



Bay Area Country Dancer

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HEY DAYS ENGLISH DANCE AND MUSIC WEEK! NEW TIME, NEW PLACE!

By Brooke Friendly

It's not too soon to start planning your summer! Here are some of the reasons you will want to put **July 7-14, 2019**—Hey Days English Dance and Music Week—on your calendar.

Our Talented Dance Staff Will Have You Dancing and Singing

For English country dance, well-loved, internationally renowned caller **Bruce Hamilton** (CA) focuses on moving well, musicality in dancing, how to recover from mistakes, and how to be a good partner. His sought-after callers workshops have helped many new and experienced callers. Our program director **Brooke Friendly** (OR) brings her warm yet commanding personality, her clear teaching, creativity, and sense of whimsy. Teaching throughout North America and England, she is also a well-known ECD choreographer. **Bridget Whitehead** (Canada/OR) conveys warmth and enthusiasm in her dancing and calling, encouraging kindness, community and the love of dancing together. In addition to her varied dance background, Bridget has a degree in education and a knowledge of music theory, yoga, and Pilates.

Gillian Stewart (MA) joins us to teach Longsword, Morris, and Percussive Dance. An engaging, high energy, and accessible teacher known on both sides of the Atlantic, Gillian leads Orion Longsword, dances with Candyrapper VSOP and Muddy River Morris, and dances and teaches any kind of percussive stepdance that she can get her feet on.

Nicole Singer (MA) was a huge hit at camp in 2017. She will return to teach two singing workshops (Song Session Dynamics and Leading Songs). She'll also collaborate with Gillian for the percussive dance workshop, inviting singers to discover how to make a song work for accompanying dance. We will have lots of other opportunities for singing throughout the week!

Come Dance to and Learn from our Inspiring Musicians

Trio Picante is Kate Barnes (MA), Daniel Beerbohm (NJ), and Mary Lea (VT). Each individually renowned, as a band they are known for superb dance playing and inventiveness. **Kate** has played piano, flute and assorted other instruments, in more genres, in more interesting locations, for longer than most of us can remember. A member of Bare Necessities and many other bands, Kate keeps busy with teaching, recording, publishing, composing, and wisecracking. **Daniel**, on clarinet, flute, saxophone, and whistles, spices his dance playing with a rich background of swing, klezmer, and classical music. He performs extensively with Trio Picante, Hold the Mustard, A Joyful Noise, and Reunion. **Mary** has a worldwide reputation for fiddle playing in a wide range of dance music. This musical versatility is reflected in the variety of bands she plays with, including Bare Necessities, and the many places around the world she has performed.

Charlie Hancock (CA), pianist and accordionist, is equally adept playing for English country, Scottish country, contras, and display dancing. Performed with brilliance, drive and clarity, his music is infused with jazz, swing, and Irish influences.

Audrey Knuth (CA) is guaranteed to get you up and moving with her rhythmically lively and spontaneous fiddle playing. With several bands, she has travelled across the US and Europe, playing for dances, concerts, and camps.

Jim Oakden (CA) specializes in playing for dancers in a bunch of bands for ECD, Contra, Morris, Irish, Breton/French, Greek, and Bulgarian on an astounding number of instruments. He records with Rogery and Persons of Quality.

Emily O'Brien (MA) performs in recorder ensembles and historical chamber music as well as ECD bands. She has played and taught at various summer workshops including New London Assembly and CDSS weeks at Pinewoods.

Chip Prince (NY) is a lifelong pianist, playing keyboards for Broadway shows. He plays regularly for Country Dance * New York and has been on staff at CDSS English Week at Pinewoods.

Alan Roberts (WA) is our fabulous sound engineer. Aware of the nuances that make us happy, he is able to provide a great experience for callers, band members, and dancers.

Daily Schedule—So Many Great Things to Choose From

English country dance, ritual/display, and singing classes aren't all we have for you. Perhaps you'll be interested in Care of Body and Mind (a stretch and relaxation class) or a Callers Workshop. Or, what about music workshops? Offerings (for all levels) include an Ensemble Workshop, Music Off the Page, Getting in the Groove, and South of the Border Tunes. One-day music, song, and dance grab bag sessions will give campers a chance to offer and experience something special.

And, of course, there will be many chances for additional fun outside the workshop schedule, including pool parties, late-night dancing, singing, and jamming, and a daily Gathering featuring staff and camper performances, stories, jokes, and more.

Welcoming Community

Hey Days is known for its welcoming atmosphere:

"I appreciated the atmosphere of the week, particularly the balance of excellence in dancing along with kindness on the dance floor. And what an incredible group of people! There was such good humor and shared joy throughout the camp."
-2018 camper

Fabulous New Location

We are very excited about our new location—Sonoma State University—in the Wine Country of Northern California. Ranked as one of the most beautiful campuses in the country, SSU offers spacious dance rooms with wood floors and numerous workshop spaces, outdoor swimming pools and hot tubs, and many trees, gardens and outdoor water features. **Best of all, the larger dance spaces and abundant housing mean more of you can come join the fun!** Campus housing is equitable and comfortable: four-bedroom suites (each with its own bathroom) including a shared living/dining room and kitchenette.

Details and Registration Info

Check out the website now (www.bacds.org/heydays) for details on the program and available scholarships. The registration form, with a new online payment option, will be available January 1, 2019. Since camp is earlier in the summer we have moved up the initial postmark deadline—a web special application date before the brochure arrives. All registrations submitted by a postmark lottery deadline of February 1 will receive notification of acceptance by email on February 7. After that date it will be first-come, first served.

We hope to dance, sing, and play with you at camp!

Teens LOVE Dancing!

By Claire Takemori

We had the 2nd "Teen Contra" on Saturday, November 3rd at First Unitarian Church of San Jose. It started with a free teen music jam with Derry, Jess Newman and Weiwei Chen leading the teens. There was a banjo, and a couple guitars, and they want to do more jams! We had three teen work traders help to setup and cleanup at the dance. At 7pm, once Matt Mathis had the sound system ready to go, about 20 teens gathered in the dark hall (with sparkly lights and laser ceiling lighting) to dance. We ended with 24 teen dancers and according to the exit poll, they are mostly interested in dancing again and bringing friends to join. We are looking at having a monthly Teen Dance, possibly starting in Jan or Feb.

We need your support too! We need a volunteer sound tech who is available on Sat nights. We can always use help with setup, snacks and cleanup. And any donations to support the dance would be appreciated. Private donations pay for glow sticks, publicity, snacks.

Sorry the dancing is limited to just teens.

The new Facebook Teen Contra Page is a space for teens to build community with those they meet at dances and to find out more about upcoming dances. Share with any teens you think maybe interested:

<https://www.facebook.com/TeenContra>

Questions and Answers about the Woodshed Dance

By Alan Winston

What is the Woodshed dance?

It's a monthly opportunity for dance exploration and discussion, a chance to try things out. Choreographers bring newly composed dances to try out, callers try different ways of explaining things or make sure their understanding of a published dance is correct, people who want to try out calling can do that. Musicians who can sight read or learn by ear very quickly can try out playing for those dances. We've had English, contra, square dance, and couple dance choreography. BACDS pays the rent on the hall as an investment in the quality of our public dances, so that this experimentation can happen 'backstage'.

Why is it called "Woodshed"?

There's an expression among band and orchestra musicians about 'woodshedding' their part - that is, practicing the tricky bits on their own, out of public view, rather than having the whole orchestra rehearsal hang while they try to get a difficult passage right. It would have been nice to call it DanceLab, CallerLab, DanceXperiment, but all those names were already taken. Now that we've created a popular English dance called "Woodshed" at the Woodshed dance we're unlikely to change it.

Who should come to the Woodshed Dance?

- Musicians who can sight-read and want to play in an open band, try out tempo variations, etc.
- Choreographers who need to test their material on actual humans.
- Callers who want practice calling particular dances or to develop their calling skills and get feedback.
- Dancers with at least basic familiarity with English or contra dance, who are willing to dance a bit, give feedback, discuss things, and say what they like or don't like.

The dance necessarily has way more talking and way less dancing than a regular evening. At least one dancer has volunteered that the discussion of how things fit together has given him much more insight into how English dances work than he gets at a regular dance.

All of the above are welcome and admission is free. There is no beginner lesson.

Why isn't it in the printed calendar?

It's kind of a complicated concept to get across in the extremely limited space available on the printed calendar. We stick it into the online calendar where there's a link to the web page that can describe it.

Where and when does the dance take place?

Second Tuesday of every month 8:00-10:00pm, at the Carriage House at Holbrook-Palmer Park, 52 Watkins Avenue, Atherton. (That's between Redwood City and Menlo Park on the Peninsula.) Dancers willing to express opinions after trying things out are very much needed and welcome. Hope to see you there!

For more info, write awinstondance@gmail.com

Irv Kestin: 1919-2018

By Laura West

Irv Kestin, a longtime dancer, passed on November 18.

All are welcome to attend his celebration of life, which as of this writing is still in the planning stage. The tentative date is January 7, 2019, most likely at the Albany Community Center.

Please contact Laura West, his granddaughter, for information about Irv's celebration or if you would like to make a contribution to the tribute she is writing for him. She can be reached by phone at 510-847-9320, or via email: LGWest@gmail.com.



Contra College 2019 – Learning to become a dancer

By David Buesch

Learning to dance with others with comfort and confidence comes more easily for some than others, but we all can do it given the time, supportive space, and guidance. The Bay Area Country Dance Society offers a unique experience for dancers to work on their dance skills. *Contra College* is a teaching and learning environment for new, intermediate, and experienced dancers that is taught by two experienced callers with support of four respected musicians. Teaching sessions focus on elements of a dance, with time for deliberate walk-throughs and questions. You will learn the best (and ergonomic) way to enjoy the figures (and your partner), and finish the dance with a discussion of what went well (or not) and why. Teaching sessions are about 80 minutes each, so there is plenty of time to use a variety of dances with different choreography to practice, integrate, explore, and learn what is it about that dance and those you dance with that make it an enjoyable experience.

Contra College is for dancers of all skill levels. New dancers can become more confident in their abilities. Intermediate dancers can refine their skills and appreciate how the flow of the dance can be enhanced by how they interact with their partners. Experienced dancers can offer direction, encouragement, and guidance (verbally and nonverbally). Many dancers, of all levels, have found that learning to dance both roles offers a broader understanding of the dance and the connection with other dancers. There are many opportunities to better understand the nuances of a gesture or figure, or why a particular tune takes a dance to a whole other level.

Contra College will be Saturday and Sunday, March 9-10, 2019 at the Royal Hodge Masonic Center (651 Roble Avenue), Menlo Park. On Saturday, it is from 9:00 am (sign in at 8:30 am) to 7:00 pm, and includes the Saturday evening (8-11 pm) Palo Alto Contra dance at the First United Methodist Church of Palo Alto. Also on Saturday, the Callers' Workshop (12:00-1:30 pm) is for new to experienced callers, and attendees will be guest callers during the Sunday afternoon contra dance. On Sunday, it is 10:30 am to 3:00 pm with a Grad dance at the Royal Hodge Masonic Center from 4:00-7:00 pm (which will be open to the public).

The *College* has an exceptional staff of teachers and musicians:

Jacqui Grennan is a contra dancer, caller, and choreographer from Los Angeles. Jacqui will teach sessions, the Callers' Workshop, and will be the lead caller for the Grad Dance on Sunday afternoon. She likes to break down dance figures in a way that is easy to grasp for newer dancers. She teaches through movement so dancers can immediately feel the connection with other dancers.

Alan Winston is an English and contra dancer, caller, and choreographer. Alan will teach sessions including the Waltz on Sunday afternoon. His clear, cheerful, and witty instruction helps focus dancers on the figures and the flow of the dance.

Jim Oakden will teach a session on how to hear and dance to contra music. Jim focuses on how integral the music is (and musicians are) for giving that great live sound, how the music and phrasing of the music can help dancers (and callers) keep track of where they are in the dance, and how it can inspire movements and nuances within the dance.

Music for the teaching sessions on Saturday will be by **Jim Oakden** and **Kevin Carr**, and on Sunday by **Audrey Knuth** and **Christopher Jacoby**.

For the *Contra College* Grad Dance (Sunday, 4-7 pm), music will be provided by **Audrey Knuth** and **Christopher Jacoby**. **Jacqui Grennan** will call with guest calling by graduates of the Callers' Workshop.

Scholarships are available. If needed, we will try to arrange lodging with local dancers.

For more information: visit <http://bacds.org/cc>.

The 1718 Ball

Just a quick word on the marvelous 1718 Ball on 11/17/18 at the Hillside Club in Berkeley. The music was wonderful and especially enhanced by the inclusion of Harpsichord. The dancing was at its highest level, and despite the outside air quality from the Camp fire, the indoor air was decent due to several air filters running full-tilt. Costumes and fancy dress, incredible food, and congenial company along with four great callers and top-notch dancers made for a memorable evening, likely not to be repeated for another 300 years.

Upcoming Events

Monday, December 31	New Year's Eve at the Palo Alto Contra	<i>Andy Shore with Pepperjack</i>
Sat-Sun March 9-10 2019	Contra College , Royal Hodge, Menlo Park	<i>Jacqui Grennan, Alan Winston, Jim Oakden</i>
Saturday, March 30 2019	Playford Ball , Landmark Ballroom, San Jose	<i>Bruce Hamilton</i>
June 30-July 6 2019	Family Week Camp at Monte Toyon	<i>David James, programmer</i>
July 7-14 2019	Hey Days Week at Sonoma State University	<i>Brooke Friendly, program director</i>

See bacds.org for more information. For events sponsored by our neighbors, see nbcds.org (NBCDS), sactocds.org (SCDS), sffmc.org (SFFMC), santacruzdance.org (TDSC), montereycdc.webs.com (MCDC), ccds.org (CCCD), haywardcontradance.org (TDOGS), lcfid.org/sf (QCD)

This issue was edited by Chris Folger. Send corrections to TheDancer@bacds.org. Deadline for the Spring *Dancer*: February 20, 2019. Send submissions to cjfolger@yahoo.com. Please join the conversation.