

**Double Issue**

**Minutes, Letters,  
and More!**

# NEFFA



# NEWS

Summer/Fall 2005  
Vol. XXXI #2-3

**Circle Your  
Calendars! The  
Festival is April 21-  
23, 2006 at Natick  
High School, Natick  
Massachusetts**

## Farewell Larry

Long-time NEFFA enthusiast, booster, advisor, and administrator Larry Jennings died on June 29th, finally succumbing to the effects of congestive heart failure and Parkinson's Disease.

Many people wrote in with comments and remembrances, and we are happy to share them with you.

### He Was a Great Man

Larry's contribution to contra dancing is legendary. Anyone browsing through the history of contra dance will find his name mentioned often. Those who follow the advice he so unselfishly offer will find success that is profound and satisfying.

Recently, I have been reading the his last book, with some interest. It occurred to me that his advice for running a successful series, becoming a valued dancer in a community and successful caller on all levels was really a recipe for a successful life. Larry was my most valued advisor. He was kind, persistent, fair and always forthright in the advice he provided me about dancing and life. In all honesty, I consider him to be the most influential male in my life. He may not have considered me one of his greatest successes, but I loved and admired him for his gracious and unconditional love.

The world is less one truly extraordinary being, who happened to love contra dancing. Larry walked his talk. The love, graciousness, devotion and patience he shared will live long past the latest sequence. He was a great man. I expect 'Larry' memories will sustain and move many of the people he touched, forward. God Bless Larry Jennings. — *Tod Whittemore & Family*



## He Knew What He Thought and Why He Thought It

Larry Jennings celebrated the role of the organizer. He urged organizers to develop a vision of a dance series and to check continually to make certain that each decision was taken with the goal of bringing that vision into being. One way Larry found to advance his vision was to offer critiques of callers. Larry's style of critique was not a feel-good pat on the back; he told it as he saw it, sometimes in painful detail. Indeed, surviving a critique by Larry became a sort of badge of honor among many callers.

Few people thought more about contra dancing than Larry. He thought about the dances themselves, to be sure, but he thought about so much more-- programming, connections, the relationship among caller and musicians and dancers, the relationship of traditional to innovative, the minutiae that goes into successful calling, the geometry of the space occupied by dancers, the shape of a hall and the shape of a program... the list goes on.

And few people defended their positions on dancing more ardently than Larry. His style of discussion was not a gentle easing of differences, so sometimes it was hard to discuss dance matters with Larry. He knew what he thought and why he thought it, and he challenged others to do the same. If you didn't agree with his ideals, that was okay, as long as you could articulate and defend your own. I think that is Larry's greatest gift to us all, to think hard about what each of us wants to see in our dance communities and to work toward achieving those visions. — *David Millstone*

## Larry Also Had a Humorous and Mischievous Side

I am very saddened to hear about the news of the recent death of Larry Jennings. I send along my deepest sympathies and prayers for all his family and friends. Larry touched many lives with his love and interest in dance. Many of us will long remember him.

I met Larry quite a number of years ago, sometime shortly after I bought his first book of Zesty Contras. I found Larry to be an interesting, intelligent individual who was not afraid to speak his mind on any account, even if feelings were

occasionally hurt. Though Larry had his critical sides, there were also softer sides to his character when he would later come back and say that perhaps he shouldn't have been as critical or forthcoming with his comments.

Larry's leadership was instrumental in helping me to change how I look at dances, and particularly how I would program and plan the time it would take to teach and dance each figure in the course of an evening. He gave me constructive and direct criticism when I needed it, even if it was hard to hear at the time, and I am deeply indebted to him because he cared enough about this process and the people around it to share his thoughts and it turn, it helped to make me a better caller. It was through this process that I became aware of Larry's deep passion of the legacy of the folk process, particularly to how it related how callers were calling, teaching, programming and over time changing the art of New England style contra and square dancing. It was this passion behind his sometimes-critical front, that made it easier to hear what he had to say, and learn from it.

Stories:

Back in the winter of 1990, I proposed offering to lead contra dancing without using gender-based language at NEFFA, and opening it up to both the Gay dance community and the conventional dance communities that attend NEFFA to see what would happen. I was not present behind the scenes at NEFFA at that time, but it was later reported to me (and perhaps others could clarify since I was not present) that the idea of introducing this at NEFFA sparked some controversy at that time. When this idea was presented to Larry Jennings and he was asked, "Do you feel this would be an appropriate session to consider for NEFFA?" his response was: "It would be inappropriate not to consider having it for NEFFA." I heard later that Larry Jennings was sitting in the audience, as this session was held on the Auditorium stage, and that he was smiling, quite intrigued with this new idea.

Since that time, Larry and I had held a number of conversations around the conventions and use of gender language and he challenged me on numerous occasions to look at how it could be changed. He said that he didn't care much for the use of Armbands or Barearms, and suggested perhaps the use of NOR "Normally on the Right" and NOL "Normally on the Left" among other ideas.



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

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Issue	Deadline
Spring	Feb. 1
Summer	May 15
Fall	Aug. 15
Winter	Nov. 1

Larry did have a major influence on how our swinging changed over time in the gender-free dance community. He didn't like the underhand swing and suggested, at one NEFFA in the mid 1990's a new type of gender-free swing hold that he had developed, after working with some dancers, that was completely symmetrical and allowed dancers to swap roles during the swing and open up on whatever side they chose to. After he swung me a few times with this new style, I went on to share this with the gender-free dance communities. Many liked it, and some still use it today.

A few years ago, Larry needed a ride to the Ralph Page Legacy weekend, and during the ride up and back, he shared a lot about his history with NEFFA and a number of the groups and dances he started and put energy in over the years. I was really impressed by this list: NEFFA, International Folk dancing, Contra and square dances, Morris dancing, etc. Larry, though eager to share his history and his involvement, was rather modest about accepting any complements on his achievements.

Larry also had a humorous and mischievous side to himself that he trusted with me on occasion. I can recall a number of times, particularly when Larry's health started to decline, when he still had the strength to get up and dance a figure or two, where out of nowhere, the partner I was doing the Hambo with was swiftly and gracefully swept out of my arms and into Larry's for a few rounds, and then just as sweetly given back when Larry got tired. He also tapped me on the shoulder a few times during contras for the same. Over time, there reached a point in our connection where I could sense he was nearby, and with just the catching of his eyes, this seamless transfer would take place. These were the most endearing times I shared with Larry as I witnessed the slow decline of his condition. Each time we shared these magic moments, I savored them, each one more precious than the last. I knew they would not last forever, and each one became a treasure I shall long remember and enjoy remembering. -- *Chris Ricciotti*

## **"We All Loved Larry" — Comments from Thursday Night Dancers**

We all loved Larry. He was an intelligent, dedicated, fun-loving man. It was sad to see him lose his health but he never lost his spirit – and he will live forever in his dances. – *Lynn*

I've known Larry since 1984, when I first started to dance. Larry taught me "the ropes." I remember talking through one of his introductions to the dance, and he called out my name – "Chris, stop talking!" *That* quieted me down.

In his later years, when just starting to use a wheelchair, he'd still have the energy for a bit of a dance. I would waltz once around the room with my husband, then when we came up to Larry's wheelchair, he'd be standing there waiting for me. We would carefully, but smoothly, and to the music, waltz. He "gave weight" in time – his smallest and most subtle movements were – of course – with the music.

Thanks for the dances, Larry. – *Chris Reynolds*

About a month ago, Larry stood up & showed me how to lead the "give and take". Six steps. It was the last time I saw him and he was smiling & instructing at the same time. – *Nell*

Larry and I worked on the memorial for Ted Sannella. I am glad to be here for Larry's. He was always so cheerful & a perfect gentleman. There is going to be some dance in heaven. – *Leslie*

We'll always miss Larry's presence at the Thursday dance. – *Arnold*

About 1984, while I was on a business trip to Sydney, Australia, I unexpectedly found out about & went to a "bush dance" – about 200 attendees of all ages at Globe School. I had brought along some dance flyers from Boston. In talking to some of the dancers, I was asked if I knew Larry Jennings. I said, "Yes, I dance with him at the VFW in Cambridge, Mass. on Thursday evenings." They "oohed" and "ahhed" and said "Larry's our God!" It turns out they had diligently studied his books and danced his dances and revered him. When I got back, I told Larry and he was both surprised and delighted.

This past Memorial Day at a party I spoke with him. He was very discouraged. I reminded him of the dancers I met in Australia and reminded him of the many gifts he had given so many. Se smiled knowingly. – *Janet Balar*

I started dancing in 1993. I can't swing due to dizziness, but dance anyway. Larry said to me: "Diane, you cut a wide swath" which I took to be a complement. We all love Larry. – *Diane Webber*

Larry was so special to so many people – a solid pillar of the dance community. Creative, supportive, honest, frank, all with a selflessness that inspired others to contribute. I will miss him. – *Vince O'Donnell*

Among Larry's many amazing qualities was his sheer tenaciousness – he never backed down. If he believed it, he wanted you to believe it, or at least understand in complete detail how and why and *that* he believed it. This perhaps sums up what I most loved and respected about Larry: He believed. He also allowed, and encouraged discourse – about anything and everything – and was open to any discussion at nearly any time. Larry was a beautiful dancer, dance partner, and human. He is in my heart, always. – *MEW*

## **Larry Was A Relentless Teacher**

Larry was a relentless teacher, driven to share his knowledge and experience at every opportunity. And it wasn't just dancing either...

During a family and friend get-together the weekend after Larry's death, one of Larry's children related the story of the time Larry was teaching them to drive. The car was a stick shift, and the first task that Larry required (after starting the car) was to move the car just six inches forward. The selection of this task, simple for an experienced driver but actually quite demanding for a new driver, was illustrative of the kind of thought Larry put into his didactic interactions.

Larry gave me a great opportunity early in my calling career to call a slot or two at a NEFFA Contra evening. Afterwards, Larry gave me encouragement and an assignment to prepare a more complex

dance. I appreciate and value his support all through my calling career.

My interactions with him changed somewhat over the years, as I developed by own theories about dance-oriented issues. I enjoyed my heated discussions with Larry about those issues, and I'm sure he did, too. He always enjoyed playing the role of Socrates.

For years, Larry had served as Advisor to the NEFFA Executive Committee. Larry could always be counted on to help the committee to cut through to the core of issues, present a fully-developed proposal, and serve as keeper of the oral history. His contributions and dedication to NEFFA were boundless.

Larry's lessons will stay with me forever. Before too long, I'll teach my daughter to drive and I'm going to ask her to move the car just six inches forward... -- *Dan Pearl*

### **He Made You Aware of Yourself**

I've known Larry for a number of years. He always made my experiences at various folk festivals better. He was a person who made you aware of yourself and the others around you whether it was in a discussion group or on the dance floor. I was sorry to hear of his passing. My regards to his family. — *Diane Mathieson*

### **His Gifts Are Greatly Appreciated**

I would like to let family and friends know that I have been empowered by the brilliant writing of Larry Jennings. Larry's description of the details of contra dance are so informative and detailed that my appreciation of dancing, calling, and administration have been greatly enhanced. Even for me, who never new Larry personally, his gifts and efforts are greatly appreciated. — *Brian Schott*

## **Contra Music on the Net**

I am the Director of JukeboxAlive, an online music community. I have created Contra and Waltz streaming Jukebox-Radio Stations that I am offering to Contra websites around the country for free.

The Jukebox-Radio stations currently include tunes from Sam Bartlett, Larry Unger, Jeremiah McLane KGB, Cailen Campbell and many more Contra Bands.

The service is free to listen and free for the sponsoring website. Having music on your site is a plus for everyone especially the listeners and the musicians.

I am an avid waltzer and contra dancer. I would love to see these genres of music disseminated so that the musicians can make a living doing what they love to do. Your assistance would be appreciated.

Bands that want to participate can do so at [www.jukeboxalive.com](http://www.jukeboxalive.com) Additionally I am making an Audio-Video Calendar system available to Contra Dance groups for free. See [www.audiocal.com](http://www.audiocal.com).

Peace and Blessings, Lonnie LePore, JukeboxAlive Director  
828 232 0016

## **IN PASSING**

### **Mary Stafford**

We regret to note the death of Mary Stafford, an English Country dancer since the late 1970s and former board member of CDS Boston Centre as well as the former Crafts Hall coordinator for NEFFA. She passed away at home on Wednesday, July 6, after a long struggle with cancer and after losing her husband of 53 years, Rick Stafford, on June 12.

### **Ellen J. Mandigo -1918-2005**

Ellen was born and raised in Foxboro, Massachusetts where she enjoyed fishing with her father, Girls Scouts, music and dancing. After graduating from Fisher College, she worked as an administrative secretary in various departments at M. I. T. In 1971 she was awarded a Diploma in Nuclear Engineering for "having served with distinction as the first Departmental Secretary." Her talent as a secretary was also applied to NEFFA, the Ralph Page Memorial Committee and the CDS, Boston Centre. She was honored with a Life Membership by CDS, Boston Centre of which she was very proud. There is no question she loved all types of dancing. She played the piano for her own pleasure, but gave many hours of music to English country dancing. Once I asked her if it bothered her to be playing music instead of dancing. She answered, "It is a different kind of pleasure." The dance camps Ellen attended included N. E. Square & Folk Dance Camp, Becket, Mass, Pinewoods Camp, Nu-Camp, Maine Folk Dance Camp, and Mainewoods Dance Camp. As an honored Girl Scout she attended a Scout camp on Long Pond, in Plymouth. She never could remember the camp's name, but always felt it abutted Pinewoods Camp.

Her hobbies besides music and dance were knitting, sewing, collecting Blue Willow China, Tea Leaf Iron Stoneware and a certain glass stemware manufactured by the Imperial Glass Company. I can attest to the knitting hobby because I was the recipient of many fine articles.

She leaves a sister and a niece in California and a nephew in Utah. She is at rest in her native town of Foxboro. I have known Ellen since 1953 and to her I say, "Thank you for a long and fun-filled 50 years, your dry wit and constant support." — *George A. Fogg*

# Tales from a Dance Leader

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**T**hat's not how the dance goes anymore."  
"What do you mean by 'anymore?'. I've been doing international dancing for 25 years, and that is the way it was taught to me and how I've seen it everywhere I have traveled. The syllabus also says that this is the way it's done."

"But Pat Leaderman has fixed it."

"Fixed it? Was it broken?"

"Well, yes. Pat just went back to Globania and realized that he transcribed the dance incorrectly 30 years ago. He presented the correct version at the Waltzing Weasel dance camp last month."

"OK. I'll give it a try."

"Good. It's important to be as authentic as possible."

--- (6 months elapse) ---

"That's not how the dance goes anymore."

"What do you mean? Pat Leaderman fixed the dance last fall."

"Yeah, but Susan Stepper just came back from Globania and fixed it at the Chattering Spines dance camp last month. Let me show you how it goes..."

"Wha!? That's the way I used to do it before Leaderman 'fixed' it!"

"It's important to be as authentic as possible."

-----  
This is based on actual conversations, and it got me thinking about what we are trying to accomplish by doing recreational folk dancing. There are the obvious benefits of being part of a social group, getting out of the house, doing exercise, etc. But folk dancing is different from candlepin bowling because of the *cultural* aspects involved.

And that makes it a potentially touchy subject.

## Recreation or Re-creation?

People who are part of the culture represented by the dance have a unique role. They *own* the dance, and thereby *define* how the dance is to be done. So if on one

day, they lift their knees three inches higher than they did last week, it's not only okay, it's authentic!

Then there's the rest of us. I claim that we can only portray an *approximation* of the authentic styling of the dance. Some dancers can do a pretty good job of emulating the style, and others, well, just go through the motions. But the point is that we don't have the "credentials" to claim authenticity.

If we can't do a dance justice, should we be prohibited from doing that dance? Well, it depends.

There are different sets of standards and goals for different circumstances. There is a difference between doing dances for *recreation*, and *re-creation*. When I do dances for fun, stylistic perfection is not the highest-ranked goal for me. But if I were a member of a performing group, I would strive for stylistic accuracy, since I am presenting that culture to the

public.

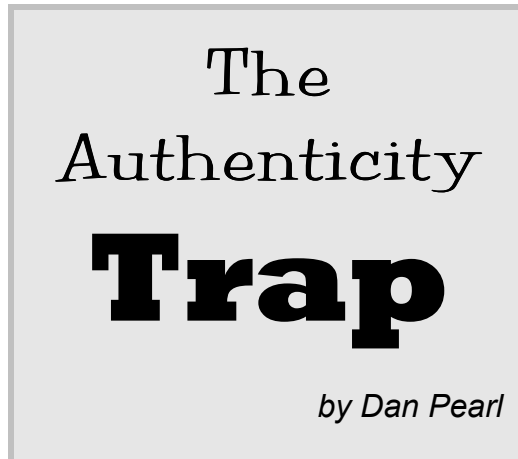
Even people with impeccable styling are fooling themselves if they think they are reproducing an authentic dance. The dances themselves might not even reflect an actual folk dance, but a modern conglomeration of figures! World-renowned master dance leaders travel overseas, collect common dance motifs, set them to a tune, issue unlicensed recordings and voila!: Instant Dance, suitable for performance or recreation.

Most folk dance recordings go about 3½-4 minutes. Is this authentic? Most folk dance music recordings for decades were released on 45rpm records and this length was a good fit. Back in the old country, the dances are simple, and the bands play on and on. Recreational dancers are sometimes surprised and even angered to see the band not playing like the recording.

As a folk dance leader, I feel like I have an implicit license to modify (gasp!) dances for the circumstances depending on whom I am leading. This includes omitting complicated steps, simplifying sequences, slowing tempos, etc. My audience is not striving for accuracy; they want a fun, different, experience.

## The Infallible Leader?

As dancers and dance leaders, we need to acknowledge



that people who collect dances are fallible. The presenters might be well meaning but every time a dance is passed along, it is slightly changed from the way that it exists in its native habitat.

If accuracy is your goal, then it stands to reason that the closer you get to the origin of the dance, the fewer changes you will observe. Barring your own travel to the origin community of the dance, learning from a leader who has traveled to the origin community will be your best bet.

Dance syllabi (printed dance directions) are notoriously variable in quality. The best ones will be accurate, vetted, use consistent terminology, provide style hints, etc. The worst mix up left and right, omit, misrepresent,

and mislead. Using them can be an adventure as well. Years ago, I visited a small folk dance group and I was astonished to see a leader teach a reel/hey for three in pieces: this pair pass right shoulders, then this pair pass left shoulders, etc. resulting in a riot of stop-start dance movement. I guess the syllabus omitted the fact that the dancers are constantly moving!

## Striking A Balance

Folk dancing is not “Dancing Free to Music.” There are conventions that need to be understood at appropriate levels to get the most from the activity.

## NEFFA Festival Lost and Found

If any of these items are yours, please contact NEFFA Lost and Found at 508-229-2854. Items not claimed by November 1st will be donated or recycled.

### Shoes

White Reebok sneakers sz 8  
Very worn Teva sandals  
Clogs sz 8.5 “Lower East Side” brown  
Dansko sandals UK sz 38, pinkish suede  
Black med heels sz 8 “High Lights”  
Black men’s sz 9? Thin foot  
Black Dexter sz 10 wide.  
Light green fabric slippers  
Brooks Brothers 9.5C black  
Liz Clairborne 9.5M spike heels brown  
White “Ballet Master” 6.5M white  
“Rugged Outback” chukka boots. Black sz 8  
Adidas sneakers. White 8.5

### Accessories

Morris hankies with finger-holds  
Morris baldrick: Yellow and green

### T-Shirts

Ashokan 2003  
UNLV large  
Black small, faded dragon design  
Family Week Pinewoods 2001 XL  
Black large with orange Native American? Eagle  
Black youth 12 “Divided”  
Black XL Las Vegas Choppers  
Medium orange “Political Prisoner in Training”  
Slate “CDS at Buffalo Gap”  
Black “You’re no ninja”

### Shirts

Red plaid Eddie Bauer, large  
Izod black poly-cotton  
Jones Sport M gray lame blend  
LL Bean, XL, short sleeve, white with blue and gray pattern  
Plastic wrapped bundle of shirts  
Pacific Legend Hawaiian shirt  
Harvard Square gray knit “PTC” logo  
Maroon Gap Medium long sleeve  
Nike large dark blue  
12 Month Miniware light blue with flower design

### Sweats

Large gray pants  
Large black Jco Jeans top with skeleton rolling dice design  
Black MT-2 Top with white design on sleeve  
Roots Athletics Small  
Black Medium Lee, “BANE”  
Green Picturetel XL

### Dresses

Dusty rose full-length

### Sweaters/Vests

Sierra Sport fleece, blue, large. “Practising Law Institute” monogram  
Black Gap medium wool  
Express medium acrylic blend black  
Faded Glory gray with red stripe  
Gift bag with blue “One Step Up” infant sweater purchased at Value City

### Jackets/Coats

Girl’s dress coat, blue with lace trim  
Black nylon with tan lining  
Denim Old Navy youth 8  
Olive suede long sleeves  
Brownish fabric “The Territory Ahead” large  
Xhilation light blue nylon winter jacket.

Youth M.

Oshkosh blue with red, white and gray stripes youth  
Tapemeasure Medium velour blend

### Musical Stuff

CD - “The Best of Rick and Judy”

### Jewelry

Earring - U-shaped with silver balls on end.  
Jumping dolphins charm  
Bracelet with small white beads  
Bracelet with black, green, clear beads

### Miscellaneous

“Smart Meds” tote bag with food  
Towel - white with pastel stripes  
Schwinn bike helmet  
Strap assembly for holding a heavy instrument?  
Various glasses and sunglasses and cases  
Schlage key on ring  
Maxell earbuds in case  
Dog toy  
Electric pencil sharpener  
Broom  
Walker (yes, a walker) Sunrise Medical

### Scarfs

Square, navy blue with white design, cotton

### Water Bottles

Nalgene pale green narrow neck  
Nalgene green wide neck “Massachusetts Institute of Technology” imprint  
Nalgene gray wide neck “Tracy” on lid (2) Boston Federal  
Breugger’s travel mug  
Octagonal polypropalene  
Polar bottle  
Nalgene gray wide neck “MPPF” on lid

Summary of the Minutes of the NEFFA Executive Board

6 March 2005

**Parking Permits (Dan Pearl)**

I'll take care of assigning parking permits to NEFFA people who need parking near the school. **Linda:** What about emergency parking? **Dan:** People go to the lobby and get a pass. This isn't ideal – preferably there would be a “greeter” outside who could handle this; they could have temporary parking in a HP space. If a person had a real conflict, ideally they'd let us know ahead of time and could be re-scheduled. The easiest thing is to park at TJX and get on the bus.

**Early Entry (Steve Moore)**

I've got myself, Leslie and Bob Fuller, maybe Angela – Ralph will help Sat. AM. **Dan:** We'll be open Saturday AM at 7:00 to finish set-up; Early Entry can start at 9:00; doors can open at 9:30. **Steve:** Everyone should give me a list of people who need Early Entry. **Nancy:** I think we can make a list this year, not make stickers. **Peter:** Sound badges go to supervisory people, not regular volunteers. **Shelagh:** The badge system should take care of Early Entry status. I can give out a few blanks for last minute fill-ins.

**Tickets (Maureen Carey)**

Dave Reid sent me the master sheets for tix etc. – everyone should have their tickets by now. Dave sent me the list of his ticket sellers and they have all been called. Neither Steve Boylan or Michael Carey want to be in charge of Tickets permanently. There also needs to be a person to run errands like getting change etc.

**Membership (Maureen Carey)**

**Maureen:** People at the membership table will write out membership cards for people who need them. **Peter:** An idea from the last meeting was that we have one person who only sells tickets at membership rates. **Maureen:** The point is that members will get quick service. (?): Hal thought it would be difficult to sell memberships and tickets at the same place.

**Linda:** This is probably not a good time to change the system – we don't have a membership chair to talk with Hal Wagner.: Another issue is that the bus system has complicated ticket sales – it's very quiet, and then there's a rush of people. **Shelagh:** What about the idea of the express line for members? **Peter:** The point is that we have two options: have a separate line for members or put a membership person at the ticket table. Which should we do? **Dan:** Having a membership person at the ticket table means that a plug can be made for membership.

**Site Search Report (Peter Olszowka)**

Peter reported on possibilities for a rehost of the NEFFA Festival. We may need to go to a cluster of buildings if we cannot get everything under one roof.

**Festival Committee Reports**

**Crafts (Ann Schunior):** We had a couple of late drop-outs; Allan Block is one. Our main problem is that we don't have the room until 6:00. This year, Friday is totally out. I'm worried about setting up through the crowded hallways. I put out a call for help for Friday night. Saturday set-up is difficult because Saturday's such a long and tiring day to begin with.

**Peter:** Setting up electrical wires will take about an hour. **Dan:** Can you mark the room (maybe on the walls) ahead of time?

**Peter:** Our current system is to set up squares with a blue tarp. **Linda:** Can you use the Activity Room? **Peter:** We're using it for Main Hall staging. **Ann:** We'd like to have a detour around the Lower Hall door. We're going to need a monitor for traffic flow outside. Parking will also be an issue since people won't be in early. **Shelagh:** Can they have a designated area in the circle? **Ralph:** What about the ramp from the handicapped lot. **Peter:** There may be a lot of traffic after 7:00.

**Evaluations (Shelagh Ellman-Pearl):** We should have something on the evaluations explaining the loss of space at Natick and the site Search.

**Food (Maureen Carey):** There are a few minor changes – they're listed on the handout. Irene Howard is trying to get the Scottish booth going. One potential problem is that I've already given their space away – this is in progress and may

**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 \$20/individual, \$38/family (up to 2 people over 18). Contributions beyond these basic amounts are welcome and 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, or via email: [neffa@neffa.org](mailto:neffa@neffa.org)

Interested persons may get on NEFFA's mailing list for one year at no charge. Send request with full name and address to the office.

or may not happen. Kitchen space will be tight because they'll need to share. I have someone to replace the Polish booth: he'll do stuffed peppers, (veggie and meat) as a main dish. He has a pushcart. **Harold:** If you need clearance for a pushcart, check it out with the school.

**Housing (Maureen Carey):** Diane reports that housing isn't doing very well. A lot of people put up friends or make arrangements with previous guests. One issue is that everyone wants to be near the HS – most of the housing is not that close. **Peter:** We only got 4 hosts. **Steve:** The hotels are offering reasonable prices. **Dan:** Does she have a targeted list or does she just send out fliers? It may be time to drop housing.

**Inside Facilities (Harold Henry):** I've called the Fire Dept., EMT's, police etc. The walk-through will be Tuesday at 6:00. We'll check out detours around the crafts set-up etc. **Peter:** Friday night: there's a passage from the Main Hall to the Lower Hall that goes around the Crafts Room – should we open this to keep people out during set-up? This is close to what people are used to. **Dan:** I think the back hallway will be enough. **Linda:** Have we confirmed that we have access to the Wellness Center through the Lower Hall? **Harold:** I'll take care of this. **Dan:** The ramp's not great for large groups – we should encourage use of the back hall. **Peter:** There's a way to go through the lockers without going through the Wellness center. **Harold:** The earliest time we can get in is at 2:00 on Friday. Saturday is 7AM. Diane and Michael will come in Friday to make signs. **Maureen:** People who need new signs should e-mail them ASAP. **Harold:** I'll rent a van Thursday PM. The sound cables are in front of everything – they'll have to be loaded first. **Maureen:** Can I use the truck for storage afterwards? (Yes). **Peter:** Sound is not using scaffolding – we need 12 foot step ladders – does Peterson have them? **Harold:** You can get ladders for \$100 – why don't you buy them. What do you need? **Peter:** A 12-foot and a 16-foot.

**Publicity (Maureen Carey):** I have a friend who may be interested; Ron might also be interested. I'm going to chase down WUMB and see if we can get radio time. The WUMB festival fell apart when a major organizer quit. So, there was no opportunity for a booth – maybe we can get air time instead.

**Sound (Peter Olszowska):** Scheduling with the sound contractors is done; I'm about to send the contracts off.

**Volunteers (Nancy Hanssen):** I saw Dot Fisher – she's ready to go with Performer Sales. My committee will take over the volunteer table this year. Committee Chairs should make sure to supervise their volunteers – I can't do anything if someone's replacement doesn't show up. **Dan:** Can you note their contact on the assignment card? They can call hospitality or their volunteer supervisor in an emergency. **Nancy:** We'll have a new communication

system to replace “notes” – we'll have a file for each committee – supervisors should pick up their file, or we'll have a runner. **Dan:** Why not use cell phones or beepers? **Nancy:** Cell phones would work. People who generate volunteers outside of the system should give me their Early Entry lists.

## 11 June 2005

**Grants Committee (presented by Maureen Carey)** A Grants Committee (GC) Recommendation was communicated (by e-mail) by Robert Johnson to grant an additional \$500 (to \$500 granted by the GC) to the Jewish Musical Theater Firelech for travel and visa costs related to performing at the Kiev International Jewish Festival was discussed.

- ❑ **Motion made by Steve Moore to continue the discussion until more information is obtained. Seconded by Mark Jones.**
- ❑ **Carried by voice vote.**

**Comments about Membership and Fund Raising (Ralph Jones)** There was a comment on the feedback form suggesting a sticker on Festival tickets saying “I'm a volunteer!”. **Dan:** We have hundreds of performers who get free tickets – we should send a mailing to them suggesting a voluntary donation of \$20. In return, their badge could have some special distinction. We could get \$10,000 out of this. We had evaluations saying “I would happily pay the cost of my ticket if the money went to improving sound in the Main Hall (for instance ...)” **Ralph:** Then why not ask for membership? **Dan:** We don't want to force memberships. **Linda:** There's another model: the dulcimer festival in Michigan - their model is that everyone [working on the festival] pays \$3. We always have 1700 performers “on the list”, (1200 of which actually sign in). **Angela:** But performers have to do a lot of fund raising just to get here. I've had groups ask for a booth here to fund raise so that they could attend the next. **Martha:** In my fund raising experience, it's helpful to say ‘anything is welcome’, but then suggest amounts. **Maureen:** Let's put this on the August agenda. **Dan:** This is a retreat type topic. Let's form a membership drive task force.

### Secretary's Report (Laura Leibensperger)

- ❑ **Motion made by Steve Moore: Approve March minutes. Seconded by Ralph Jones.**
- ❑ **Carried by voice vote.**

## 7 August 2005

### Grant Committee Request (Robert Johnson)

A grant request was discussed. The Grants Committee had already awarded \$500.

- ❑ **Motion made by Robert Johnson that the Board increase the current \$500 granted by the Grants**



**Committee by another \$500, for a total of \$1000 towards airplane tickets and visas for the group Firelech to travel to Kiev. Seconded by Ralph Jones.**

❑ **Motion defeated 1 – 9.**

(?): I agree that in view of upcoming site questions, though the GC has never come close to spending \$5000, this year it might make sense to lower that amount. **Robert:** I can relay the concern here to the GC. **Ralph:** Also, we should emphasize the connection of what people do at the Festival to what we fund. **Linda:** How much work would it be for you to give us a synopsis of grants over the last 5 or 10 years? **Robert:** Every year in the fall, I give a handout for the past year – I could compile something for the last five years.

**Site Issues (presented by Maureen Carey)**

**Maureen:** Peter has communicated that a potential new Festival site has rejected us, but he doesn't consider it to be a completely closed door. **Ralph:** Do other people agree with that? Why does he think that? **Dan:** I think he's the only person communicating with the administration. **Rayna:** Peter mentioned that he wanted "senior" people to talk to them again. They have a new executive at the school – maybe Peter felt that, being new, talking to him might make a difference ... **Mark:** I've made some phone calls – it's a very political process – it takes time to find the right people. I contacted 6 or 7 places about a month ago.

**Maureen:** I have a friend who's active in another town's politics. She's got all three Select-people desperate to have us come there. Of course, this isn't the school ... Michael and I did an extensive walk-through with her of their three schools on Friday. We had marvelous treatment by the custodial staff, especially in the Middle School, which is only three years old and would be the central place. There's tons of parking within walking distance. The Middle School has about 200 spaces, the adjacent Elementary School has another hundred. The High School has more – it's about a five minute walk. In the center of town, there's acres and acres of parking. In that site, the Festival would take some re-envisioning. There's a good chance we would be partners to some degree with the town. There are lots of people in town who would like to have us. **Harold:** There's public transportation 10 or 12 minutes away. **Maureen:** The building has certain sections that are air-conditioned; not all of it. It has one gigantic room with a cement floor which is air-conditioned ... There also are several large gyms. There's a beautiful air-conditioned modern library. **Ann:** I could handle the concrete floor. **Linda:** So where are we at in the process? **Maureen:** The principals are on vacation until Tuesday. **Dan:** If it reduces our cost by having them provide a facility for little or nothing with the Festival being partly a 'town thing', that's OK – that's how we got our foot in at Natick. It was a Natick co-production. **Harold:** Do you see shuttle buses? **Maureen:**

It's a very short walk, but people will be out in the weather.

**Mark:** Another town was interested in having a conversation or basic facility walk-through. That's two possibilities. It would take several weeks or a month to get the administration to a point where they would say we agree, or not. The facilities have not been seen.

**Ann:** Can we get the list of requirements and compare it to what we saw. **Dan:** It's on line. **Linda:** A frustrating thing about this process is that we've had no deadlines. As you can see on the list, many places have not been contacted. We have to have a timeline. If Peter can't make one now, we may have to do it as a group. Program will be sending out invitations to apply ten days from now. Craft applications are due on Oct. 10. **Harold:** Are our dates available? **Maureen:** Yes. **Ralph:** We need to have a walk-through soon and lock in our dates. **Shelagh:** We have Natick if we need it. We have the options of: a new place, staying at Natick, or bag the festival and focus on a new site. We should at least decide today whether we're going to have a festival. **Linda:** From my perspective, and probably Ann's, they (performers/vendors) don't really care where they're going to be. What we have to let them know is if the festival is happening, and when. The application can list dates and not place. By late September or early October, we need to know the space so we can start to assign performers to spaces. **Mark:** I'll make a "Plan B" motion, addressing whether should we have a festival if we have it at Natick. **Rayna:** How much money did we lose at NEFFA this past year. **Ralph:** I have minus \$1000-\$1500. **Harold:** The issue isn't money – it's space. Right now, the Lower Hall is almost unusable. In 2-3 years, we'll probably lose Natick due to rebuilding. **Linda:** As regards Natick, we had discussed the options of 1. not having a Festival, 2. having a reduced Festival as last year, or 3. having a tent to replace the Lower Hall. There would be an advantage to not having a Festival if it meant that everyone could work on site alone. I think festival goers would understand if we have a big publicity gear-up for 2006. Money-wise, we'd have a year without losing money. I think we stand to lose festival goers if we offer a festival with Lower Hall conditions like last years. Money spent on a tent might be worth it. **Maureen:** It doesn't make sense to take a new place 6 months before the festival, since our normal prep time is 6 months. Re-envisioning a new kind of festival will take more time. We also have Thursday night issues. **Robert:** There's a down side to not having a Festival – if you go without a season, will people lose interest? **Shelagh:** Can we afford to lose continuity? I'm curious, how much would this tent cost? **Harold:** About \$5000, depending on size of the tent. **Dan:** It could be two tents side by side-very large tents are rare. **Harold:** The structure of the tent – poles etc. – breaks up the dance floor. **Dan:** That quote doesn't include the floor. I priced it out – it's about \$10,000 to duplicate the Lower Hall with a tent and dance floor. **Ann:** We also could lose the interest, not just of attendees, but of vendors. We could have a publicity blitz about wherever we are: either

we're working on a new place but we have to deal with Natick this year, or, we're starting a new process so give us your feedback. **Rayna:** We need a festival so we have something to show when we're talking to sites we might be interested in. **Dan:** I think we need to have the Festival, and we need to have supplementary space; we need to show people that we're doing something.

- Motion made by Mark Jones: We will have a Festival this year at Natick, (unless we decide on a new site), on the usual date. Seconded by Ralph Jones.**
- Carried by voice vote.**

**Linda:** The problem about choosing both a new site and a new date is the pressure created if we don't have our usual week – it was miserable for Operations and Sound to not be on a school vacation week – compounded by the issue of a new site. **Ann:** It would at least triple our amount of work – new signs etc. **Ralph:** The three possibilities are Natick - usual date; other site - usual date; other site - date to be determined by ... **Harold:** The end of school break has obvious advantages. It we can't do it during spring break, would we want to push it to May, later in the spring?

- Motion made by Linda Leslie: Regardless of location, the Festival will be held the weekend after Patriots Day (April 21, 22, 23 2006). Seconded by Ralph Jones.**
- Carried by voice vote with one abstention.**

Plans were made for a tour of potential alternate facilities.

## Letters to NEFFA

### Callers: Call!

I would like to make the comment that I rarely contra dance anymore because I find that many of the callers in our area (Southern NH and Greenfield) call the first two changes in the contra and then you are on your own. Since we don't dance every week, we are not familiar with many of the contras. I feel that we have to concentrate so hard to do the dance correctly that it isn't any fun. Heaven forbid if you should have a conversation with someone in the line, as that would be a total end of the concentration and loss of where you are in the contra. When we learned contra dancing with Ralph Page, we were taught to listen to the caller for the next change. However, now the caller is no longer paying attention and sometimes not even in the room. Since contra dancing is supposed to be for fun and recreation, I really think that the callers, who are being paid by us, should be up on the stage, calling the dance, and not wandering around. I wish someone would bring this up with NEFFA and see if some change could be made in this regard. Thank you. — *Marilyn Richardson*

### The Southerners Seek Memories

I hope some caller, musicians or dancers may remember the 1974 visit of Southerners Band to USA comprising Jack Hamilton, Ken Hilyer and Alan Corkett. I have been asked to write an article about this trip and have little documentary record; staying with Bob Dalsemer in Baltimore and playing for a dance there; Dudley Laufman weekend in his log cabin - kitchen party, we met Bob McQuillen, Dick Leger and many other names and played at the Ralph Page camp at Keene, NH. in September 1974.

Please contact me preferably with any anecdotes.

Alan Corkett (Oh dear, was it 30 years ago!)

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