

Benefit dance with Footloose, Erik Hoffman March 7

Excitement is building for our first dance of the Spring Calendar (page 3). It's a special SBCDS fundraising dance (\$10) featuring **Footloose**. The band includes **Andrea Hoag**, fiddle; **David DiGiuseppe**, accordion, mandolin, and washboard; and **Pete Campbell**, piano and bass. They will have played the Fiddling Frog Dance Festival the last weekend in February, toured the state, and washed the beach sand from

their toes before they play the Carrillo Ballroom, attracting dancers from all over, on Sunday, March 7.

From the Footloose web site: "Footloose is a high energy and oft-times zany dance band [that] has become a highly respected and sought after band, playing at numerous dance weekends and week-long dance camps.

"The diverse musical influences each

member brings to the band help to explain (if not excuse) their unique sound [which] draws upon Irish, southern old time, jazz and classical music influences."

See the whole page at <<http://www.mindspring.com/~daviddg/3fl.html>>.

It's remarkable how the above adjectives also apply to caller and hometown-boy-made-good **Erik Hoffman**, another key ingredient of this tasty Sunday.

Santa Barbara Country Dance Society

dance star

Volume 9 Number 4 Spring 1999

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[Local Highlights]

March 14: It's the closest Sunday to St. Patrick's Day. To celebrate, the **Young Celtic Fiddlers** will be there to join **Kitchen Junket** for a set or two. That's not all: enjoy the step dance demo, always a thrill, during the break.



March 28: Annual **Spring Potluck** at 5:30 p.m. sharp. Bring yummys to share, tableware, and \$1. Turkey provided. After the potluck, stay for the dance featuring **Chuck Galt** and **Turtle Creek**.

[Spring Is Sprung]

Spring "is" the **Sprung Floor Dance Festival**, that is, the tenth annual, no less, on the Saturday and Sunday (plus one hour of Monday) of Memorial Day Weekend. The flyer is due by early May, but here's what we know, or think we know, now:

Saturday begins at Oak Park (location subject to change) with a **free dance** at 2:15 p.m. It's an open mike (Caller's Jubilee) dance and also open band. Don Ward (dward@loop.com, 818 353-8052) coordinates the callers, and the band coordinator position is open. Please contact Peter Glatz (pmgquilt@silcom.com, 805 682-4572) if you can help coordinate the music. At 5:00 we take a stroll on the bridge over the creek to the picnic area for our

Saturday Evening Potluck. Then we dance under the stars from 7-10 to the calling of **Charlie Fenton**. After that, no, it's not over yet, we migrate over to **Rusty's Pizza** on Carrillo at Bath, for pizza and a **jam session** open to all.

Sunday possibly begins with a **Potluck Brunch** somewhere. Your place? Then comes the **main event**: dancing from 1 p.m.-1 a.m. on the sprung floor, except for a dinner break. It's mostly contras and squares in the Ballroom with various workshops in the side rooms. Various bands, callers and instructors will be scheduled; sample them all!

••••

A great many other events await you; information is available at our dances on the literature table in the lobby.

Ojai folk dance party

An all-folk dance party comes April 24 to the Ojai Art Center (113 S. Montgomery St.). Dance time is 7-11 p.m.

For those used to contra dancing only, don't shy away. We'll teach some very simple dances to live music, and we welcome contra dancers to give folk dancing a try. For the more experienced dancers, live music will also be played for intermediate and advanced level dances. Most teaching will take place the first hour or so and the rest of the evening is devoted to a folk dance party using a combination of live music and folk dance tapes. If you're an experienced dancer, come help

see **FOLK DANCE**, next page

Jams spread downtown

It's live, it's music, it's free, and you can be part of it. Four jam sessions happen every week for your jamming and/or listening pleasure.

Sundays: Irish music jam at the James Joyce, 5 p.m. 513 State St.

Mondays: Irish music jam at Dargan's Pub, 7 p.m. 18 E. Ortega St., set back from the street down a walkway.

Wednesdays: Old-Time music jam at Jefferson Hall, Unitarian Society, 1535 Santa Barbara St., 7 p.m. Moves to Alice K. Park Memorial Garden in April.

Thursdays: Irish music jam at Dargan's Pub, 5:30 p.m.

Folk radio update

Since we listed folk music on the radio in the last issue, KPFK Los Angeles has installed a new transmitter for Santa Barbara at 98.7 FM. (The 90.7 L.A. frequency might still work better for some.)

Annual Meeting March 7

The SBCDS Board Meeting of March 7 has been designated our Annual Meeting. All interested parties are welcome.

The meeting takes place from 4:30-6:30 p.m. in the Baylor Room (the room next to the ballroom), 100 E. Carrillo.

Come for the meeting, stay for the special dance.

..... comments & opinion.

On Style, Form, Commitment & Community #1

When I read Keith Connes' well written comments in the Winter 1998-9 issue of the *Dance Star*, I had an immediate reaction. Those of you who have observed my personal dance style might think that I would disagree with Keith's comments, but I found myself in agreement with his basic premises and only disagreeing on minor points, but from an entirely different perspective.

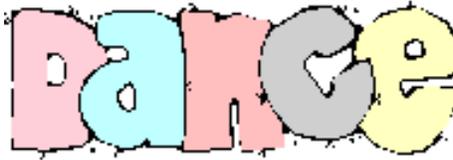
I would like to suggest that contemporary contra dancing consists of a hierarchy of dance styles. The top of the hierarchy is "group dancing," followed by "couple dancing" and "individual dancing." I also suggest that individuals have an obligation to be on time for dancing with their partner as a couple, and couples have an obligation to be on time for dancing with the group.

For example, "long lines forward and back" (referenced in Keith's letter) is a form of group dancing, i.e., the entire group, with the exception of couples who may be out at the top and bottom, is expected to dance in lines forward and back. I exclude the end couples in the forward and back (one of my minor disagreements with Keith's comments) since these couples are technically "out" and are not obliged to join the group. In English Country Dancing, the out couples traditionally stand in-place during long lines forward and back.

Couple dancing occurs when a couple is out at the top or bottom of a set or when there is a partner or neighbor swing in the dance pattern. These couples then have an opportunity to express alternate dance styles (which Keith refers to as "whirls, twirls, lifts and backbends"). However, couples who embellish the basic swing have an obligation to the group to be on time for any figure that requires their participation with the group (such as Keith's example of extending their hand for the

next allemande), especially if there is a progression in the middle of the dance.

Some dance patterns are more for individuals, such as do-si-do. In this case, the individuals are free to add whatever embellishments they desire, such as "spinning like a top." However, these individuals also have an obligation to finish on time so they can be ready for the next figure, especially a figure that involves their part-



ner or the group.

I have used the phrase "on time" several times in these comments. To be on time, a dancer must be aware of the number of measures and beats (the "count") for each figure in the dance. Some figures are 8 counts and some are 16 counts (2 counts = 2 beats = 1 measure). Before adding any embellishments as a couple or as an individual, a dancer should be able to count the dance figures and end on time for the transition to the next figure. Some contra dances have great moments that will be missed if dancers are not on time (such as the transition in Wizard's Walk from the end of the partner swing to the start of the

Folk dance from front page

demonstrate early in the evening for those learning folk dances for the first time.

Kitchen Junket, whose members are experienced folk dance musicians, will provide live music. Linelle Glass, who has a strong folk dance background, will teach beginning dances from 7-8 p.m. and will introduce some intermediate/advanced dances also.

If you enjoy folk dancing, join us. If you have been introduced to contra dancing and would like to explore other fun forms of dance, give the folk dance party a try. For information please contact Linelle (805 682-1593, lglass@sbceo.k12.ca.us) or Ginnie (805 646-0832, mickelv@vcss.k12.ca.us). We hope to see you there!

Linelle Glass and Ginnie Mickelson

Walk).

Finally, I agree with Keith that "exhibitionists" who launch into a swing when only the actives are swinging do destroy the symmetry of the dance and are ignoring their responsibility to the group (the caller and the rest of the dancers). However, there are some figures, for example, when the actives cast down the outside of the line and come back, where the inactives can swing without destroying the symmetry of the dance, as long as the finish on time to join the actives in the next figure (such as circle left).

In conclusion, I suggest that there is a hierarchy to contemporary contra dancing that permits couples and individuals to express their particular dance style within the framework of dancing as a group, as long as the couples and individuals respect their obligations to the dance community, of which we are all members.

I realize that some of my comments here depart from the concept of traditional contra dancing, and I welcome feedback and comments.

Steve Davis

sdavis@silcom.com

On style, etc. #2

Excellent response! I think you've added a lot of enlightenment and I don't disagree with anything you say. Regarding the out couples joining "long lines forward and back," I see your point and can agree that this should be optional. Thanks for participating in the discussion.

Regards,

Keith Connes

more RESPONSES on back page

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dance star

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P.O. Box 21904

Santa Barbara, CA 93121-1904

805 969-1511

cannon@alumni.caltech.edu

<<http://www.rain.org/~gshapiro/sbclds/>>

Newsletter this, that, and the other thing:

Gary Shapiro, gayres@iname.com

Opinions expressed are those of the individual authors. Express yours in the next issue!

Alert! Reports have surfaced that more women will be attending our upcoming dances. Men! You're needed! Don't delay! (See related alert on page 4.)

Spring
1999



Santa Barbara Contra Dance Calendar

with Ojai and SLO listings

Calendar produced by Santa Barbara Country Dance Society • P.O. Box 21904 • Santa Barbara, CA 93121-1904 • 805 969-1511

Come enjoy a dance to the irresistible rhythms of a live old-time string band. We'll dance flowing contras of New England, a thriving North American tradition, plus other delights. All dances are taught and prompted: no experience or partner neces-

sary. Wear comfortable clothes and shoes.

SANTA BARBARA DANCES

Sponsor: SB Country Dance Society
Dance from 7–10 p.m. every Sunday, usually at the Carrillo Ballroom, one of the best dance floors anywhere. Carrillo dances are cosponsored by SB Parks and Recreation Department.

SBCDS 24-hour Dance Hotline: 805 969-1511.

SAN LUIS OBISPO DANCES

Sponsor: Central Coast Country Dance Society

Dance in SLO on the third Saturday of each month from 8–11 p.m.

Break-time snacks are potluck. International folk dancing precedes at 5:30.

SLO 24-hour Danceline: 805 541-0201.

OJAI DANCES

Sponsor: Ojai Art Center

Dance 7:30–10:30 p.m. For more information call Ginnie at 805 646-0832, or Karin at 805 933-0660.

INTRODUCTORY WORKSHOP

All three groups hold workshops 30 minutes before each dance evening. Also, the simpler dances are generally earlier in the evening.

ADMISSION

\$6 for SB and SLO dances, \$7 for Ojai, unless otherwise noted; *subject to change*.

KEY TO DANCE LOCATIONS

Santa Barbara Carrillo Ballroom **CB** Carrillo Recreation Center
100 E. Carrillo St.

Oak Park **OP** Junipero at Calle Real, SB

San Luis Obispo Veteran's Hall **SLO** 801 Grand Ave.
East of 101, Cal Poly exit

Ojai Art Center **OA** 113 S. Montgomery

DATE LOC CALLER • BAND • Etc.

March 7 Sun CB Erik Hoffman • Footloose (\$10) • Of the 14 SB dances not to be missed on this calendar, this is certainly one of them. A special SBCDS fundraiser.
March 14 Sun CB Jonathan Southard • Kitchen Junket • St. Patrick has a surprise or two for us.
March 20 Sat OA James Hutson • Kristina & Her Right-Hand Stars • Spring Equinox dance
March 20 Sat SLO Warren Blier • Michael's Mixed Nuts • Spring Begins dance
March 21 Sun CB Barbara Stewart • Sliding Scale • First Full Day of Spring dance
March 28 Sun CB Chuck Galt • Turtle Creek • Preceding the dance, our annual Spring Potluck at 5:30 p.m. Bring a dish to share, tableware, and \$1. Turkey provided.

April 4 Sun CB Jeff Spero • Kristina & Her Right-Hand Stars • Daylight Savings Time begins
April 11 Sun CB Gary Shapiro • John Light & Laura Light • These two Lights are not related or even, you know, but they do make beautiful music together.
April 17 Sat SLO Warren Blier • Continental Drifters
April 18 Sun CB Warren Blier • Michael's Mixed Nuts
April 24 Sat OA Folk Dancing with Linelle Glass and Kitchen Junket • Live music! 7 to 11!
April 25 Sun CB Drew Tronvig • Chameleons

May 2 Sun CB Gary Shapiro • Sliding Scale
May 9 Sun CB Jonathan Southard • Jump Fingers • Treat Mom to the contra dance.
May 15 Sat OA Chuck Galt • Michael's Mixed Nuts • This band really is Nuts.
May 15 Sat SLO Greg McKenzie • Growling Old Geezers
May 16 Sun CB Greg McKenzie • Growling Old Geezers • SB debut for Greg
May 23 Sun CB Don Ward • Kitchen Junket
May 29 Sat OP Charlie Fenton • Larry Unger & Elke Baker (\$7) • Preceding this special 7 p.m. dance: free Caller's Jubilee/open-band dance at 2:15 p.m., a potluck in the park (across the creek) at 5, Intro at 6:30 as usual. Party and jam session at Rusty's Pizza after the dance. Saturday location subject to change.
Sprung Floor Dance Festival
May 30 Sun CB Caller Charlie Fenton, plus several other outstanding callers and bands. Join dancers from near and far on the super **sprung floor** from 1 p.m.–1 a.m. Simultaneous afternoon workshops. (\$TBA)

March 1999

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May 1999

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English Country Dancing — Schedule varies.
For latest schedule call 805 682-5523.

Dance in L.A. area — Contra dances every weekend. L.A. Dance Hotline: 818 951-2003.

Responses from page 2

On style, etc. #3

First, thanks to all the writers for keeping a fire burning.

I have just three comments about Steve's response to Keith's letter (which was a response to Lawrence Wallin's in the Fall 1998 issue).

While we each have our own individual style, for my money, no dance pattern is "for" individuals (although I'll have to think about "turn single"). The one example Steve gives is the do-si-do. Strictly speaking, the pattern is for two people to relate spatially to each other in a particular way. With the use of eye contact, and intentions, the relationship between the two is more than spatial.

As I and others have written, transitions are one of the greatest aspects of contra dance. One transition that many men enjoy is a swing followed non-stop by the two men meeting in the middle for an allemande left. The inertia of the swing, channeled properly, sends the men into the center and oh-so-nicely into the allemande left. Now a different fun move is to twirl the woman toward the end of the swing. For better or worse, these two fun things are mutually exclusive. If one is *always* swing dancing at the end of the swing, he'll forever miss that cool transition, the inertial flow. Of course, he's welcome to do so if he can get himself and that left hand out there in time.

Another consideration when expressing a couple style: might new dancers be intimidated, or get the wrong idea of what contra dance is all about? The features of contra dance that I have in mind are inclusivity and relative ease of learning.

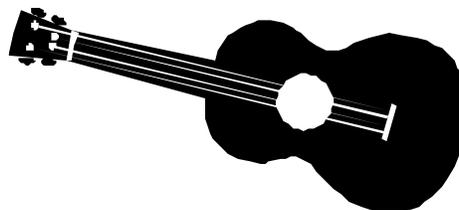
Gary Shapiro

On style, etc. #4

Having had the opportunity to see Steve Davis' letter prior to submission, I would also like to add that I believe the bottom line is that social dancing is about having fun. I agree with Steve that as long as the timing and the symmetry of the contra dance are not compromised, there should be room for self expression. If some dancers and/or callers begin to insist that there be no embellishment at all, many other dancers would soon find themselves bored

and stop coming altogether, seeking out and supporting instead other dance forums that allow—perhaps even welcome—more flexibility of style.

On another matter, as a woman, I also take exception to Keith's remarks about women with sweaty palms. First of all, I am surprised that he singles out women in this manner, when the number of men with sweaty palms (not to mention, sweaty arms and hands) far outnumber the number of women. In fact, in my own experience, about the only times my palms encounter any moisture is when I interact with a dryness-challenged man. And as for Keith's well-meaning sugges-



tion that we use body powder—a suggestion that should perhaps be made to all, without singling out either gender—that will work for about five minutes.

The bottom line is, unless a way is found to attach portable air-conditioning to each participant, dancing will trigger perspiration, in some perhaps more than others. Not to expect and accept that as an occupational hazard, if you will, is to set yourself up for disappointment.

Faigy Avnon

Alert! Reports have surfaced that **more men** will be attending our upcoming dances. **Women!** You're needed! Don't delay! (See related alert on page 2.)

On style, etc. #5

I do not object to embellishments; in fact, I enjoy watching them, as long as they don't involve disregarding the choreography of a dance that the caller is relaying to the dancers—such as the example I cited, of some inactives swinging when the call is for only actives to swing.

As for singling out women with sweaty palms, my reference was to "the moist neighbors who come my way." I didn't use the word "women," but it's true that the discerning reader will deduce that, since I am a man, my neighbors are usually women. Perhaps I should have included the fact that I have allemanded with sweaty-palmed men as well.

I must point out that my reference to the use of body powder was gender-neutral. You see, I can be as politically correct as the next man—er, person.

Anyway, let me make it clear that I love contra dancing, I love the SBCDS dances in particular, and feel great affection and bonding towards all who attend. If I offended anybody by my comments, I am sorry.

Love,
Keith



Post Office Box 21904 • Santa Barbara, CA 93121-1904

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