

**Don't Miss the  
NEFFA Festival  
April 23-25, 2010  
Laufman Feted at  
DC Celebration**

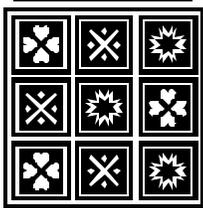
# NEFFA

NEW ENGLAND FOLK FESTIVAL ASSOCIATION

# NEWS

Winter 2009 – Vol. XXXV #4

**Thursday Dance to  
Stay in Concord  
History, but no  
mystery  
Mega-minutes**



## NEFFA T-Shirt Quilt Raffle

Win a Collection of NEFFA History!

We are producing a work of NEFFA history - a quilt of past Festival shirts from 1989 to 2009 to be raffled at the 2010 Festival gathering. In conjunction, we are putting together a booklet about the shirts.

Harold Henry gave us the quilt idea and a large set of shirts. Gaetana Freniere donated the first ever shirt, which she designed.

You can help by relaying t-shirt history, stories and myths. Please don't hesitate to contact me, Terry Huffaker to talk about the shirts or the quilt. [978-263-5468 or [tee.huffaker@gmail.com](mailto:tee.huffaker@gmail.com)]

Thanks,  
Terry Huffaker



**Dance  
Location  
Changes**

**Thursday**  **Contras**  
Dances at the Scout House Presented by NEFFA

**Feb 18** Will be held at West Cambridge Youth and Community Center, 680 Huron Av.

**Family Dances**

**Feb 21** Will be held at the Masonic Lodge, 58 Monument Square, Concord

# Thursday Dance to Remain at Concord Scout House

As you may know, the Thursday Night Dance Committee has been making a decision whether to move the dance to the new West Cambridge Youth Center. Many dancers have assisted us in this endeavor by attending our Experimental Dance and providing us with surveys and comments. We have reached a decision! **We are staying, at least for the foreseeable future, at the Concord Scout House.**

Each hall has its share of advantages and disadvantages. Regarding Cambridge, the top things people liked were the location, the floor, clear sound, possibility of working air conditioning, the size, and the lobby. The top dislikes were the poor A/C (although we didn't have anyone who knew how to work it), the non-square room shape, the expected difficulty parking on a Thursday, the stage jutting out into the hall, the aesthetics, the location, the hard floor, and the size (not big enough).

Information not available to all dancers played a large part in our decision.

First, the hall rent in Cambridge would be \$500 a night (vs. \$300 at the Scout House). This would mean large losses unless we raised admission fees. Our survey indicated distinct price sensitivity on the part of people who found the Cambridge dance more convenient; enough dancers would dance *less* often if the price were raised that it would offset the additional income.

Secondly, the City of Cambridge would reserve the right to pre-empt the dance on a two-week notice up to three times a year. For a dance organizer, this is a nightmarish situation, with the genuine possibility of loss of dancer goodwill and loss of income for performers who very well may be depending on the income from our dance.

A surprisingly large number of dancers liked having a

dance at that location, on that day of the week (Sunday). We will consider these suggestions and consider running a dance, perhaps a monthly Sunday dance, at that location while we get experience running events there. If you'd like to see a short video of the Experimental Dance, see <http://tinyurl.com/ykawyus>

Thank you all for your participation in this endeavor, and your continued support of the Thursday dance – wherever we are!

By the way, our next appearance at the Cambridge hall is Thursday February 18th. That night the floor is being refinished at the Concord Scout House.

— Dan Pearl for The Thursday Night Dance Committee

## Boston Harmony World Music Choir Performances February 20-21

Regular NEFFA Festival performing group Boston Harmony, the unique Boston area world music choir led by Patty Cuyler and Larry Gordon, presents concerts on Saturday, February 20 at 7:30 PM in Cambridge at First Church, Mason and Garden Streets, and Sunday, February 21 at 3:30 PM in Amherst at Grace Episcopal Church, on the Green. Admission, at the door, is \$12, \$8 for students and seniors. For further information call (978) 371-7317 or visit [www.villageharmony.org](http://www.villageharmony.org).

The concert program presents South African songs and dances, traditional sacred and secular music from Caucasus Georgia, Bulgaria and Corsica, a short mass by Antonio Lotti, and American shape-note and gospel songs. Now in its fifth season, the choir has expanded to 60 voices, evenly divided between teens and adults. The group is particularly notable for its ability to radically change its sound as it ranges through these different genres: from the dark and sonorous Georgian timbre to the ultra-bright Bulgarian hard-voice, from straight-ahead shape note singing to the rich and mellifluous South African sound.



Editor: **Dan Pearl** Mailing: **Dayle Watts**  
Editorial Review: **Robert Golder, Shelagh Ellman-Pearl, Lisa Greenleaf, Robert Johnson**

The NEFFA News, a publication of the New England Folk Festival Association, Inc., is published four times a year to communicate with its membership and other interested persons. **Please send all**

**editorial submissions**

to Dan Pearl, 15 Buffalo Run, Southborough, MA 01772, or to [neffa@neffa.org](mailto:neffa@neffa.org). Opinions of individuals are not necessarily the opinion of the NEFFA Executive Board.

**Publicize your events!** Display advertising is available for qualifying folk-related organizations. For more information, contact the editor.

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<u>Issue</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
Spring	Feb. 1
Summer	May 15
Fall	Aug. 15
Winter	Nov. 1

# From the President's Desk

Robert Golder



The very first New England Folk Festival was held on October 28th and 29th, 1944, at the Boston YWCA at 140 Clarendon Street. It was called the “Fall Folk Festival” and was sponsored by the Boston YWCA, the Community Recreation Service of Boston, the International Institute of Boston, the Country Dance Society, “and other Community Recreation groups,” according to the doubled-sided flyer sheet which served as a program guide. The Festival was not meant as a gathering for its own sake; rather, the thirteen-member organizing committee intended it to inspire and stimulate further activity in the participants’ own local community groups. Moreover, the organizers intended that an immediate purpose of the Festival, in the post-World War II era, would be to promote peace. It was a bold and innovative plan: a Festival that provided stress relief to war-weary Americans, even as it brought together various international and cultural groups in joyful celebration of their distinctive heritages.

Looking at the original flyer, I am struck by how little time was devoted to participatory dancing. The 1944 Festival opened at 1:00 pm on a Saturday afternoon with an exhibit of folk crafts that included baskets, bird carving, hooked rug making, pottery, stained glass, spinning, weaving, and stone and wood carving. A program of music and dance demonstrations and performances began at 3:00 pm and continued into the evening, with additional presentations on Sunday. The offerings were as varied and intriguing as we would expect at our present-day Festival, with Swedish, French, Chinese, Irish, Wampanoag, Navajo, Greek, Scottish, Italian, Estonian, Polish, Portuguese, and Russian folk dances and music all represented.

It was not until 10:00 pm on Saturday night that Ralph Page of Nelson, New Hampshire took the microphone and began the first participatory dance session of the first Festival, with “Folk and Square Dancing for All.” In those days, New England “square dancing” was assumed to include contra formations as well.

Sunday’s activities included two “Leadership Conferences.” One gathering emphasized setting standards and providing leadership to guide the growth of folk arts and crafts in New England life. The other leadership conference was intended to develop and promote recreational programming of folk

music and dance in community venues throughout New England.

It is important to note that there were no alternative activities during these leadership conferences. They were not merely open and available to all Festival participants; they were the only programmed activities in their time slots. It was taken for granted that, in some way, everyone would be a leader in promoting New England’s folk arts, crafts, songs, music, and

dances. The organizers assumed that every attendee would be an active, rather than a passive, participant – not merely in the weekend Festival, but in the communities to which they returned after the weekend activities had concluded.

“Au Revoir, but not Goodbye,” the Festival Committee wrote in the final lines of text on the flyer. “We hope that you have enjoyed this Festival and have received inspiration and stimulation to further this type of recreational program in your Communities. If you feel this is a valuable endeavor and would like to see it continue, please write the Committee. We welcome all your criticisms and suggestions.”

Sixty-six years later, I’ll stand by that same philosophy. I hope that you’ll come to the 66th annual New England Folk Festival ready to be an active participant who seeks more than mere entertainment. Attend a workshop that teaches something totally new to you. Meet new people of varied ages and interests. Listen to them, and also share what you know and enjoy from your personal experience and your cultural heritage. Consider what you can do to support NEFFA, so that this valuable endeavor may continue (since you’re reading this message in the *NEFFA News*, you’re probably a NEFFA member already, but when the time comes please be sure to renew your own membership). But also consider how your Festival experience can provide you with “...inspiration and stimulation to further this type of recreational program in your Communities.”

Please visit [www.neffa.org](http://www.neffa.org) often for the latest updates on planning for the 66<sup>th</sup> Annual Festival on April 23-25, 2010. Remember to invite your friends who are new to the folk activities we enjoy. We have scheduled multiple beginner-level events for them. Please keep in mind our other programs throughout the year. In the Greater Boston area, enjoy the Family Dance Series and the Thursday Night Contra Dance Series in Concord, MA. As always, thank you for helping NEFFA to create joyful celebrations of arts, music, song, dance, and crafts for the New England folk community.

# A Trip To Washington DC

**Jacqueline Laufman reports about her and Dudley's trip to receive a prestigious award.**

As most of you know, Dudley Laufman recently received a National Heritage Fellowship, the highest honor for a traditional artist in our country. On Monday, September 21, we flew to Washington, DC to take part in the ceremonies. At the orientation that evening at the Doubletree Hotel in Bethesda, Maryland, (where we all were housed) each recipient was given a gold National Heritage Fellow lapel button by Barry Bergey, Director of the National Endowment for the Arts. Each recipient was introduced and each one told a bit about their tradition. There were eleven recipients and you can read about them at <http://tinyurl.com/nea-honor>

Tuesday afternoon we were all bussed to the U.S. Capitol Visitor's Center on Capitol Hill for a public ceremony where the honorees received a beautiful green marble plaque engraved with gold. Dudley's was given by Mrs. Judd Gregg, wife of Senator Judd Gregg of New Hampshire. Dudley has played for their children when they were students at the Well School in Peterboro, New Hampshire, and also for Judd's father, Hugh, when he was governor of New Hampshire.



After this event we all walked over to the Library of Congress for a splendid banquet in the marbled foyer with grand fluted columns. The gilded, vaulted ceilings with colorful inlaid mosaic heightened the sense of homage and honor that the Arts community was bestowing on these Fellows. As they spoke in turn at the podium, it became clear that there were two aspects of their story that were the same for each one: they all followed a passion that had first stirred within them long ago; and, it was important that they were passing down their art form and tradition to others who were learning from them.

Wednesday morning we were bussed to the Strathmore Music Center in Bethesda for our first rehearsal for the concert to be held Thursday. Dudley and I were joined here by his musicians and dancers who were to perform with him. Vince O'Donnell, fiddle, Ted Levin, fiddle, Sylvia Miskoe, accordion, and Neil Orzechowski, piano. Dancers were five of Dudley's children, two grandchildren, his sister and a niece, and my daughter.

Later that afternoon there was a rehearsal for the grand finale.

Wednesday evening we played for a house dance in Takoma Park at the home of Loretta Kelley. There was no keyboard but there was an old pump organ. Neil had great fun with this. What a funky sound...four fiddles, accordion and

organ. Dudley noticed there were some morris dancers there... Bob Dupre, Charlie Pilzer, Dudley's sister Ann Mason, her daughter Sara, me, and another guy. Dudley, after much arm twisting, ("We don't have bells, we don't have hankies, I don't know Bampton") cajoled us into doing a sandlot morris version of Bampton Highland Mary. It was great. Lots of energy. Dudley finally got to meet Marcia Segal from the Library of Congress who had located some rare recordings for him of Sammy Spring, Happy Hale, and Arthur Hanson.

Thursday had dress rehearsals. The big performance was that evening at the Strathmore Music Center. All the recipients took part. Basket weavers had slide shows and interviews with Nick Spitzer, host of the radio program American Routes. Mike Seeger, who got the Bess Lomax award, had died in August. He did get the award at bedside before he died. His wife, Alexis, was interviewed with a nice video of Mike presented at the large screens. She was radiant. There was one video of Mike playing a Jews harp and diddling McLeod's Reel (Hop High Ladies) finishing with "Deedle deedle deedle deedle deedle, dot com."

Our part was less of a performance, more of a kitchen junket. We opened with Dudley's tune Mistwold, once through. Then Nick Spitzer did a short interview ("How did you get started?") Then Mistwold again while the dancers, Dudley's kids and grandkids, sister and niece and my daughter, all hung around the piano until Dudley said "OK, time to dance, let's do a Virginia Reel." Music switched to Dudley's tune deMartelly three times through. Dudley and I put down our fiddles and jumped into the top of the set as the music went into the Money Musk (what else), and we gleefully shuffled our way through that three times. Then the music went back to Mistwold, and the dancers did more reeling and promenading while Dudley and I got our fiddles and got the audience to "la la la" along with us. Reception followed and much visiting with friends who came to see the show.

Home on Friday and without a break went right into my oldest daughter Becky's wedding rehearsal and dinner and great wedding on Saturday. Dudley is still on cloud nine, and I still haven't unpacked.

The National Heritage Fellowship concert is now on American Routes radio website. Go to <http://americanroutes.publicradio.org/archive/> Click: Listen To Hour 2

The Routes Radio image pops up in another window for playing the show. To hear music and dance segment with Dudley which lasts about 5 minutes scroll to 19:43.

Here is a link to an interview with Dudley conducted by Josephine Reed with the NEA: <http://tinyurl.com/nea-lauf>

# Summaries of the Minutes of the NEFFA Executive Board

September 13, 2009

**President's Report:** Bob Golder gave a short talk on NEFFA's original Mission Statement. Memorabilia were passed around.

**Secretary's Report:** Alison Buffum presented the minutes from the Retreat. The minutes were accepted.

**Treasurer's Report:** Ralph Jones said the NEFFA cash were back in the usual investment vehicles after the Festival.

**Vacancies:** Alison Buffum was nominated to fill the vacant Secretary position, and Ashley Zanca was nominated to fill a one-year Director position. to fill unexpired terms (1 yr). These nominations were approved by the Elected Board.

**Slate of Chairs:** Bob introduced the slate of chairs. After some modifications, the slate was approved.

**Sponsorships:** A draft policy for Sponsorships (by Bill Cowie and Don Veino) was discussed and refined. The intent of our written policy is to provide clear guidelines as to who can advertise and who can't. Bill and Don will present a revision next month.

**Logo:** Bob Golder looked into a possible update of the NEFFA Logo. Bob got some feedback and will present proposed changes at a future meeting.

**Volunteers:** Bill Cowie will get in touch with Susan Crocker about Volunteers.

**Tickets:** Maureen Carey is excited about doing Tickets. The ticket prices will be decided in December based on financials provided by committee chairs in October.

**Program:** Linda Leslie reported that the application is up on the web with an October 6th deadline. All performer correspondence will be by email this year. Program book will be larger this year; we need help with the booklet redesign.

**Late-night Dance:** Don V. reported that investigations are continuing into the possibilities for a late night dance, either on-site or at a different site.

**Dance Performances:** Chair will continue to be Jill Wheat. The organization of Sat and Sun may change. There was a recommendation to avoid having the contra medley at the same time as Dance Performance slots.

**Benefit Dances:** Plans are afoot for another NEFFA benefit dance. Julia and Ashley are planning the event in Western Mass

**Performer Sales:** Nancy Hanssen requested that agreements about available space be put in writing.

**Parking:** A chair is needed Gene Fry has detailed the responsibilities of the job.

Thursday Night Dance Committee: Dan Pearl alerted the committee about the upcoming "experimental" dance at the new building at the old VFW site.

October 4, 2009

**President's Report:** Bob Golder called the meeting to order and said that while the 2009 NEFFA is an excellent model, we need to make the Festival new and different in 2010.

**Secretary's Report:** Minutes from September will corrected and approved.

**Treasurer's Report:** Ralph Jones would like a CPA to produce the new non-profit tax for this year. We are in better financial shape than last year thanks in part to the generous support of members at higher membership levels

**Benefit Dance:** Julia and Ashley continue to explore possible venues in Western Mass for a benefit dance. **Don V:** Why not do another in Boston area? Don will consult with Terry and David Casserly.

**Parking:** Will Mentor will be the chair. This was approved by the elected board.

**Sponsorships:** Don V. presented the second draft of policy statement on ads, sponsorships and grants.

**Sound:** Michael Bergman may replace Don Heinold. Budget should be @ 10K

**Program:** We're blocking out big block activities to avoid conflicts.

**Inside Operations:** Harold Henry says budget probably under 36K but a reduction of 5% is not likely this year.

**Hospitality:** We request 8 cell phones: 1 for Safety Chair and asst. at table, 1 for Hospitality, 6 for Safety volunteers. 2010 budget= \$280

**Food:** Koren has lead on new drinks seller

**Activity Room:** Jenny Mosley will be the Chair.

November 8, 2009

**President's Report:** The lease for the Folk Arts Center of New England office is going to be terminated by the landlord. NEFFA and CDS Boston sublease space from FAC, so we will need to rethink our office situation.

FAC is considering its options, from purchasing a building to moving to other rental properties.

Most of our office usage is archival storage. Down in the basement are racks holding piles of boxes. Some boxes are unsorted mixtures of CDS, NEFFA, and other documents. Others have been very well organized by George Fogg. In total there is an incredible pile of boxes filled with NEFFA items and papers from the past 65 years, occupying about 200 square feet of space, stacked in places as high as seven feet tall. There is stuff from Ralph Page and Ted Sannella and everybody else that created the history of our organization. There are extremely valuable programs and

December 6, 2009

documents that go back to 1944 and the very origins of NEFFA.

I met with Marcie and stated my belief (not NEFFA policy) that NEFFA does not use an office to the point where an annual expense of \$5600 is a good use of the money. I think we should retrieve our archives, and find a permanent good home for them, which may be the Dimond Library at UNH Durham. We have all worked very hard to ensure NEFFA has a future, but I think we need also to work hard to ensure that we preserve and document our past.

An extensive discussion ensued delving in the issues of how to sort and store the archival materials, where to store them, whether to digitize them, etc.

Related issues, such as what to do with the phone (virtualize it?) were discussed.

**Treasurer's Report:** NEFFA needs a "resident agent" who lives in-state. Steve Moore will take on this role.

**Tickets:** Maureen reported that the Ticket Committee wants prices to remain the same as the 2009 Festival. **Bob:** We do not know if we can accomplish all that we did last year (and it was a lot) to keep prices same. **Dan:** We don't need ticket prices until next month. We need to have a complete financial picture.

**ATM at Festival:** Don is working on going with a company that could install a temporary ATM at the Festival site. Location, security, and power requirements are issues.

**Benefit Dance:** Plans are continuing. Terry advises a smaller scale than the Benefit Bash earlier this year, with a correspondingly lower admission price. **Dan:** Consider tiered price structure to allow people to donate as much as they want/can. **Linda:** Consider an online silent auction. A man raises money for corgi rescue that way.

**Publicity:** Bill Cowie suggests increasing out-of-town publicity. Bill will develop a plan.

**Fundraising Quilt:** A quilt made up of past NEFFA T-shirts would be relatively easy to produce. Steve Moore said that fundraising had to be over \$5000 for a report to be filed.

**Program:** Linda Leslie reports that the preliminary program is almost completed. Bob Solosko will be working on the Folk Music and Song program.

**Parking:** I am making final arrangements to get the Satellite Parking.

**Late-Night Dance:** Off-site does not appear possible. Harold: will contact Bob LaConte about this and have an answer by next meeting.

**Thursday Night Dance Committee:** Experimental dance at the "VFW" in Cambridge was well attended, with some old friends in attendance. Thurs Night Committee is considering the surveys and other feedback.

**Treasurer's Report:** Discussion continued on how to find an accountant to prepare the tax forms. While the search is going on, an automatic extension will be filed.

As financial reviews are expensive and cash is not plentiful, Dan moved that NEFFA indefinitely suspend all financial audits and reviews. An amendment was made and approved to just change the suspension for three years. The motion was approved.

**Secretary's Report:** Alison Buffum resigned her position effective at the end of this day's meeting, citing a large number of unforeseen commitments in her life (and the inability to focus sufficiently to take good notes after a long drive).

**Office Issue:** UNH is receptive to the idea of receiving NEFFA archives (but not 78rpm records). As some of our records are intermixed with CDS Boston's, we need to approach this collaboratively. Terry was present at the office and will go again next week. **Maureen:** UNH would like stuff after February.

**Bob:** The NEFFA Board has decided that as of the date that the office moves, we aren't contributing. CDS needs to know this.

**Maureen:** We need a grant from CDS Boston for this project. CDS Boston has money for this kind of project and should agree with the open-ended purpose.

A motion was passed to support cooperative work with CDS Boston.

**Sound:** Michael reports that a more realistic sound budget is \$12,000 or maybe as much as \$14,000 if he tries new things.

**Tickets:** (Maureen) The committee would like to keep tickets prices the same. Don is looking into online ticketing. This stimulated interesting discussion of logistics, security, etc.

**Dave:** Most dance weekends only let you buy full festival badges ahead of time. This would help us.

Dave moved that we accept this ticket vender and allow Don, Maureen and Beth to proceed. The motion passed.

After extensive discussion, a "Young Adult Member" rate was established. Most other prices remain the same as in 2009.

# From the NEFFA Archives

**SQUARE DANCE**      **CDSS**

— **RALPH PAGE** — *CDSS*

**Famous New England Caller**

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Saturday  
April 8, 1972  
8 p.m.      \$2

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**DUANE HALL**  
201 West 13th Street, New York  
(at corner 7th Avenue)

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Information from:  
COUNTRY DANCE AND SONG SOCIETY  
55 Christopher Street  
New York, N.Y. 10014  
Tel. 255 8895



Photo credit: Suzanne Brown

Thanks to George Fogg for finding this item. One notable thing about this, is that after decades of dancing in the same hall the New York dance group (now called Country Dance \* New York) is being forced to move from their church sub-basement hall in the West Village. See

<http://www.cdnny.org/MovingFlyer.pdf>  
for information on their new locations.

# Housing Needed for Out-of-Town Festival Visitors

Visitors come from far and wide to enjoy the energy, camaraderie, open minds, and general smiles at the NEFFA Festival. (The first time I visited the Festival, I walked into the main dance hall and immediately recognized 3 people from Michigan and 1 from California--before meeting even one metro-Boston local!) We would like to help make it easier and more attractive for our “dance gypsies” to join us in Mansfield this coming year, and we are asking for your help!



## We already open our hearts --can we open our homes?

Do you have an extra bed? Floor space? Air mattress? Someone from whom you could borrow an air mattress? Then you can provide hospitality for people attending NEFFA! We know you and your fellow dancers, singers, craftspeople, etc. are flexible people (physically and mentally), so feel free to be inventive with your space. Particularly visitors who drive from the farther areas of New England may appreciate this.

## Email Lark to find out more.

Please contact Lark Speyer for the Hospitality Committee at [laspeyer@gmail.com](mailto:laspeyer@gmail.com) if you might be able to provide “crash space” within the metro-Boston, Mansfield, or Providence area. Please think about how many people you might be able to put up, how far from the Festival you live and whether you can provide rides, and whether you know anyone else we could ask for help about this! Every offer is greatly appreciated.

Remember that any resulting arrangements are solely between you and the person you take into your abode. Does that person know a NEFFA member or other folk community person who can give a reference? NEFFA cannot vouch for any person requesting hospitality and cannot assume any responsibility or liability for that person’s acts or omissions.

## See you at the Festival!

Lark Speyer  
[laspeyer@gmail.com](mailto:laspeyer@gmail.com)



**N·E·F·F·A**

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