannsen**. Tony is well appreciated by many local musicians as host of the weekly Glendessary Jam sessions. Also, he and his charming wife, **Rachel Johannsen**, were extremely generous during the 1994 Harvest Moon Dance Festival, even though they were not attendees, by providing housing in their lovely Mission Canyon home to **Peter Barnes**, **Kerry Elkin** and **Jeremiah McLane**, 1994 Festival musicians.

And who was that strange ghoul?

Weil, we can only blow one cover per issue, and besides, **Joanne Uhl** is already mentioned elsewhere...

Speaking of Halloween, Ojai resident, frequent SBCDS dancer and one-time **Madonna** impersonator **Margot Eiser** has issued a request for photographs of the 1993 or 1992 Halloween dances. She can frequently be found at SB, Carpinteria and Ojai contra dances.

As we hinted in the previous issue, caller, musician, former Dance Star editor, and SBCDS Board member **Erik Hoffman** has left his Banana Road abode for foggier parts north. He continues to call here and in San Luis Obispo from time to time.

Thanks, Joanne!

Undoubtedly, our volunteers make our dances happen. Of the dozens of volunteers who help each month, one in particular may be going unnoticed by the dance community. **Joanne Uhl** is our accountant and tax preparer. We unload all kinds of information on her, and somehow she makes sense of it all and keeps various bureaucracies happy. The Board could not make sensible plans without her help.

Thanks, Joanne, you are truly a valued member of our community. Keep dancing with us.

Add'l Volunteer Recognition

We also thank a number of folks who have stepped forward recently to take over regular dance production jobs:

Scott Swain: events coordinator

Elliott Karpeles: hall booking, liaison and records

Bernadette Bagley: dance report preparation

George Cannon: dance report record-keeping

Elaine Miller: newspaper publicity

Peter Glatz: mail pickup and distribution

Most recently, two more folks have of-

fered to fill a too-long vacant volunteer position. Our dehydrated and carbohydrate-deprived selves will want to thank **Tony Marzio** and **Donna Karpeles**, our new refreshments co-coordinators. Of course, we still need volunteers for the coordinators to coordinate; that is, people to bring water and snacks for a particular dance.

For information on volunteering, call **Jonathan Southard**, our volunteer coordinator, at (805) 683-4909.

Folk Dance Class on Hiatus

The folk dance classes will cease for now, but look for special workshops at festivals such as the Sprung Floor in May. The members of Kitchen Junket, with two out-of-town musicians, are not able to play live music more often than once a month. Also, learning folk dancing requires a commitment of a class at least twice monthly in order to progress and build a repertoire. We aren't able to schedule dances that often.

I have enjoyed sharing my knowledge of folk dance, and the band members enjoyed the opportunity to play eastern European music once again. Thank you for attending!

Linelle Glass



Winter 1994-95



Old-Time Contra Dance Calendar

Santa Barbara Country Dance Society • P.O. Box 21904 • Santa Barbara, CA 93121 • (805) 969-1511

Location Key

CB Carrillo Ballroom, 100 East Carrillo St., Santa Barbara. Co-sponsored by Santa Barbara Adult Programs.

CARP Main School, corner of 8th and Palm, Carpinteria.

Come dance on the finest floor in the West at the Carrillo Ballroom and at the more intimate Carpinteria setting. Join the fun! Dance to the irresistible rhythms of live old-time string bands. We'll do the flowing contras of New England, colorful square dances, plus a few old-time couple dances such as waltz.

We hold an **Introductory Workshop** before each dance. Come at 6:30 to learn the basics. No prior experience or partner is necessary. All dances are taught and prompted. Generally, the dances are simpler earlier in the evening. Wear comfortable shoes and clothing, and have a good time!

Times & Admission (unless otherwise noted)

Admission: \$5

Dance time:

7:00–10:00 pm

Introductory Workshop:
6:30 pm

FOR THE LATEST DANCE INFORMATION, CALL (805) 969-1511, THE SBCDS 24-HOUR DANCE HOTLINE

DATE	LOC	CALLER • BAND • Etc.
Dec 4	Sun CB	Jonathan Southard • Hot Flashes Dress in layers. Prepare to remove most of them.
Dec 10	Sat CARP	Gary Shapiro • Chameleons The ones who keep changing return to Carpinteria following their triumphant debut in October.
Dec 18	Sun CB	Susan Michaels • New Young Buzzards A very special dance to benefit the local Make-A-Wish Foundation chapter, an organization which helps make Wishes come true for children in the area with life-threatening medical conditions.
Dec 25	Sun CB	Erik Hoffman • Ken Keppler, Jeannie McLerie & Friends Our annual Christmas Day dance with our traditional Christmas talent. Intro 6:30, dance 7–10:30.
Jan 1	Sun CB	Gary Shapiro • Kristina Gibbs & the Resolutions Once again Kristina puts together a super-charged dance band.
Jan 14	Sat CARP	Carl Magagnosc • Growling Old Geezers With a good supply of geezer beans laid in they'll be growling gloriously.
Jan 15	Sun CB	Jonathan Southard • Kitchen Junket It's that great San Diego–Santa Barbara–San Luis Obispo band.
Jan 29	Sun CB	Carl Magagnosc • Swing Easy It's not every month we can have a fifth Sunday dance so swing on by!
Feb 5	Sun CB	Carl Magagnosc • Kitchen Junket • The band from Amtrak?
Feb 11	Sat CARP	Jonathan Southard • Hot Flashes • Leave the down jacket at home.
Feb 19	Sun CB	Gary Shapiro • Immortal Lemmings That "r" in the band's name is not a typo.

December 1994

				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

January 1995

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February 1995

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26	27	28				

Other Events in Our Vicinity

Ojai — No schedule at press time. Call the SBCDS hotline for the latest Ojai schedule. Ojai Art Center, 113 Montgomery St.

San Luis Obispo — Second Saturdays, 8–11 pm, and fourth Sundays, 7–10 pm, at the SLO Veteran's Hall, Grand Ave. near Monterey St. Intro one-half hour earlier. Admission \$5. For more info call David at (805) 541-1148 or Cynthia at (805) 546-0518.

Los Angeles area — Contra dances every weekend. Call the LA Dance Hotline at (818) 951-2003.

LA New Year's Dawn Dance — 8 pm New Year's Eve until 7 am New Year's Day. Callers Cris Miller, Chuck Galt and Lou Dow; bands TBA. War Memorial Hall, 435 S. Fair Oaks, South Pasadena. For more info call Lou at (818) 504-9518.

'Cover' Story from page 2

exhaustion and relief (almost) while we listened to the thunder roll and the rain-drops of a tropical storm pattering outside...

Tropical storm!?! Lightning and rain!?! Our final test. (Rick called all the way from a job in LA, after a sleepless night, to share my worries.) Here it is Friday morning—do we put it up or not? Install 20-

foot-tall aluminum poles in an electrical storm—not smart. Move the Festival to the Veterans Hall, after all we've done to be ready for this event? At Oak Park I put the decision to the crew. To a person they said "The storm will go away. They always have. Let's just do it." And we did. And it worked perfectly. And then we danced!

P.S. We tested our entire system for electrical grounding once it was in place, made some minor adjustments and achieved a safety level better than the strictest code.

P.P.S. It took just 5 hours to put up and 2 hours to take down this year. Next year will be even better.

P.P.P.S. People really liked it.

And you thought it was all about music and dancing together. That's just the half of it.

••••

*Canopy drawings by Carl Magagnosc.
Sun flaps on the south side are omitted from the drawings.*

Join the SBCDS for '95

Join the Santa Barbara Country Dance Society. You'll receive a \$1 discount at regular dances (generally those in the main listing) and priority admission to the Harvest Moon Dance Festival. Membership is \$18 per calendar year, pro-rated by calendar quarter. To join for 1995, send a check for \$18 to the SBCDS or sign up at one of our dances.

Santa Barbara Country Dance Society

dance star

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E-mail: cannon@alumni.caltech.edu

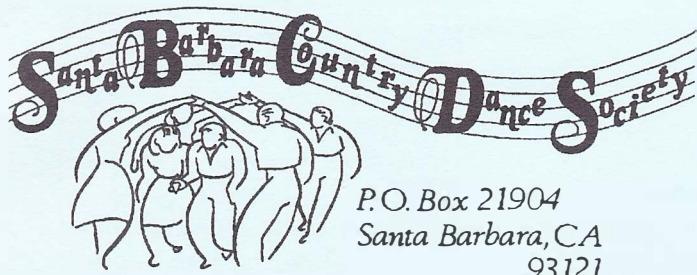
Editing & layout: Gary Shapiro

The *Dance Star* encourages articles, letters, artwork, comments and suggestions. Send or phone them to the SBCDS, or bring them to a dance.

corrections

In the Fall Dance Star, we misspelled the name of Barbara Richer, a member of the Immortal Lemmings.

We would like to reassure the more careful readers of the Fall calendar that November 1994 indeed contains only 30 days. In fact, *all* Novembers until further notice will contain only 30 days.



P.O. Box 21904
Santa Barbara, CA
93121

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