She was a young woman, brimming with energy and attractiveness. She was tall and strong, with an easy smile, but her attractiveness came more from something inside her. It came from some quiet, internal confidence, a confidence that allowed her to be comfortable with people, comfortable enough to hand out small kindnesses to people she didn’t know as easily as she handed them out to people she did know. She was the kind of woman that any of the men that night would have been thrilled to dance with.

He was an older gentleman, tall and thin, almost gaunt. A gentle man, just a bit shy, beset by the slowness that age and shyness impose. Anyone looking at him would say “He sure is spry for his age.” But that would be a comment as much as a compliment. For age and its inevitable fallibilities had surely eroded the energy he once must have possessed.

She came that night to dance. She came to dance, to feel the rhythm of the music in her arms and her legs and her feet. She came to find other dancers with the same energy, to feel how they moved to the same music, to feel the rhythm of the music in the beat of each of their brief interactions.

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He came that night to dance. He came to move, to stave off the gathering stiffness of age, assisted by the music and the energy of the crowd around him. He came because it was a safe place, a place that afforded opportunities for the brief social interactions that satisfied his need for contact without overwhelming his shyness.

The dance hall was just beginning to fill a few minutes before 8:00. He had changed his shoes, and was sitting quietly, waiting. Others were sitting or standing, some were milling about, some chatting. He had chosen a seat on the perimeter. There were plenty of empty chairs on both sides of him. He felt safe sitting there. If anyone cared to approach him, to speak to him, or even to sit near him, he would be pleased.

She breezed in, and sat down to change her shoes. Following some unwritten custom, she sat not in the chair beside him, but in the next one over, leaving an empty chair between them. He looked at her as she arrived. Their greeting was one of politeness, not familiarity or friendship. He looked at her shyly. She smiled warmly and said Hello. Having been accepted by her, he had the confidence now to say Hello in return.

He paused for a moment, gathering just a small bit of confidence. He was about to do something that he had done many times before. Sometimes he had succeeded and sometimes he had failed. But to a person like him – a person somewhat more sensitive than most – the emotional reward of the successes was just a bit more satisfying, and the pang of the failures just a bit more disappointing, than they might have been for most people. So he turned toward her, and he started carefully.

“Do you have a partner for the first dance?” he asked.

“No, I don’t” she replied.

He watched her reply carefully, for this was the critical part. He watched how she replied. He listened to how she replied. What he really wanted to find out was whether it was OK with her if he asked her to dance. What he was really asking was “Would you mind giving up one of your dances tonight to spend with an old man?” He watched her to see what her reaction would be. Would she gladly dance with him? Or would she just go through the motions because she couldn’t find a socially acceptable way to avoid him? Or worse yet, would this woman turn him down so she could dance with someone younger, someone stronger, someone she had come to dance with?

But she held his gaze as she answered, and she continued to smile at him when she was finished, and in doing so she answered his real question. She told him that it was OK to ask her. With that small kindness, she allowed him to ask the next question much more easily.

“Would you like to do the first dance?”

“I’d love to,” she said, still smiling.

She not only accepted his invitation, but she also made him feel as though she was honored to dance with him.

I want to thank you, young woman, whoever you are, for showing that small kindness to an old man. I thank you on behalf of this gentleman, and I thank you on behalf of the community that, however tenuously, connects all of us to each other, including you to me.

And I thank you for one more reason. You see, I hope that I will be lucky enough to live as many years as this gentleman has lived. And if I do, I hope I will still be dancing at that age. And most of all, if I reach that age, and I am still able to dance, I hope there will still be women like you who will be kind enough to share a dance with an old man like me.
Community

I have been a folk dancer for 25 years. I have played music for folk dancing for 23 years. In both roles I have experienced and participated in many types of folk dancing: International, Israeli, traditional squares, contra, Cajun, Swedish...and on and on and on! Dance and music are a significant part of my life and will most likely remain so.

All of the above is an effort to establish my credentials as a creditable commentator on the word “community” and how it applies to dancing. Not that I am an expert; while I have participated in the dance community for many years I remain mystified as to why and how it all fits together...

So what is this thing called “community”? Is it some nebulous concept bandied about by callers, dancers, and musicians at workshops? Is the number of potlucks, outings, birthdays celebrated, friendships, marriages, children that are generated from one’s local dance? Is it just the dance itself? Is it the “cool people”, or the “nerds”? And what about the different dance types: is the contra dance community similar in structure to the international folk dance community? Is community defined by geographical location, or are we all part of one world-wide dance community? And if that is so, how does one hold a potluck for that? And what about the communities-within-communities? One can speak of the community of dancers, of musicians, of callers, of organizers. And what about the discrete groups of people who come together as social entities within each type of dancing—do they define what a community is?

Hmmm...I keep asking questions, and instead of narrowing the focus of this concept, I seem to have expanded it to the limits of infinity. It seems that I can only rely on my personal experience, and that is where I will start.

“Dance community” has meant many things to me over the quarter-century that I have been involved in dancing. When I first started out, the dance community was a refuge from an uncertain and unhappy college experience; I found joy and movement and music in international folk dance. These things helped alleviate the stress in my life and helped me become more alive and confident.

Later on, “dance community” meant a year-long party playing and dancing to old-time music and Southern squares. It was hanging out with friends until all hours, playing tunes until dawn, dancing every weekend (This was in Pittsburgh in the mid 1970s: we didn’t have dances on weekday nights with the frequency that occurs now!), communal dinners, and playing in bars. Nothing had to be organized; events seemed to just be created out of thin air. A church would offer a hall for free to use for a monthly dance, a person would call up and say “Come on over and bring your instrument” for an all-night music and dance party. We formed a community of people who fed off of each other’s youthful energy and love of music and dance.

In the early 1980s, “dance community” meant “woodshedding.” It was sitting down and painstakingly learning the newest and most difficult clogging step, or traditional banjo or fiddle style, or big-circle dance. It was going to Augusta, or Brasstown, or Ashokan. It was hours listening to ancient recordings and trying to duplicate traditional stylings. We were drawn together by our common thirst for knowledge and mastery.

As the mid and late 1980s came around, “dance community” for me meant the company of my fellow musicians. It was playing every weekend, going to festivals, getting hired in “big-name” arenas: Boston, Washington, San Francisco, Seattle. I started traveling out of state and playing farther and farther from home. We musicians started to sound like rock stars when we talked amongst each other: this dance was unresponsive, that one they whooped and hollered all night, they really liked that hot medley we laid on them! We started

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competing with other bands: are we as good as ___? Will the callers hire us? Will the dancers like us? Heady times...yet I felt a little isolated from the dancers. I was on stage, they were down there, and when I did interact with them it felt artificial and awkward. “You actually dance?” People would ask me when I was down on the dance floor: as if I was some exotic species only known for one thing: playing music. In some ways, while I enjoyed the attention, it was the least “community” feeling I have ever experienced.

Now, “dance community” means “stewardship”. I don't mean that in any lofty sense, just in the fact that I am a member of the Thursday Night Dance Committee that organizes the Thursday contra dance at Glenside, and I feel a sense of responsibility towards the “community.” I realize that dances don’t just happen anymore, they take a great deal of planning, energy, coordination, and preparation. I now have a long and integrated view of the community. And that view takes in some of the common threads that make up my different community experiences throughout my life.

“Dance community” means people working and playing together to create an enjoyable, musical, and movement-filled experience that is both meaningful and joyous. It encompasses many things: the social interactions—the friendships formed, flirtations, romantic liaisons, etc.; the need to move and play; the discovery of and the enjoyment of music; the creation of a learning community (so that people may discover the history, ethnicity, and complexity of dance and music and experience the personal growth inherent in learning these new things); and other intangibles that I would be hard-pressed to describe.

All communities, whether they are neighborhood, or religious, or political, or dance, need to be nurtured. They need constant attention or they will grow stagnant and disperse. Communities will change over time, and they will exhibit varying amounts of cohesion and vitality as time goes on. But the basic existence of the community will remain viable if people are willing to put energy into maintaining the institutions and activities that make that community unique.

I think that (to paraphrase a very over-used saying) it takes a community to raise a community. It is the simple, individual acts that lend vitality to any community. One does not need to sacrifice huge amounts of time to do a community deed. For the dance community, I can think of many things that would qualify as simple acts that would help give the community “oxygen”:

- Volunteer to help clean up at the end of a night of dancing
- Have a dance party at your house once a year
- Ask a new person to dance, or show a new dancer a basic step
- Volunteer a service (running off flyers, researching sound equipment, carrying equipment, storing equipment, offering rides to and from the dance, etc.)
- Learn how the sound system works at your dance and volunteer to help run it for an evening
- Take money at the door
- Musicians: ask dancers for input on: tempo, phrasing, etc.
- Callers: ask dancers for input on teaching techniques, approach, etc.
- Dancers: Listen to the music, the caller, the teacher
- Organize a potluck dinner before a dance
- When things go wrong, and the evening is not perfect, smile
- When things go right, and the evening IS perfect, smile
- Feel joyous and pass that on to the next person you dance with

Simple acts most of them, and yet, taken together they help not only to nurture community, but to define community. After all, we are all part of the community we dance in!

Bob Stein’s e-mail address is: squeeze@voicenet.com
This article was previously published in the newsletter of the Heritage Dance Association and has been reprinted by permission.
On Welcoming Beginners

From Kiran Wagle, a DC-area caller and curmudgeon from somewhere out on the Net.

A Sad Story

Here’s a story from not long ago, at one of our DC-area dances. It’s nothing new.

A new dancer (clumsy, but not excessively so) and I jumped into a dance at the end of the line. The caller was from out of town; serviceable, but not any better than that. He didn’t mangle the walkthrough, or crash the dance, but the walkthrough wasn’t clear enough to some dancers. That was probably the fault of the dance; the dance he picked was a circus.

When we stumbled our way to the top of the line, my beginner partner looked at me and said “They’re not going to let me back in here.”

And she probably believes that. You and I might think it’s absurd. We know that the problems were really in the choreography. It didn't flow. It had parts that were easily mixed up. Other parts didn’t seem to fit the music very well. The choreographer’s intentions for the transition were unclear. There was no good place for lost dancers to get their foursome back together. And so forth.

She didn’t realize or notice that she did about as well as me, and most of the other dancers in that line, all of whom had trouble with it. (And why would anyone expect her to notice this? She doesn’t know who’s new and who isn’t.) She believed that she didn’t do well enough to deserve to come back.

(Read that again.)

That’s the legacy of poor calling.

Was this the fault of the caller or the choreographer? I don’t know. In general I don't hold choice of repertoire against callers. The caller didn’t do anything glaringly wrong, after choosing the dance. The dance was mostly undanceable even by experienced dancers, so I’d be more likely to blame the choreographer. Bad choreography is as much a problem as bad presentation. But having said that, being able to pick dances that work is part of the job of the caller.

But does it really matter? I haven't seen that woman come back.

And that’s the kind of thing I think poor callers (and all choreographers) need to see, in order to be motivated to do better. I wonder if they can be so motivated at all; the more I see the more I believe they just don't care. Perhaps they don't believe they might be hurting people. Or perhaps they can't believe it, because everyone’s been telling them they did well when they did poorly. Who knows?

We can talk till we’re blue in the face about welcoming beginners. As callers, we can focus on various random behaviors we speculate are welcoming (for example, cracking jokes) instead of on clear, concise, and accurate walkthroughs in words everyone can understand. Over and over again, I see beginners drop out because they think they didn't get it. They're confused by the dance, and, discouraged, they sit down and refuse to get back up, and leave at the break. No matter how many talking heads drone on about welcoming them, when things fall apart around them, do they feel welcomed?

I have no idea. I usually don't see them again to ask.

A follow-up from Mike Prager, who lives in Beaufort, NC

Who's responsible for a lousy dance?

Well, I am of the old school. Once the band is on the stage and the crowd is in the hall, the caller is in charge. Given that, the caller is responsible for everything, unless there is a good reason not to hold her responsible for any particular thing.

Choice of material is probably the most important technical thing a caller does. (The most important thing is setting the tone of the evening.) We ask, why is a given dance done, and others not done any more?

Why is an evening’s dancing less or more varied? Why are squares less or more popular? The most direct answer is choices by callers.

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I get the impression that some newer callers underestimate the caller’s role in shaping our tradition, on time scales from the evening to the decade. With all due respect to the wonderful musicians in the band, who make the whole thing possible, I think it is pretty hard to overestimate the influence callers have.

**THE CALENDAR**

Many of the listings for the Boston area appear courtesy of the Folk Arts Center of New England, 42 West Foster St., Melrose MA 02176 — 781-662-7475. They publish Folk Dancing Round Boston, a bimonthly listing of dance events in the Greater Boston area. Many of the Northern New England listings appear courtesy of the Dance Gypsy Calendar (P.O. Box 6447, Brattleboro, VT 05302 - 802-257-4478) or the Down East Friends of the Folk Arts Newsletter (c/o Malcolm Sanders, 13 Pinkham's Flats Road, Lamoine ME 04605). All three are published monthly with much last-minute information which can’t be included here - why not subscribe!

Always call to confirm before traveling great distances to get to a dance!

All of these events require that you bring clean, non-street shoes to dance in! The number of halls available for dancing has been shrinking because of the concerns of hall-owners about wear and tear on their floors. Please help dancing continue by bringing shoes which do not have street grit on them and changing into them to dance.

* Items marked with a * are events which we still have not heard about this year. If you have information about them or other dances, please send mail to Jacob and Nancy Bloom, 169 Sylvia St, Arlington MA 02476 or e-mail to: bloom@gis.net. The other events have been confirmed, but the information is always subject to last minute changes. The deadline for the winter calendar is 10/15/00.

**Regular Events - Eastern Mass.**

All Sundays  
International, Cambridge. Instruction 7 PM, dance 7:30
2nd Sundays  
Israfil Folk Dancing, Cambridge 8-10:30 PM. $3.00 All year.
2nd Sundays  
*Scottish* Brookline 6:30-8:30 PM $4
Various Sundays  
Family Dance Concord 2-5 PM, $4, $15/family. Dances on 11/5, 12/3, 1/7, 1/21, 2/4, 2/18, 3/4, 3/18
All Mondays  
Contras & squares w/Yankee Ingenuity. Concord 7:30-10:30 PM.$5
All Mondays  
Israfil Brookline 8:30, teaching 8:00. $4
All Mondays  
*Scottish* Cambridge 7:45-10:15. $6
All Mondays  
*Scottish* Fitchburg 7 PM
2nd & 4th Tuesdays  
*Gender-free English*, Boston. 7:30-10 PM $5
2nd & 4th Tuesdays  
Contra Cambridge 7:30 PM
All Weds.  
English Arlington 7:30-10:30, $6
All Weds.  
Israfil Cambridge 7:30, teaching 7:00
All Weds.  
Western Square Classes Danvers. 7-8:30 PM $3
All Weds.  
*International* Southboro 8-10:30, $3.50 Sep-June
All Thursdays  
Contras & squares, Cambridge. 8-11 PM. $5.
All Thursdays  
*International*, Belmont. 8-11 PM, $6.
1st Fridays  
Scottish, Salem. Beginners 7:30, dance 8 PM. $2
1st Fridays  
*Experienced English* Brookline 8:15-11, $5 Oct-June
1st Fridays  
1st 3rd 5ths Fridays  
Scottish Weston 8 PM $4
2nd Fridays  
*International* w/Cambridge Folk Orchestra. Arlington 8:15-11

Having said all that, everyone makes mistakes. As I dance for more and more years and lose more and more brain cells, that point is driven inexorably home. So, let us place responsibility where it belongs and at the same time realize: we’re all human, and we’re in it for the fun.

Happy dancing!

2nd Fridays  
*Contra* w/Walter Lenk & O'Connor's Mob. Carlisle 8-10:30, potluck 6:30 $5 Oct-June
2nd & 4th Fridays  
English. Barnstable. 7:30 PM. $5.00. Call to confirm dates.
2nd & 4th Fridays  
Contra Rehoboth 8 PM $6
2nd & 4th Fridays  
*Scottish* Stow 8:30 $3
3rd Fridays  
*Contra* w/Roaring Jelly. Lexington 8-11, teaching 7:45.
$5/under 12 free. Sep-June
3rd 4th 5ths Fridays  
1st Saturdays  
Contra w/Woods Hole Folk Orchestra. Woods Hole. 8 PM
1st Saturdays  
*Contra* Medway. 7:30-10:30 $6 Sep-June
1st Saturdays  
Contra w/Berlin Country Orchestra. Berlin. 8-11 $5/$12 family. Sep-June
1st & 3rd Saturdays  
*Scandinavian*. Brookline. 8-10:30 PM. $5. First dance 9/16.
2nd Saturdays  
*Contra* Cotuit.
2nd Saturdays  
*Contras & Squares* w/Tony Saletan. Concord. 8-11 $6 Oct-June
3rd Saturdays  
*Contras & Squares* w/Beth Parkes & Swinging On A Gate. Concord. 8 PM $6 Oct-June
3rd Saturdays  
Contra w/Ami Larkin & Friends. Sandwich. 8 PM $6
3rd Saturdays  
4th Saturdays  
*Contra* w/Lenk, O'Connor & Knight. Concord. 8-11 Sep-June
5th Saturdays  
*Contra* Concord. 8 PM
Various Saturdays  
*Gender-free Country Dance* Jamaica Plain, Boston.
7:30-11 PM. $6.
Various Saturdays  
Various Saturdays  
*Salsa/Swing* Medford. 8-11, advanced class 6:30, beginners 7:15. $12.

***SPECIAL EVENTS***

Sept 23, Saturday  
FACONE Benefit Bash. Concert and folk dance party. Congregational Church, 400 High St, Medford. 7:30 PM. 781-662-7475
Oct 14, Saturday  
Zdravets workshop & Dance (Balkan). Dance Barn, 35 Westbrook Road, Whately, MA. Bjoesseph@unix.amherst.edu, or call (413) 665-0484
October 22, Sunday  
Advanced English Dance. Munson Library, South Amherst. 2-5 PM. 413-549-8159.
Nov 5, Sunday  
Family Dance w/Dudley Laufman & Two Fiddles. Scout House, 74 Walden St, Concord. 2-4 PM. $4, $15/family. 781-662-7475, 781-662-6710, fac@facone.org
Dec 3 Sunday  
Family Dance w/Judith Stames-Hamilton & Regina Laskowski. Scout House, 74 Walden St, Concord. 2-4 PM. $4, $15/family. 781-662-7475, 781-662-6710, fac@facone.org
Dec 31, Sunday  
FACONE New Years Eve Party. Friends of the Performing Arts, 51 Walden St, Concord. 781-662-7475, fac@facone.org
Jan 7, Sunday  
Family Dance w/Tony Saletan & Judith Stames-Hamilton. Scout House, 74 Walden St, Concord. 2-4 PM. $4, $15/family. 781-662-7475, 781-662-6710, fac@facone.org
Jan 21 Sunday  
Family Dance w/Sarah Gregory Smith & Rick Mohr. Scout House, 74 Walden St, Concord. 2-4 PM. $4, $15/family. 781-662-7475, 781-662-6710, fac@facone.org

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Venuess - Eastern Massachusetts

Arlington

Barnstable
English: 508-362-9570 at West Barnstable Community Hall, Rte 149 (North of US 6)

Belmont
Thursdays International: 781-662-7475. First Unitarian, 404 Concord Ave

Berlin
First Saturday Contras: 978-365-3883. At Town Hall, Route 62. Oct-May

Boston

Brookline


Carlisle
Contras: 978-369-1232, 617-547-7781 at Unitarian Church

Concord

Danvers
Western Squares 978-774-8159, 978-927-8173. At Calvary Episcopal, corner Holten & Cherry Sts.

Fitchburg
Scottish: Egyptian Room, Fitchburg Art Museum, 185 Elm St. 978-342-1724.

Ipswich
Contrats: Whipple Middle School, Green St, off County Rd. 978-356-1477.

Lexington

Medford

Medway
Contrats: 508-883-3443, 508-429-1773, mtvictor@juno.com, at Christ Episcopal Church, 14 School St

Melrose
Balkan: 617-840-2362. Dance Studio, 466 Franklin St.

Northboro
3rd Sat Contrats: 978-481-4802. First Unitarian, 40 Church St

Rehoboth
Contrats: 508-252-6375, 508-669-5656, shwknkr@comcast.net at Golf Hall, Bay State Rd.

Salem
Scottish: 978-745-2229 at First Universalist Church, 211 Bridge St

Sandwich
Contrats: 508-888-4968 at Grange Hall, Old County Rd, East Sandwich (near fish hatchery)

Southborough
International: 508-872-4110. At Fayville Village Hall, Central & Grove Sts.

Stow
Scottish: 978-897-2466 at Town Hall

Venuess - Western Massachusetts-area code 413

Amherst

Berkshire

Greenfield

Hadley
2nd Fri.Swing: at N.Hadley Village Hall, 239 River Drive. 585-1039

Northampton
Scottish 586-5476. 3rd Sun. Family dance 586-7602. At Lyman Hall, First Churches, 129 Main St (Rte 9).

Pittsfield
2nd Friday Contras: 499-7105 at Pittsfield Grange, 1123 West St. Sheffield
4th Saturday Contras: 528-9385 at Grange Hall, Route 7.

Regular Events - Western Mass.

3rd Sundays
All Mondays
English. Amherst. 7:30 PM. $5.
All Weds.
Scottish. Great Barrington. 7 PM. Sep-June
All Thursdays
Scottish. Northampton. 7-9:30 PM. Sep-May
All Fridays
International. Amherst. 8-10 PM. All year

1st Fridays
Contra & Scandinavian with Fourgone Conclusions. Greenfield. 8 PM.

2nd Fridays

3rd Fridays
Contra w/David Kaynor. Greenfield. 8-12 PM.

Contras & squares. Greenfield. Teaching, 8, dance 8:30 PM. $5

1st Saturdays
English w/Helen Davenport. Amherst. 8-10:30 PM.

1st Saturdays
Contra w/Wild Asparagus. Greenfield. Beginners 8 PM, dance 8:30 $6 All year.

2nd Saturdays
Contra w/Square Dance. Ralph Sweet. Goshen. 8 PM. Sep-June

3rd Saturdays
English w/pleasures Of The Town. Amherst. Beginners 8 PM, dance 8:30-11. $6. All year.

3rd Saturdays
Gender free contras. Greenfield.

4th Saturdays
Contra. Amherst. 8:30-11:30 PM.

4th Saturdays
Contra w/Joe Baker & Mountain Laurel. Sheffield. 8:30 PM. $5/adults, $2/kids. Jan-Nov

4th Saturdays
Zydeco. Greenfield. Teaching 8, dance 8:30 PM.

4th Saturdays
Square Dance w/ Bob Livingston. Bernardston. 8 PM

5th Saturdays
Contra w/Soozarama. Amherst. 8:30 PM. $5, various Saturdays Gender-free contradance. Greenfield. 8 -11 PM.

Special Events

Oct 22, 2012
Advanced English Dance. Munson Library, So. Amherst. 2-5 PM. 413-549-8159, hrepasky@forwld.umass.edu

Regular Events - New Hampshire

2nd Sundays
English Concord. Sep-May

2nd Sundays
English w/Marianne Taylor. Portsmouth. 7-9:30 PM. All year.

All Mondays
Contra Nelson. June-Dec

All Wednesdays
International. Hanover. Oct-May

All Wednesdays
Scottish. Concord. 7:30 PM. $4. All year

“middle” Wednesdays Scottish. Nashua. 7-9 PM.

1st & last Thursdays
Scottish. Nashua. 7-9 PM.

Scottish: 781-259-9566, 617-235-6940 at First Church, on the Green

Woods Hole
Contras: 508-548-6661. At Community Hall.

Worcester
Contras: 508-755-7329. First Cong. Church, 1070 Pleasant St.
1st Thursdays Contra w/Lanepary River Band. Dover. 8:10-10:40 PM. $4.
All Fridays Scottish. Keene. 7:30 PM.
All Fridays Scottish. Greenland. 8 PM. Oct-June
1st & 3rd Fridays Contra Holderness.
4th Fridays Contra. Milford. 8-11 PM. $5. All year.
1st Saturdays Peterborough. Instruction 7:30 PM, dance 8-11:30 PM Sep-Jul.
1st Saturdays Country Dance Deerfield. Nov-June
2nd Saturdays Contra. Francistown. 8:00-11:00 PM. $5. All year.
2nd Saturdays Contra. Gilmanon Corners. 8-11 PM. $5/person, $10/family. All year
4th Saturdays Contra. Dover. 8:30-11:30 PM.$6. All year

*** SPECIAL EVENTS ***
Oct 14-15, Sat-Sun Portsmouth Maritime Folk Festival. Various locations around Portsmouth, most events free. www.folkhorizons.org
Nov 18, Saturday 18th Century Scottish. Parish Hall, Greenland. 436-4118.

Venues - New Hampshire - area code 603
Concord 2nd Sunday English. 934-2543. At Howard Auditorium, 105 Pleasant St. Wednesday Scottish. 226-2739. At Odd Fellows Hall, Pleasant St 3rd Saturday Contra: 746-2388. At East Concord Community Center.
Deerfield 1st Saturday Country dance: 463-7771, 463-7151. At Town Hall, Old Centre Road.
Dover 1st Thurs Contra: 664-2513. 4th Saturday Contra: 659-7038. At City Hall.
Francesstown 2nd Saturday Contra: 547-2955, 487-2480. Town Hall.
Gilmanton 2nd Saturday Contra: 267-7277. At Academy Building, Gilmanton Corners.
Greenland Friday Scottish. 436-4118. At Parish Hall, Post Road (Rte 151).
Hanover Wednesday International: 802-633-3226, at Kendall Retirement Community
Holderness 1st & 3rd Friday Contra: 536-3887. At Town Hall. 
Keene Friday Scottish: 352-6968. At Unitarian Church, Washington St. 
Saturday Swing: 357-2100. At Moving Company, 76 Railroad St
Kensington 3rd Friday Contra: 770-7988, 659-5612. At Town Hall, Route 150.
Milford 4th Friday Contra: 886-5071, 672-8252. Town Hall.
Nashua Scottish: 891-2331, lorenw@rwp.mv.com. At Chandler Library, Main St.
Nelson Monday Contra: 827-3455, 827-3732. At Town Hall.
Peterborough 1st Saturday Contra: 525-3883. At Town House.
Portsmouth 3rd Sunday English: 886-5071, bw@star.net, taylorgorman@juno.com. At Portsmouth Ballroom, Portsmouth & Fleet Sts.
Sandwich 1st & 3rd Friday Scottish: 284-6164. Town Hall.
Wentworth 1st Friday Traditional Squares: 744-5135. At Town Hall.

Regular Events - Connecticut
All Sundays International. West Hartford. 7-10:00 PM. $5. All year.
1st & 3rd Fridays *Contras & English w/Ed & Marjorie Potter. Norwalk. 8-10:30 $5 Sep-May
2nd Saturdays Square dance w/ Bob Livingston & Barbara's Band. Killingly 8 Sep-June.


Venues - Connecticut
Greenwich 2nd Saturday Country Dance: 914-736-6489, 203-381-9509, bkoser@bestweb.net; bigfoot.com/~roundhill. Round Hill Community House, Round Hill Rd.
Middletown Wed Scottish: 203-238-0694, 860-347-0278. At First Church Cong., 190 Court St
New Haven Tuesday Scottish: 203-732-1017, 203-878-6094. At Medical Asso. Building, 364 Whitney Ave (at Lawrence St) 
Friday English: 203-776-1812. At Neighborhood Music School, 100 Audubon St.
Newtown Monday Scottish: 203-938-2881, 203-263-3578, 1 Hawley School, Church Hill Rd.
West Hartford Sunday International: 860-561-5069, 860-232-7368. At American Legion Hall, 12 Memorial Rd. 1st Friday Swing: 860-649-0482, zsman@erols.com. Town Hall, 50 S Main St
West Haven Saturday N.E. Dance: 203-776-1812. At Arbeiter Maenner Chor, Univ.of New Haven, 420 Orange Ave.
Wethersfield 2nd Saturday Contra: 860-633-0793, gaupton@net.net. 3rd Saturday Cajun: 860-648-2584, tamarind@webtv.net. 4th Saturday Swing: 860-267-0613, 860-346-7954, jbugj@msn.com. At American Legion Hall, 275 Main St.
Windsor Tues Scottish: 860-283-5402, 860-434-0415. At Grace Episcopal Church, on the green.
Woodbridge Friday Scottish: 203-393-3189, 203-874-5344. Woodbridge Cong. Church, 5 Meetinghouse Lane.

Regular Events - Vermont
2nd Sundays English. Norwich. Jan-April
4th Mondays International. Brattleboro. Sep-July
Most Tuesdays Scottish w/Bernard McGrath & Joy Leland. Fairlee. 7-9 PM S3
All Wednesdays Scottish w/Ray & Lesley Purdy. Manchester Village. 7 PM
All Wednesdays Scottish. Bellows Falls. 7:30 PM. Free.
All Wednesdays Scottish Montpelier
All Wednesdays Israeli. Burlington. Sep-May
All Thursdays Scottish w/Major & Bailey. Putney. 7:30 PM. Sep-June
1st Fridays Contra Danville. Oct-May
1st Fridays Contra North Clarendon. Feb-May
1st Fridays International. Norwich. Sep-June. Call to confirm
1st & 3rd Fridays Scottish. Cornwall
2nd Fridays Contra Chelsea. Oct-May
3rd Fridays Contra Burlington. Sep-June
3rd Fridays Community dance. North Clarendon. Jan-April
Alternate Fridays English. South Burlington. Sep-May
1st Saturdays Swing. West Dummerston. Sep-June
1st,3rd,5th Saturdays Contra. Montpelier. 8 PM.
2nd Saturdays Contra. Wolcott.
2nd Saturdays Contra. Burlington. Instruction 7:30 PM, dance 8:00 PM. $5.
2nd & 4th Saturdays Contra. Norwich. Sep-June
3rd Saturdays Family dance. Cornwall. Sep-May
3rd Saturdays Contra. Townsend.
3rd & 4th Saturday Swing. White River Jct. Sep-June. Call to confirm
4th Saturdays Contra. Bristol. 8 PM.
Last Saturdays Contra w/Fred Breunig & Tune Police. East Putney. Beginners 8, dance 8:30 -11 PM.
Various Saturdays International. Lyndonville
Various Saturdays Gender-Free Contra. Putney. Dances on 10/7, 11/4, 2/3, 4/7, 6/2
Various Saturdays Ed Larkin Dancers' Open House. Royalton. Dances on 11/18, 12/16, 1/13, 2/17, 3/10, 4/14

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Venues - Vermont - area code 802

Brattleboro 4th Monday International: 348-7463. At School of Dance, 17 Eliot St.
Bristol 4th Saturday Contra: 388-4548. At Holley Hall.
Burlington Wednesday Israeli: 878-4823. At Ohavi Zedek Synagogue, 188 N. Prospect St. 3rd Friday Contra: 660-9491. At Champlain Club, Crowley St. 2nd Saturday Scottish: 658-0832, 685-8488. Edmunds School, Main & So. Union Sts.
Chelsea 2nd Friday Contra: 802-883-5578. Grange Hall.
Danville 1st Friday Contra: 426-3331. At Knights of Pythias, Hill St.
East Putney Last Saturday Contra: 387-5985. At Pierce's Hall.
Fairlee Tuesday Scottish: 603-353-4647. At Town Hall.
S. Burlington Friday English: 658-4126, 862-3638, 878-4893. Municipal Bldg, 575 Dorset St.
Townshend 3rd Saturday Contra: 874-7141. At Town Hall.
West Dummerston 1st Saturday Swing: 254-5443. At West St. Arts.
White River Jct Saturday Swing: 603-863-6519. At Jazzercez Ctr, 27 Maple St.
Wolcott 2nd Saturday Contra: 748-5137. At Town Hall.

Regular Events - Rhode Island

All Wednesdays Scottish. East Greenwich. 7-10 PM.
Various Saturdays Contra Dance. Cranston. 8 PM. $6 Dances 9/16, 10/23, 11/25, 12/23, 1/20, 2/17, 3/17, 5/22, 6/16
Various Saturdays Cajun Dance w/Magnolia. East Providence. 8 PM, teaching 7:30 $9

Venues - Rhode Island

Cranston Saturday Contra: 401-828-3229, jsw@edgenet.net. At Oaklawn Grange, Wheelock St. 8 PM. $6
East Greenwich Wed Scottish: 401-295-8297, paul@skye.phys.uri.edu. At Rocky Hill Grange.
East Providence Cajun 401-246-2720, 508-636-2221, Aecel@aol.com. At Brightridge Hall.

Regular Events - Maine

All Sundays Scottish. Kennebunkport. Children 5 PM, dance 6 PM.
All Sundays *International. Orono. 7-9 PM. Free
All Sundays Scottish. Belfast. 7-30-9:30 PM. $2.
2nd Wednesdays English. Freedom. 7-9-30 PM. $3.
All Thursdays International. Bar Harbor. 7-9 PM. $1.
All Thursdays International. Rockland. 6-30-8:30 $4.
All Thursdays Scottish. Brunswick. 6:30-8:30. $3
2nd Fridays Contra. Kittery. 8-11:30 PM. $6. All year.
3rd Fridays Cajun. Auburn. 8-11 PM $6
3rd Fridays Ethiopian w/New Nile Orchestra. Portland. 8 PM
3rd Fridays Contra w/Sleep Island Rovers. Stonington. 7:30:10:30 PM $5
1st Saturdays Contra w/Maine Country Dance Orch. Bowdoinham. 8:30 PM $5

*** SPECIAL EVENTS ***


Venues - Maine - area code 207

Bar Harbor Thursday International: 461-6631, 288-3800, 257-4321, jra@jax.org. At Municipal Bldg.
Belfast Monday Scottish: 469-3291. At American Legion Hall, Church St. Folk & Contra: 338-0715. First Church.
Blue Hill 1st Saturday Contra: 359-2070. At Town Hall.
Bowdoinham 1st Saturday Contra: 563-8440. 3rd Saturday Contra: 948-5842, 225-2117. At Town Hall, School St. Bring water.
Falmouth Contra: 688-9043, 772-6690, srleblancusa.net. Cong. Church, 267 Falmouth Rd.
Hulls Cove Contra 667-0260. Community Center.
Kennebunkport Sunday Scottish: 967-3813. Community House, Temple St.
Kittery 2nd Friday Contra: 603-436-8372. At Grange Hall.
Orono Sunday International: 827-2324. Memorial Union, University of Maine.
Portland Ethiopian 761-1545. At CCE.
Rockland Thursday International: 372-8298. Recreation Ctr, Limerock St.
Rockport Contra: 785-5118, 568-7597. Simonton Corners Community Hall.
Skowhegan 1st Sat Contra: 566-7952, 587-4851. At Grange Hall, Pleasant St.
Stonington Contra 367-5058, 348-2333. Deer Isle/Stonington Dance Center, Rte 15A.
Winter Harbor 4th Saturday Contra: 422-9014, 461-6631. At Hammond Hall.

Regular Events - Outside N.E.

All Thursdays Contra . 8 -11 PM. $5. oldjoeclark@hotmail.com, 716-461-3816. At Covenant United Methodist Church, 1124 Culver Rd, Rochester,NY.
1st Saturdays English w/Richard Sauvain. 8 -11 PM. $5. 716-442-4681, sauvin@frontierinet.net. At Covenant United Meth. Church, 1124 Culver Rd, Rochester, NY.

*** SPECIAL EVENTS ***

Sep 22-24 Heritage Dance Festival Plymouth-Whitemarsh High School, near Philadelphia PA. Dances, workshops, music, performances. 215-842-1425, heritagedancefest.com
Festivals and Dance Camps

Sep 15-17 Folk Song Society of Greater Boston Fall Getaway Weekend, Plymouth MA. Contact: Marilyn Levin, 49 Pearl St #2, Newton MA 02458, 617-558-7034, www.fssgb.org

Sep 15-17 American Dance Weekend at Buffalo Gap, Capon Bridge WV. Contact 301-694-6794, www.cacapongroup.com/buffalo, Buff-faloBoe@aol.com,

Sep 15-17 Star Hampshire Traditional Music & Dance Weekend, Isle of Shoals NH. Contact: Patrick Stevens, 21 Prospect St, Portsmouth NH 03801, 603-436-8372, 603-431-4849, steveget@nh.ultrarart.com

Sep 15-17 New Hampshire Highland Games, Loom Mountain, Lincoln NH. Contact: 800-227-4191

Sep 15-17 Gender-Free Dance Camp, Becket MA. Contact: 978-597-5861,


Oct 6-9 Oktoberfest. Hurlbert Outdoor Center, Fairlee VT. Contact: 781-662-7475, 978-692-6217, crawdahl@gis.net

Oct 14-15 Portsmouth Maritime Folk Festival, Portsmouth NH. Contact: www.folkhorizons.org, info@folkhorizons.org


Always call ahead before traveling great distances to go to dances!

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

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 permitted by 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 inquiries to the NEFFA office: PMB 282, 1770 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA 02140 or (781) 662-6710.

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.

The NEFFA office is on the move. After a good number of years in our Porter Square, Cambridge location at the Masonic Hall, our lease (actually the Folk Art’s Center of New England’s lease – we share the space) has not been renewed. Any possible move to a new folk building is years away, so we are moving to an office in Melrose. For convenience, office mail will be routed to a Mailboxes Etc. location in Cambridge. Our new mailing address and phone numbers are shown below.

We will continue to share office space with CDS Boston Centre, and the Folk Arts Center of New England.

N•E•F•F•A
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