

Bay Area Country Dancer

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www.bacds.org

Catch Spring Fever [

March 18-20, 2011

The temperature's rising at the BACDS Spring Fever weekend! Whether you're young or old, newcomer or old-hand, English or Contra, gay, straight, blue-state, red-state, or just lover of all things dance, you'll find the temperature is rising as we bring dancers together again to build a glorious shared community. We want your energy, style and friendship to make this a perfect weekend; and we've invited outstanding musical talent to pull it all together.

This is not your plain ole English Country or Contra Dance camp. We're blending the best of both! It's a weekend for people who *love* to dance, with really stellar dancing that is so hot that it's cool! We'll show you how to build technique in dance styles you know, or introduce you to styles you don't know, but will no doubt

Action on the floor at
Monte Toyon 2010

Photo courtesy of
Dan Vilter

discover with a passion. Dance away the day and discover you learned something when you weren't looking. Want to stretch your horizons? We'll help you. Want to focus on one style with immersion? We'll make that happen, too. Wanna have a good time? Easy, you won't be able to help yourself. This IS the good stuff, folks!

Check it out! Contra Sutra brings their sensuous musicianship, a wide range of styles and phenomenal dynamics. And the Latter Day Lizards incorporate swing and jazz into their music to keep us at a fever pitch as we whoop and holler all weekend long! And there's more talent coming on board. No matter what your preferred style of music or dance, you'll find something to excite you. Callers include Scott Higgs, known nationwide for his clear teaching style, sense of fun, and kind heart. And there are additional surprises to delight us all.

Programmer Sam Weiler is using his experience with East Coast "English & American" camps to put together a program that is a seamless mix of the best of both worlds. Check out his vision statement on our website.

Sure, there's lots of great dance, but lots of great people, too. Play and get to know some special people. You'll make friendships that go home after camp. We already have people coming from around the country and overseas, too! Come join us! We really hope to see you there!

Want more? Social games and events in the evening? Camper-led dance parties? No walk-through English? Shopping at our "dress barn"? Pick-up Morris dancing? Expect these and other surprises (just what DO you do with a four-foot beach ball?)

Registration is now open. Pick up a flyer at your local dance or go to our website, **bacds.org/sf**. One price includes everything: two nights lodging, five wholesome meals (not to mention homemade bread and soup) and all the dancing we can manage. Discounted pricing is available for youth (under 30), work/trade helpers, and those in financial need.

Whether you prefer English Country or Contra, or a blend of both, come and catch the fever. Join us in the enchanting redwoods of California next March. You don't want to miss this, and we don't want to miss YOU!

Come to the Ball! (A Cautionary Tale)

"Come to the ball," he said, ignoring that I was a relatively new dancer.

"All right," I replied, envisioning Cinderella and shushing the inner voice that cried out "No, no, you're not ready!"

So off to the ball I went – totally unprepared. The afternoon workshop was all the practice I got. There were no walk-throughs at the ball and the dances were not prompted. I was mortified. "Never again will I endure such supreme discomfort and embarrassment," I vowed.

As I was swearing off all balls, a kind man asked me to dance. Softly he whispered what figure came next and guided me through the dance. I forgot my terror and began to move with the other dancers. I breathed easier and actually enjoyed myself. I wasn't Cinderella, but I understood how much fun a ball could be.

"All right," I relented, "I shall go to another ball, but only when I can dance with confidence."

During the interim I attended local English dances, a weeklong summer camp of English dancing, and various weekend events. Along the way, I learned how to dance – not merely to follow prompts but to move with ease and elegance. Best of all, I became part of my local dance community – greeted with smiles and hugs, asked to dance, and included in social gatherings. I was ready to dance with confidence when I signed up for the next Playford Ball.

That night, the women's changing area resounded with happy chatter and bursts of laughter. Safety pins, ribbons, and costume jewelry were borrowed. Women zipped, buttoned, tied, and hooked each other into their finery, then stood back to admire. We were all Cinderella, transformed; our Prince awaited our entrance.

The Grand March began, music filled the room, and we were off, embarked on a magical night. For those few hours, we all lived happily ever after.

—Barbara Bickerman

Please Note: The BACDS Playford Ball is far less intimidating than Barbara's first experience! Many of the dances will be taught at local English dances; there will be two workshops and a Ball Rehearsal; and there will be walk-throughs except for two dances identified as "For Those Who Know."

The next BACDS Playford Ball will be held Saturday, April 2, 2011, at The San Jose Woman's Club. See the flyer in this mailing, or visit **bacds.org/playford** for details.

BACDS American Dance and Music Camp — The Tradition Continues

by Laura Light

Long ago and far away, in the summer of 1981 was born the **Mendocino American Dance and Music Camp**. Started by Brad and Jenny Foster and many others, it was modeled on CDSS' Pinewoods Camp, adapted to its California environment in the redwood forest. Adaptation to changing conditions is necessary for all living things, and Mendocino American Week, living thing that it is, must change.

Change is hard, but it's also a grand opportunity. And so it is for American Dance and Music Week as we depart our beloved Mendocino Woodlands for a new location, closer to Palo Alto and San Francisco (just 45 minutes drive from SFO and SJC airports!), yet still in the coastal redwoods. Last year, the camp organizers took a leap of faith and opened doors for young dance organizers from around the country to come and share in the quality dance and music that has always marked Mendocino American Week. The results were superb. We had an energized and very, very fun week with a great mix of old and young, traditional and neo-traditional dances, dancers, and events.

This year we're going to do it all again, taking into careful consideration that we need to nourish and provide opportunities for younger dancers, and be sensitive to those who might be struggling with current adverse economic conditions.

We have **Hammer and String**, one of the most promising and exciting young bands emerging from the old time and traditional Irish scenes on the East Coast. Multi-instrumentalist Rhys Jones, known for his incredible old-time fiddling, is paired up with Cleek Shrey, a red-hot Irish fiddler and accomplished pianist. Add in John Hermann's awesome banjo playing and you get an eclectic and energizing flow of unique dance music.

For contrast, we have the well-loved trio from Quebec, **Crowfoot**, whose unique blend of Irish, English, Quebecois, Appalachian, and original music is polished and always electrifying. Featuring Jaige Trudell on fiddle, cello, and vocals; Nicholas Williams on flutes, accordion, piano, and vocals; and Adam Broome on guitar, citern, and vocals, Crowfoot is the perfect concert, dance, and teaching unit!

Laura Light and George Paul of the **Avant Gardeners** will also be on hand to play for classes and give the other bands a break here and there. Laura and George are known for their tune writing and improvisational techniques, which they are sure to share with campers.

Leading the dance classes will be the inimitable **Erik Weberg** from Portland, Oregon, well-versed in English and American contra dance, and **Will Mentor** from Vermont, an accomplished, community-minded American contra and square dance caller.

Helping out with couples dancing and possibly singing classes will be **Karina Wilson** and **Eric Erhardt** from New Mexico. Classes will take advantage of the broad range of styles and experience of our callers and musicians, which means that campers will get plenty of hands-on time playing, learning tunes, improvisation and tune writing, playing in a band, dancing morn 'til night with classes in couples dancing, squares, contras, and English. I've heard that at another camp, Nicholas taught an amazing class called "Music from Listening," which I can't wait to take!

There will be traditional old time arts and crafts, picnics, camper band night, feasts, late night stories and campfires and jams, and all of the other traditions we have always enjoyed at Mendocino Camp. Plus, we'll invent a few more — how about a square dance in a round yurt?

And there's more good news! With our change of venue come reduced costs and more opportunities for scholarships for those who need it. The full camper fee is **just \$590.00**, with a sliding scale for youth and underemployed.

The camp begins on Sunday and ends on Friday, a slightly shorter camp, with excellent benefits. The revised schedule will help out-of-town campers make more convenient travel plans. Camp will begin early with featured bands playing around the Bay Area on the preceding weekend, offering some workshops, and continuing with an all-camp-plus-community dance in Palo Alto on Friday night, followed by workshops, a concert, and the Palo Alto Saturday night dance.

We hope you will join us for some or all of it! It is not to be missed! For more information visit bacds.org/amweek.

How-to Homestead and Dance in San Francisco

How-to Homestead is a San-Francisco-based multi-faceted arts organization that has at its center the creation, curation, and distribution of short films dedicated to 21st century homesteading. BACDS is helping to support their "11 in 11" How-to Homestead Tour featuring films, skill shares, potlucks and folk dancing in all 11 districts of San Francisco in 2011.

Here are the first three shows of 2011:

- Booker T. Washington Community Center, District 2, Saturday February 26
 Afternoon plant propagation workshop with Justin Valone, early evening potluck, ½ show of short films with live musical accompaniment include: What I Learned The Year I Made My Own Linen Underwear and Secrets of the Alewife: Cheesemaking, followed by Contra Dancing with Mavis McGaugh.
- Harvey Milk Center, District 8, Saturday March 5
- Simple kraut making with Melinda Stone, early evening potluck, films with live musical accompaniment followed by square dancing with band and caller TBA
- Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Community Center, District 3, Saturday March 26
- Workshop TBA, early evening potluck, films with live musical accompaniment, followed by Contra Dancing with band and caller TBA.

For more information, visit **howtohomestead.org**. Complete details will be posted by January 1.



By:Brooke Friendly (OR)

Join us August 21-28, 2011 for *Hey Days*, the new BACDS English Dance and Music Week, at a splendid new location in the Wine Country of Northern California.

What is new

- More room to dance
- Comfortable housing with en suite bathrooms
- Many workshop spaces
- Parties by the pool
- No need for camper chores

What will continue

- Internationally recognized staff
- Outstanding dance and music workshops
- Inspiring music for evening dance parties
- Daily gathering for staff and camper performances
- Conviviality and a variety of merriment
- Delicious meals
- Work-trade, musician, and CDSS sponsored youth scholarships

Featured in 2011

- Ukulele workshop for all
- Musicians Mini-Course (co-sponsored by CDSS)
- Waltz and partnering workshops
- Arts and Crafts
- Song writing workshop

The Location

Near Healdsburg, Bishop's Ranch sits on a sunny knoll nestled among the forests, farms and vineyards. The facility has a swimming pool, a spacious dance hall, many other lovely spaces for dancing, music workshops, jamming and parties, and a variety of airy and pleasant accommodations with en suite bathrooms, all with linens provided.

The main dance hall is the air-conditioned Swing Pavilion, with a sizeable floor for dancing, a stage area, two raised galleries and window seat areas, abundant natural light, and spectacular views. The porch and patio adjacent to the building provide inviting outdoor seating and informal meeting space.

For your culinary pleasure, the cooking staff at Bishop's ranch provides tasty, wholesome food served in the roomy dining hall. The round tables, high ceilings, and large windows with spectacular views provide a relaxing setting for visiting with friends over a delicious meal.

The Staff and Program

Mary Devlin, popular caller from Portland OR, is our program director. She has lined up a marvelous staff with many exciting workshops to choose from.

Gene Murrow will bring his historical knowledge, musical insights and New York sense of humor.

Joanna Reiner, a widely popular young caller from Pennsylvania, will teach English and longsword dance. She is back by popular demand after her west coast debut in 2008.

Matthew Duveneck, a big hit in 2009, will teach waltz and partnering workshops.

Try something new this year: Play the ukulele! The ukulele is a very accessible instrument, and it's powerful and versatile "in the right hands". **Kate Power** and **Steve Einhorn** are legendary in the Pacific Northwest for harmonizing community, presenting concerts and workshops in community settings for all kinds of folks. They will lead ukulele workshops, singing and song-writing sessions, as well as afternoon arts and crafts in the Bishop's Ranch fully-stocked art room.

We have a fabulous line up of musicians. **Reunion – Jonathan Jensen** (piano and more), **Daniel Beerbohm** (winds), **Barbara Greenberg** (fiddle), plus **Anita Anderson** (piano), **Dave Bartley** (plucked strings), **Charlie Hancock** (piano, accordion), and **Michelle Levy** (fiddle, viola, vielle). More musicians and music workshops will be announced soon on our website. **David Newitt** will be our sound engineer.

We are delighted to offer a musicians' mini-course co-sponsored by the Country Dance and Song Society. Following the popular CDSS model, the mini-course has a separate application and is limited to twelve musicians. Led by Anita Anderson, this will be an opportunity to refine skills and get lots of practice and feedback playing for dancers.

Hey Days will begin Sunday evening, August 21, and end with breakfast on Sunday, August 28. Check out the website (**bacds.org/eweek**) to get the details and a registration form. We hope to dance, sing, and play with you at camp!

A Letter to the Editor

Dear Editors,

I am referring to James Candlin's article "Quite a Song and Dance..." in your Bay Area September newsletter. He writes:

"...and Pat Shaw's Heidenröslein (Heath Rose) picked up where Schubert and Goethe left off."

I have heard this before, namely that we dance to Schubert's melody of Heidenröslein; but that is not the case. We dance to a very popular German folk tune written by Heinrich Werner. Attached are 3 attachments, and here is the translation of the footnote of the third:

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe wrote the text based on a folk motif in 1771. Franz Schubert set the poem to music in 1815. Twelve years later Heinrich Werner simplified the melody and thus created the folk song which has been widespread in Germany since the middle of the 19th century.

I hope this little contribution clears up a common misunderstanding.

Karin Norlin, a fellow English Country dancer from the San Diego area.



Editor's note: To save space, I've included only two of Karin's attachments: The Schubert version and the Werner. The third attachment is a copy of the Schubert melody line with the footnote mentioned in the letter.



- 2 Knahe sprach Ich breche oldt Bastem auf der Heiden! Rosfein sprach. Ich steche dich daß du ewig denkst auf mich und ich will a nicht iriden. Rosfein. . . .



From the President

From the President: The upcoming year, 2011, marks the 30th anniversary of BACDS as an organization dedicated to "preserving, promoting, and teaching English and American music and dance." I don't know if anyone is up to putting on a "30th anniversary" celebration or anything (are *you* interested?), but we can at least take some time to look back at what we've done with those 30 years.

We've certainly managed to preserve, promote, and teach the dance form. We sponsor $6\frac{1}{2}$ regular Contra dances and $7\frac{1}{2}$ regular English dances every month (the fractions come from that partial 5^{th} week). This is down a bit from our peak, but it's more dancing than you can get most places in the country. And one *reason* our dances are down a bit from their peak is that there are lots of other groups in the area sponsoring dances (TDSC, NBCDS, TDOGS, SCDS, the Queer Contra, the Canyon Contra, etc.) It's all one big dance community, and our people had a hand in getting it started. We promote dancing just as effectively by encouraging our neighbors as by growing our own dances.

We've been working on growing our own dances, too. That's been hard work. Many of our original core members are still with us, but they're in their 50s and 60s instead of their 20s and 30s, and they are slowly dwindling in numbers and energy. The recession has cut into the attendance at our dance camps and weekends, and the fact that there are so many other dance organizations, camps, and weekends around means we are sharing our dancers more widely. The answer, of course, is outreach and youth recruitment. We've been working on that for years, and it's starting to show results.

Ten years ago, some of our dances had reputations as snooty, cliquish, and unwelcoming to newcomers. We've had some very animated conversations about that, and we've changed. Most of our core dancers now understand that the way to keep our dances going is to actively welcome newcomers and help them have a good time as they learn. And we're doing it, not just talking about it. I am frequently getting unsolicited feedback telling me how friendly and welcoming our dances are. Outreach can be frustrating: just because someone comes to our dance and has a great time doesn't mean they'll be back. To become a regular, they also have to find a way to open a big enough hole in their busy life schedules to fit dancing in. But some of them do, and we are bringing in new dancers.

Youth recruitment is working, too. The big "secret" to bringing in more youth is to find a young person with a magnetic personality who likes contra dance and is persuasive enough to bring all his or her friends. You can't plan this: it's totally serendipitous. But you can encourage it. As I said above, we've made our dances more welcoming. We've established a special youth/student price to make our dances more affordable to those on tight budgets (and a pay-what-you-can policy for people with real financial difficulties). But the big success has been our youth scholarship program. When you offer young people free or steeply discounted admission to a camp, special event, or weekend in exchange for a work-trade responsibility that includes them in the "management team," you get results. The young people bring tremendous energy and enthusiasm to the event, and they come away wanting to do more. When we were faced with a serious attendance drop at American Week last summer, which threatened a \$20,000 loss, we "invested" that \$20,000 in extra youth scholarships and filled the camp with new energy. Time will tell if this is a good investment. I think it is.

We've also improved our web presence. The Internet is becoming the primary place people go when they are looking for dancing. Nick Cuccia put a lot of effort and time into upgrading our website some years back, and it's paid off. We're getting ready now to look at upgrading it again. Anyone interested in helping? Also, we've got people putting our dances on FaceBook, YouTube, and calendar listings like Zvents. This is all volunteer work, so thanks to all who are doing it.

We also have a responsibility to "preserve, promote, and teach" the music, the calling, and the sound engineering. We've made some progress, but we can do more. We offer some open band/open caller opportunities, and we offer regular music and calling workshops at our camps and weekends. The biggest progress has been in bringing up more callers. Ten years ago, most of our dances had a "house caller," one person who pretty much ran the dance, did the programming, did most of the calling, dealt with the hall, and organized other volunteers to help. This meant that new, up-and-coming callers didn't get many local gigs, and had to travel a lot to get "established" elsewhere before they got much work in the Bay Area. This has mostly changed. Many of our programmers now are not callers, or and the remaining "house callers" are opening more slots to others. The community norm seems to be shifting toward bringing in different callers every week, and actively scouting for new talent. Much of the impetus for this change in the contra community, at least, came from our neighboring organizations, who jumped on the idea before we did.

The Palo Alto Contra has been committee-run operation for over a year now. This has brought in new ideas, new attitudes, new leaders, and given the old leadership timely relief. The dance has been enormously revitalized.

The San Francisco Contra is planning a brainstorming session on Saturday, February 5 at 3:00 pm to explore ways to revitalize that series and foster greater community involvement. We plan to reserve a room at Celia's for dinner afterwards, so the discussion can continue right up until the dancing starts. The meeting space is limited, so please send an E-mail to <sf-contra@bacds.org> if you plan to come. Or just show up at Celia's.

I still think we should do more to promote and encourage new musicians, callers, and sound techs. I'd like to see some efforts to organize "community band nights," like they do in Hayward, and possibly some workshops, open jams, and such. Are there any musicians, callers, or sound people out there who want to step up and organize something?

BACDS is a great organization to be part of. I've been part of it for 17 years, now, and I'm halfway through my 8th as President. It's a pretty easy job. We have lots of volunteers, and the organization pretty much runs itself. Not perfectly, mind you. We are a *volunteer* organization, and some things *do* fall through the cracks. But mostly, things work, and all I have to do is remind people to keep up the good work. And hope they volunteer to do more. *Any takers?*

~ Jens Dill, BACDS President, <back-president@bacds.org>

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Volunteer Thanks

- ↑ Thanks to Joyce Fortune, James Tank, Susan Petrick, Le Anne Welch, and Eric Anderson for making our first Contra College such a success.
- ↑ Thanks to *Charlie Fenton, Erik Ievins, Diane Frank, Ellen Wall, Maria Markoff,* and others for helping to organize a San Francisco Contra committee. Interested parties should come to the meeting on February 5.
- ↑ Thanks to the Palo Alto Contra Programming Committee, *Jim Saxe*, *Alan Winston*, *Bill Ward*, and *Eric Black* for putting together a year of great bands and callers.
- Thanks to *Jack Tuttle* for bringing his music students to play for the Palo Alto Contra on November 13th, and to all the kids who played so marvelously, and all the parents and siblings who came to dance to them. This goes a long way to fulfill our mission to bring along the next generation of musicians.
- Thanks to *Ron Shattil* for bringing his costuming expertise to the Halloween Contra once again. You've never truly *danced* until you've danced with a 12-foot tall praying mantis. Sympathy to *Ethan Weke*r, whose marvelous costume was upstaged by his wife's (*Lauren Manierre*), when it came to the awarding of prizes.
- ↑ Thanks to *Ed Severinghaus* for doing such a great job of organizing volunteers for the No Snow Ball, and to all the volunteers who pitched in to help.
- Thanks to the *Fall Ball Committee* for putting together another splendid Ball.
- ↑ Thanks to *Ric Goldman* for taking time from his duties for the Fall Ball to wrangle the *Spring Fever Committee* into writing an article for this newsletter.
- ☐ Thanks to the Spring Fever Committee (Peggy Chipkin, Sam Weiler, Sharyn Petersen, Ric Goldman, Jens Dill, Lori Honzik, and others) for injecting new energy into Spring Weekend. Thanks especially to Lori, who had to resign for personal reasons and is still giving us lots of support.
- ↑ Thanks to *Jody Distler-Dill* for taking over the washing and storage of the BACDS camp bedding, and to *Annette Kindred* for assisting and providing moral support.
- ☐ Thanks to the *Fall Frolick* committee for putting together a wonderful weekend of English Dance, and for including that Contra session in the closing dance. Let the record show that *real* English dancers do Contra with *energy* and *timing*. Thanks to *Sharon Green*, who is stepping down as programmer, and to *Kalia Kliban*, who is stepping up.
- ↑ Thanks to Bill Ward, Diane Zingale, Jody Distler-Dill, Liz Macera, Valerie Neer, Catherine Allen, Kevin Goess, Sharon Green, Loretta Guarino Reid, and all the others who have publicized our events on FaceBook and other Internet venues.
- ↑ Thanks to *Berkeley Morris* for hosting the 2011 California Ale. My apologies to *Deer Creek Morris Men* for forwarding the rumor that *they* were hosting.

I can't possibly remember all the people who need to be thanked for their efforts. If I fail to mention someone, let me know, and I'll add them next time.

Other Notes

- Best wishes to *Eric Black* and *Diane Zingale* as they cope with their legal and business difficulties, and Diane recovers from her recent surgery.
- Encouragement to all of us who are still looking for jobs now that the recession is "over." At least we have time for dancing. And remember our "pay what you can" policy. If you're low on funds, you can still dance.

Upcoming Winter Events

Dec 28 – Jan 2	SFFMC Camp New Harmony	
December 31	NBCDS New Years' Eve Contra Dance	Joyce Miller, with the Syncopaths
December 31	SCDS New Years' Eve Contra Dance	Susan Petrick with Ratnip
December 31	New Years' Eve English Dance	Sharon Green with Stan and Susan Kramer, Mary Tabor, and Bill Jensen
January 1	NBCDS New Years' Day Contra Dance	Joyce Miller, with the Syncopaths
January 14 –16	Contra Carnivale (CCCDS) (full)	George Marshall, Lisa Greenleaf, Seth Tepfer
January 15	Seattle Ball (www.seattleball.org)	Brad Foster
February 5	SF Contra Organizational Meeting	3:00 pm, RSVP to sf-contra@bacds.org
March 5	Playford Ball Workshop, East Bay	
March 13	Playford Ball Workshop, Peninsula	
March 18 – 20	Spring Fever	Scott Higgs, with Latter Day Lizards and Contra Sutra
April 1	Playford Ball Rehearsal	
April 2	Playford Ball	Bob Fraley, with Chuck Ward, Jon Berger, Michelle Levy, Rebecca King
April 8-10	Queer Contra Dance Camp (SFBQCD)	Susan Petrick, Sam Weiler, Danny Pollock, with KGB

See <u>bacds.org</u> for more information. For events sponsored by neighboring organizations, see <u>nbcds.org</u> (NBCDS), <u>scds.ca</u> (SCDS), <u>sffmc.org</u> (SFFMC), <u>cccds.org</u> (CCDS), <u>santacruzdance.org</u> (TDSC), <u>haywardcontradance.org</u> (TDOGS), <u>queercontra.org</u> (SFBQCD).

This issue was edited by Julie Thomas and Loretta Reid. Send corrections to <u>caljuliet@comcast.net</u>. <u>Deadline for Spring Dancer</u>: Feb 15. Send submissions to <<u>TheDancer@bacds.org</u>>. Please join the conversation.