



NEFFA *News*

New England Folk Festival Association

1950 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge MA 02140 — (617) 354-1340

Spring 1999 — Volume XXV #1

NANCY HANSSEN'S PRESIDENTIAL FAREWELL

This is my last message as president of NEFFA, a fact I view with conflicting feelings. It has been an enormous pleasure and a great honor to be head of an organization which provides so much enjoyment to so many people. Walking down the corridors of the Natick high school during the Festival is extremely gratifying; in addition to the folks who, seeing my badge, stop me to say "thank-you", there are so many just there having a wonderful time. Remembering my own joy when I first came to the Festival more than 20 years ago, I am delighted to have been able to help provide it to others now.

But being president means responsibilities and challenges as well as joy, and after four years I am ready to pass those on. I look forward to remaining on the Board and continuing to help create the Festival, but I also look forward to having more freedom to enjoy it all.

During my presidency the Board has been an incredible source of help and support, working on committees to solve problems, offering advice, keeping our debates and deliberations reasoned and on track - and, of course, producing the Festival and all our other events. I am very grateful to all the Board and committee members, past and present, and especially to our officers and advisors: vice-presidents Bob Solosko and Shelagh Ellman-Pearl and treasurer Ralph Jones, who have loyally carried out their tasks; legal advisor Leslie Morrison, who has generously given her time and expertise; Dan Pearl, who, in the unglamorous but very demanding position of secretary, has done an amazing job of producing and distributing minutes, meeting notices, etc., and has been a wonderful source of advice and support. And I owe a special debt of gratitude to advisor Larry Jennings, who was always there with information, advice and encouragement. To all of the above, and to you, our members, I say a heartfelt "thank-you."

See you at the Festival!

— Nancy Hanssen — *President, NEFFA*

in the *News*



what's
happening



calendar



boat dance



In the **year 2000**, our current plans are that the Festival will be the weekend of April 14-16, **2000**. This is the weekend **just before the Boston Marathon**, and there is a lot of competition for motel rooms in the area.

We suggest that you book rooms as early as you can to avoid disappointment!

Check with the motel; they may allow bookings up to a year in advance.

DANCE FRIDAYS AT THE CENTER FOR CULTURAL EXCHANGE

Every Friday evening - 52 weeks per year - the Center for Cultural Exchange, One Longfellow Square, Portland, Maine, will sponsor ethnic dance parties. These events will feature a rotating selection of the best local musicians and dancers, as well as visiting artists from around the country and around the world. From 7:00 to 8:30, dance teachers will be offering instruction for beginners in the basic movements—these dances are all very accessible, and with a little bit of assistance, even those of us with two left feet can cut a swath across the dance floor. After 8:30 it's dance, dance, dance.

Each month, the schedule of events will rotate according to the following calendar:

1st Fridays: **Mediterranean folk dancing** - Greek, Balkan and Italian music and dance: dance the tarantella, sirto, kalamatiano, lesnoto and much more...*[The NEFFA Board has approved a risk-sharing grant to support these evenings of dance. — ed.]*

2nd Fridays: **Latin dance parties** - Dominican meringue, Cuban son, Puerto Rican bomba y plena, Mexican mariachi, salsa from Nuevo York ...

3rd Fridays: **American couple dance traditions** - swing, jitterbug, lindy, polka, waltz, circles and squares, lots more...

4th Fridays: **Celtic music and dance** - Irish, French Canadian and Cape Breton traditions, ceilis, soirées ...

5th Fridays (every fourth month): **Asian Indian bhangra dance parties** sponsored by the India Association of Maine.

Specific information about each Friday's artists will be available about six weeks prior to each date, but the general calendar will follow that outlined here (i.e. if someone is interested in Latin dancing, they will know in advance that it will always happen on the second Friday of each month). Tickets to Dance Friday events will be available at the door, and prices will vary depending upon who is performing. For more information please call +1-207-761-1545.



Highlights of the Minutes of the NEFFA Exec Board

For information on attending future meetings, call Dan Pearl at 508-229-2854 or E-mail: pearl@sw.stratus.com

25 October 1998

Family Dance Report

The report was distributed. People are happy to subsidize the losses incurred by this series.

Thursday Night Dance Committee (Dan Pearl)

A report was distributed. Highlights:

Average attendance is down from the previous season, but still quite decent at 201.

The Thursday after the Festival attracted the highest attendance every for our series: 352.

Sue Rosen has joined the committee.

Grants (Robert Johnson)

In the past year, we approved both requests made of the Grants Committee.

The regular motion to re-fund the Grants Committee was made and approved for \$5000.

Anything above \$500 goes to the Board with Grants Committee recommendation. Some of the money awarded is outright grants, and others are loans.

Ticket Prices (David Reid)

The Ticket Committee has created a formula to create a more regular price schedule.

Three price grids based on three different base prices were computed; the chart with a \$12 non-member single session price seems to be favorable.

Bob: We should revisit membership rates whenever we change ticket price. **Peter:** We could make a membership price a function of ticket price.

Festival Flyer (Dan Pearl)

Dan presented some drafts of a Festival flyer that he feels addresses some issues he has with the previous flyer. There was general encouragement and suggestions given. Dan, Nancy and Janet will approve the flyer design before it goes to press.

Nominating Committee (Elsa)

The vacancies are: President, Secretary, four Directors, and Nominating Committee member. The call for nominees will be going into the next newsletter.

Arrangements (Bob Solosko)

There may be a classroom available to us for the next Festival. We'll know by this week.

For the year 2000, the school does dismiss early on the

Friday before the school vacation. But in 1999, the Auditorium is already booked for the corresponding Friday. This means we should not even wait until the 1999 Festival before we apply for the facility. No one had a problem with this. Nancy mentioned that we should encourage Festival guests to book hotels early, as that is the weekend before the Boston Marathon.

Program (Janet Yeracaris)

The program timeline was distributed. The budget was also distributed.

Most applications have been received at this point. The preliminary grid is still on track for mid-February.

Katy Burns is not interested in taking on the Program Chair position.

Dan is willing to help with data preparation for the booklet, but someone else is needed to do the layout.

We'd like to create a position of Evaluations Coordinator, responsible for distribution and collection of Evaluation forms.

Sound (Michael Bergman)

No big changes expected this year. Expect the usual small inflation in the budget.

In smaller halls we need stage managers.

T-Shirts

There is a discrepancy in the amount of money credited to T-shirts. It is hard to track this, given the way that records are kept at Performer Sales. We were less than satisfied with the responsiveness and accuracy of our T-shirt vendor; we will look for another company next year.

Miscellaneous

- **Newsletter Editor Search:** Dan has contacted several candidates.
- **Computers Available to a Good Home:** Michael Bergman has some older computers that could be used for some light word or data processing.
- **Folk Almanac:** They would like us to advertise. We have never paid for advertising before. We should look at the big picture of goals.
- **Membership Issues:** Nancy would like to form a committee to investigate membership issues. Bob Solosko, John Wojtowicz and Jean Krogh volunteered to take this on.



Some Words from Larry Jennings

"I have something kind of personal to say.

"I've always looked forward to coming to these meetings. I enjoy them. I consider them to be opportunities, not to be a drudge. Especially for you Elsa, where you have so many people to find, I'd urge you not to go in with the attitude, "well, the

meetings aren't all *that* bad." I think they're exciting.

"But I'm a sick man. I'm not going to be able to come much anymore. So I want you to know: If I'm not here, I still thinking about you. And call me for my advice, for what it's worth. It's a very difficult thing for me to get out of the house.

"Thanks for listening."

Nancy: And thank you, Larry, for years of...[interrupted by spontaneous applause from the committee.]

WHAT IS THE DMDF?

It's the Dance Musicians Development Fund Benefit Dance and it'll be held this year on Sunday, March 28, 1999, from 12:00 noon to 10:00 PM, with a potluck at about 5:00 PM. Admission is \$6 per day or evening session. It'll be at the VFW Hall, 688 Huron Avenue in Cambridge, Mass. Call the Folk Arts Center at +1-617-491-6083 for information.

6 December 1998

Nominating Committee (Elsa Elliott)

Susan Worland is likely going to resign. It is up to the Board to decide to fill the slot before the next election.

Ralph Page Legacy Weekend

Sylvia Miskoe reports 30 full-time registrants, some part-timer, and some scholarship recipients. Registrations should pick up before the event.

Publicity (Steve Boylan)

In the next few weeks, information will be going out to the early-deadline publications. TV and radio stations, on the other hand, need March notices. We have a slot with Dick Pleasants for 'GBH's "Folk Heritage" on April 17th. We have had radio slots on WUMB before. Other ideas: Send packs of flyers to distant groups; place an ad in CDSS News, WBAI-FM (NYC), music schools.

Steve: Should we advertise? **Peter:** It not only helps us, it supports the publications. **Michael:** We should advertise where people might *not* know us. **Dan:** Is there a greater Boston teachers' magazine? **Rayna:** There's the MTA magazine.

Michael: Do we want to do a class discount? **Bob:** Kids and teens are already low cost. **Robert J:** It was tried over a decade ago and abandoned. **Jean:** It might be hard to manage entire classes attending Festival events. **Rayna:** Classes don't take field trips during school vacation. **Dan:** It has been

pointed out that Natick High School kids don't even know we exist. Perhaps distribute special student passes (or place an ad in the NHS school paper).

Nancy: Should we publicize information about other NEFFA activities? The Family Dance comes to mind. We need writers!

Dan: Tony Parkes did a great job on the 50th Retrospective brochure.

There was a discussion of photos: what is effective, and who might have some.

Program (Janet Yeracaris)

Janet presented her program philosophy document.

We do have the North Star room available to us this year. This room, unlike the Loft (which it replaces) is HC-accessible.

The split will be roughly as it was in 1998: 40% contra, 30% international, and 30% other couple. There will be more English, a swing workshop, Cajun-Zydeco, etc.

We are still working out arrangements for stage-manager coverage. There will be morris dancing on Friday to entertain early arrivers.

Sound (Michael Bergman)

We have decided that we don't want big changes in our contractor-run halls; we are not going to do bidding this year. Our intention is that unless there are big problems, we will be using the same contractor for several years.

Hospitality (Shelagh Ellman-Pearl)

A Hospitality budget/timeline was presented. Shelagh will be preparing a HC Access Guide.

Michael: Would it be reasonable to ask people to use the Auditorium HC elevator between performances? It makes a lot of noise. **Leslie:** We should ensure we all know how to handle requests for HC lift usage.

Membership (Bob Solosko)

We want to simplify membership procedure and make memberships more attractive. We considered many factors and came up with the following.

- We propose having two membership categories: Individual and Family (2 ballots).
- We are proposing having only 1-year memberships, with expirations just before the Festival. This would simplify things for members and for us. **Michael:** Wouldn't this lengthen the renewal line at the Festival? **Bob:** The Pre-Festival packet would have a renewal form in it.
- Currently, if one joins at the Festival, you get two Festivals worth of discounts. We will eliminate this.
- Individual Membership rate should be the adult member's all-Festival ticket rate plus \$3. (Our membership fees are still very low.) Family: 2 × Individual – \$2.
- Other possible benefits: Thursday dance or Family dance discount coupons, NEFFA merchandise discounts, Ralph

Page Weekend discount, and discounts on other events.

- Run-in period would begin after the Festival.

Ralph: If the database doesn't contain the data we want (re: expiration dates), why not change the database? Currently, memberships expire in June. **Bob:** There is the issue of transition. **Michael:** This is a large change. We need time to think about it.

Bob: So the issues to think about are:

- Categories of membership
- Money raising goals (break-even or raise money)
- Membership period
- Cost of membership
- What membership benefits should be

Bob: Virtually all organizations have annual expiration dates.

Dan: CDSS has monthly expiration dates, it spreads out the work. **Nancy:** CDS Boston has an annual expiration, and Arthur does nothing except CDS memberships for two months.

Grants (Robert Johnson)

A proposal to the Grants Committee from the Portland (ME) Performing Arts Center to support a Balkan dance group special monthly series. \$1500 was requested. Some questions were raised, and the motion was tabled.

Miscellaneous

- **Food Operations:** Mary and Don will be doing this for one more year, but they'd like a replacement.
- **Retreat Reports:** Not every retreat committee leader has submitted written reports.

EXPAND YOUR CD COLLECTION AND BENEFIT THE BOSTON FOLK FESTIVAL

The Boston Folk Festival [not NEFFA] is having a fundraising event to benefit their fledgling folk festival, the second of which will be taking place in Boston in September.

They'd like donations of used CD's and records in advance of the sale which will take place at UMass Boston, 100 Morrissey Blvd, in the McCormack Cafeteria on Saturday March 20 (9am-5pm) and Sunday March 21 (noon-5pm).

You can drop off your recordings at the following locations: **Acton:** The Minor Chord; **Cambridge:** Sandy's Music; **Dorchester:** WUMB at UMASS; **E. Bridgewater:** Rockpile CDs; **Falmouth:** Eight Cousins Books; **Framingham:** Centre Music; **Lexington:** Music Emporium; **N. Dartmouth:** Baker Books; **S. Easton:** Blackthorne Tavern; and **Wakefield:** Linden Tree Coffeehouse.

For more information, call 617-287-6911 or on the Internet at <http://www.wumb.org/folkfest>.

THE BOAT DANCE RETURNETH!

There will be a **Boat Dance** on Sunday, July 11, departing Commonwealth Pier at 7:30 PM, returning at about 10:30 PM. We will be **contra dancing** to live music while being taken on a trip around Boston Harbor. Dance on the top deck under the stars or on lower, roofed-over decks. You haven't danced until you've done it on a summer's evening cruise!

Tickets are \$18 in advance, and \$20 at the dock before we leave. There are non-dancer tickets available for any friends or family who might enjoy just the cruise. Non-dancer tickets are \$10 at all times. Tickets for children 12 and under are \$5 at all times. Boats can be dangerous places, and younger children, if you bring them, must be directly supervised by a non-dancing adult.

For more information on tickets, contact Angel Roman via e-mail at Rebecca_Roman@PPIO.com, or, if you must, leave a message at phone # (508)626-9370. I look forward to seeing you there!

The NEFFA News, a publication of the New England Folk Festival Association, is published four times a year to communicate with its membership and other interested persons. **Send Calendar items** to Jacob and Nancy Bloom, 169 Sylvia St., Arlington MA 02476, or to bloom@gis.net. **Other submissions** go to Dan Pearl, 15 Buffalo Run, Southborough, MA 01772, or to pearl@sw.stratus.com.

Publicize your events! Display advertising or flyer enclosures are available for qualifying folk-related organizations. For rate and deadline information, contact Dan Pearl at +1-508-229-2854.

The New England Folk Festival Association is a non-profit educational and cultural organization, incorporated under the general laws of Massachusetts to encourage, sponsor, and preserve high standards of performance of the folk arts and traditions in New England and elsewhere.

Membership entitles one to voting privileges, publications, and to reduced admission to selected NEFFA-sponsored activities. It is open to interested persons who support our objectives.

Annual Dues are \$7/individual (\$18 for 3 years); \$11/family (up to 2 people over 18) (\$28 for 3 years) Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent of the law. Send check, payable to NEFFA, to the office. Occasionally, NEFFA shares its mailing list for a one-time use by like-minded folk organizations. If you do not want your name and address shared in this way, tell us with your membership. **Please direct all telephone inquiries** to the NEFFA office.

Interested persons can get on NEFFA's mailing list for one year at no charge. Send request with full name and address to the office.

Deadlines

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Covering</u>	<u>Calendar</u>	<u>News</u>
Spring	Apr.-Jul.	Jan. 20	Feb. 15
Summer	Jul.-Oct.	Apr. 20	May 15
Autumn	Oct.-Jan.	Jul. 20	Aug. 15
Winter	Jan.-Apr.	Oct. 20	Nov. 15



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