



The Toe Tap Tribune

news of the Manitoba International Folk Dance Association
April 2007

"Dance Hits of the East"



Edwidge Munn (front, centre above) presented a workshop in February featuring favourite dances of Ottawa and Montreal where she dances regularly. See review page 3.

Calendar

Friday, May 4, 2007 MIFDA AGM 8:30 - 9:30 pm

Dancing to follow featuring the **Klezmer Kids** and our very own **MIFDA Band**. Potluck snacks.

MIFDA CONTACT INFO

Membership: Linda, 477-5981
email: ljhull@mts.net

Publicity/newsletter: Lori, 452-5662
email: lori@media-galori.com

MIFDA email: mifda@shaw.ca

website: <http://members.shaw.ca/mifda>

AN EXCHANGE OF CULTURES

The Sisters of Sion, an international community of women religious, hosted an international experience in Winnipeg with Sisters from Central America and Brazil from January to March 2007.

For two months, Alexandra, Paula, Vaneide and ZeZe [pictured below] joined the Winnipeg Community. They studied English and lived and worked with the community. They welcomed so many new Canadian cultural experiences that included, of course, the mighty winter. They were challenged by it, but they also braved it with great openness, as they did with all that was new to them.

As a part of their time in Winnipeg, they participated in the weekly dance

sessions at MIFDA. This was a definite highlight for each of them. It was a chance to meet new people, practice their English and do what they love to do: DANCE!

One of their reflections on this time was their appreciation of the communal aspect of folk dancing. That, and the warm reception of the MIFDA members and the spirit of inclusivity that prevails there- were all a part of their gratitude.

They brought this gratitude and their enthusiasm to the circle. They have written since their departure and say that they think of the Friday night group often.

Thank you MIFDA. - Maria V.



From left to right in this photo: Deb [friend], Alexandra, ZeZe, Paula, Vaneide and Margaret [from community].

DANCE HITS OF THE EAST

On February 23 & 24 MIFDA welcomed Edwidge Munn, a folk dancer from Ottawa, to share the "Dance Hits of the East", that is the favourite dances of Ottawa and Montreal where she dances regularly. In our discussions about this year's workshop there was a feeling that we should try to get a mix of dances from different countries rather than focusing on a single country as some of our recent workshops have done. Several of our members had met Edwidge and danced with her in Montreal and Ottawa and knew that she is a great dancer and dance teacher, and we were glad when she agreed to come and teach a workshop for us.

Edwidge presented dances from Bulgaria, Turkey, Romania, Albania, Croatia, Serbia, Macedonia, the Netherlands and a New England contra to boot.

The workshop drew a good crowd of our regular members and some others, with attendance of more than 50 for the Friday night session.

Some of the dances are already favourites of ours, such as the Turkish dance, Gulli, and the Croatian dance, Nabrala, which the MIFDA Village Band has been learning.

During the workshop review session people volunteered to "adopt" a particular dance so that they would be able to lead our review sessions in the following weeks, and this has worked well.

For her part, Edwidge seemed to enjoy herself a lot as well, commenting on the high level of energy and enthusiasm she found here. But of course she had something to do with that as well.

- Jeremy H.

Israeli Dancing Classes

Join Gina Chodirker for a 6-week "Really Beginner" Israeli Dance session, beginning on Wednesday, May 2. Classes will be from 7:30 - 8:30 and participants must register in advance at the Rady Jewish Community Centre, 123 Doncaster.

Gina also teaches Israeli Dance on Monday evenings, 7:30-9:30 at the Centre.

For more information call the centre at 477-7510 or email Gina Chodirker at: gchodirker@shaw.ca

MIFDA's Elastic Band

Over the past year several members have formed the "MIFDA Village Band". The band is "elastic" in its composition, reflecting the inclusive and participatory approach we follow in our dancing. Our ambition is mostly to enjoy the music and be able to entertain ourselves and our fellow dancers when the occasion arises, and not to overdo it. After all, we also like to dance ourselves.

Our repertoire tends to be songs that are easily singable and that MIFDA members like to dance to. Even when we're not performing, it adds more depth to our enjoyment to sing along with the music as we dance and to have some understanding of what the song is about.

Membership in the band is open to anyone who enjoys singing or playing an instrument and wants to learn

some of the music that we dance to. Of course the music and singing in different languages is quite challenging. We have been meeting twice each month, with the first meeting devoted to singing and the second focusing on instrumentalists. With leadership from Kelly, who acts as an informal director and provides us with music and song lyrics, we grapple with pronunciations, musical arrangements and harmonies.

Recently Bob Travica has been helping us learn to sing and understand some of the Balkan language songs. Everybody, of course, contributes. The band has performed several times at our various socials, including the Open House, the Hallowe'en Social, the Holiday Social in December, Valentine's Day and at the Edwidge Munn workshop.

- Jeremy H.

photos
by Anne Adkins



Growing Number of MIFDA Teachers

As the person planning the dance program and doing a lot of the teaching I have been happy to see a growing number of people willing and able to teach dances at MIFDA over the past several years. For the past few years we have been fortunate to have J.P. Cloutier, a highly skilled dancer and teacher, teaching us some of his favourites. Last fall the peripatetic Kathleen Mazurek returned from Mexico to teach us dances she learned there and in New England. Steve Meszaros, danced with MIFDA in its early days, has revived some of the dances he used to do then. Recently Bob Travica has also shared his great knowledge of Serbian dances with the group, and Kelly revived a classic Serbian dance, Seljancica, that has long been a favourite of international folk dancers. Meanwhile, David has

been reviewing the Sher and some other klezmer dances in anticipation of dancing to the Klez Kids at our AGM in May.

Our expanding circle of dance leaders was especially apparent at the Edwidge Munn workshop when each of the many dances that she taught was "adopted" by someone who took responsibility for leading and reviewing the dance in subsequent weeks - David, Barbara, Steve, J.P., Kelly, Diana, Don, Sandy and others contributed to this. Thanks to all these folks, this has been a great year for expanding our teaching resources and for getting everybody involved in the process.

- Jeremy H.

Irish Set Dancing Classes Growing

Free Irish set dancing classes are continuing on Mondays at Riverview School (multipurpose room) from 7:30-9:30 pm. Growing numbers of people have been coming out for these classes and newcomers are always welcome. Classes meet most Mondays, but are occasionally cancelled because of school events. For information about the classes talk to Jeremy

Dance News

Irish Mini-Festival, May 5

There is a one-day Irish Festival taking place on May 5, featuring a free "Irish Market" with various musical, crafts and dance demonstrations, plus workshops and an evening concert. The concert will feature a great Irish concertina player, Noel Hill, as well as local musicians and dancers. Irish set dancing demonstrations will be part of the Irish Market and will take place at 10:15 am and 2:00 pm. There will also be a short set dancing performance as part of the evening concert. The McConnell School of Irish Dance will also be performing during the concert and will be offering an Irish step dancing workshop during the day (\$15). All events take place at the Canadian Mennonite University on Shaftsbury Ave. Concert tickets are available at McNally Robinson or from Jeremy.

Ontario Folk Dance Camp, May 18 - 21, 2007

Location: The University of Waterloo, 100 kms. west of Toronto.

Cost: \$405 single/ \$360 double (non-OFDA member), includes room, meals, snacks, art supplies and workshop tuition.

For more information contact Kathleen at: kathleenmazurek@yahoo.com

Village Green Morris Men Show and Community Dance

May 26, 7:30 pm

The Village Green Morris Men will put on their annual Big Show on Saturday, May 26 at the Crescent - Ft. Rouge Church (Wardlaw and Nassau) at 7:30 pm. The guest performing group this year will be the Irish band, Cruihna. The show will be followed by a Community Dance featuring Cruihna and morris musician, Ken Natrass.

Jeremy Hull will call Irish set dances, Robin Lynch will call Welsh dances, Dave Edwards will call Appalachian squares and Dan Stone may call contras, if time permits.

Sacred Circle Dancing

First and third Sundays of each month, 2 - 4 pm at John Black United Church, 898 Henderson Hwy.

and every Monday evening at A-Spire Theatre, Gimli

For more information, email Astrid at: ahudson@mts.net

Edmonton International Folk Dancers will host a workshop with Cristian Florescu and Sonia Dion, October 5, 6 & 7, 2007

The workshop will be sponsored by the Balada Romanian Folk Dance Ensemble, a performing group comprised of enthusiastic Canadians who devote their spare time to the practice and performance of Romanian folk dance.

Location: the Westmount Community Hall 10978 - 127 Street, Edmonton

Cost: \$40, billeting available.

Contact: eifdancers@hotmail.com for more information.