



# Bay Area Country Dancer

No. 123—October 2020

www.bacds.org

## A Band Is Born ... with BACDS as Doula

How could our freelance musicians survive with no gigs? The BACDS Board came up with an answer. Our musicians could survive if we paid them for services that would fulfill BACDS's mission to promote, preserve, and teach traditional English and American music and dance.

One of the first grant proposals the Board received came from recorder virtuoso Judy Linsenberg of Musica Pacifica. Zoom solo dancing had created a need for shorter-than-usual recordings of country dances. Judy proposed that she, together with violinist Shira Kammen and pianist Patti Cobb, would make such recordings for the dance community's use. The Odd Sundays English Garage Band was born!

Judy, Shira, and Patti will soon complete their first batch of recordings, many of which have already appeared online at Odd Sundays English dances. Keep an eye out for the recordings on BACDS' website, where they will eventually be available for downloading.

Another project supported by a BACDS grant is the *Rodney Miller Collection of Original Fiddle Tunes*, a major publication by one of the great innovators of North America's fiddle tradition. BACDS is honored to have played a part in preserving Rodney's musical legacy.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### *Survey coming soon!*

I'm sending out a survey to everyone who dances at BACDS dances. I hope you will take a moment to fill it out. I'd like to know if our community has needs that we can meet together that are not being met by online ECD, Contra, and workshops. Look for it on BACDS-Announce email list. —*Claire Takemori*

### *Christy/Bowen Big Birthday Bash on Zoom*

Christy Bardin and Bowen Lee have the same birthday in October. We were going to celebrate this year with a birthday contra dance, but now we're going to have a Zoom party. The fabulous Audrey Knuth will be our featured musician. Storytellers will touch our hearts and minds. And you'll have an opportunity to jump in with your stories and music. Save the date! Friday, October 16, from 7 to 9 pm. Zoom link will be posted in BACDS announcements, or email Bowen at [bowenlee3@yahoo.com](mailto:bowenlee3@yahoo.com) for the link. Come listen to great music and stories, share some virtual cake and ice cream, and have a great time. —*Bowen Lee*

### *Subscribe to BACDS-Announce!*

All our online event notifications go through BACDS-Announce. Sometimes they are organized too late to get them on the website in good time. If you're not getting emails from [bacds-announce@bacds.org](mailto:bacds-announce@bacds.org) and want to, go to <https://bacds.org/mailman/listinfo/bacds-announce> and sign up there. It would be a good idea to tell your mail client that mail from bacds.org is not spam. —*Alan Winston*

## Fall Frolick Goes Virtual

The best-laid plans ... Back in February we had dreams of bringing our Fall Frolick to Bishop's Ranch this November 13th–15th for a glorious weekend of English country dance and music. We have to postpone that trip to the Ranch till 2021, but in 2020 Fall Frolick is going virtual, and that means fun.

Be prepared for concerts and dances featuring members of some of America's best bands—Peregrine Road (Rachel Bell and Karen Axelrod), Persons of Quality (Jon Berger, Jim Oakden, and Rebecca King), The Whoots (Jim Oakden, Shira Kammen, and Charlie Hancock), and the Odd Sundays English Garage Band (Judy Linsenberg, Shira Kammen, and Patti Cobb). Expect English dances called by Kalia Kliban and Sharon Green, international folk dances led by Jordan Ugglu and Megan Wolf, and French bourrées taught by Rachel Bell.

We may not get to Healdsburg this year, but we'll have a virtual visit to Kalia's woodturning workshop, as well as to Companions in Waiting, the rescue and adoption service for cats and dogs run by Jo and Bruce Hamilton. Yes, there will be kittens and puppies at camp!

That's November 13th–15th, coming to a Zoom screen near you! More details in mid-October.

## In Memoriam: Dick Bagwell

Dick Bagwell died at home with loved ones by his side on September 6, 2020, following a heart attack a few days earlier. He was 84. He was a musician, actor, writer, director, and educator, with a BA in Theatre from Northwestern and an MA in Theatre from Penn State. He performed as the Pied Piper and Merry Will Kemp at fairs and festivals across the US. He enjoyed Scottish and English country dance and danced with morris teams, most recently Deer Creek, until a stroke in September 2014 left him hemiplegic.

Notable accomplishments include marching with Martin Luther King in Selma, Alabama, in 1965; developing programs as educational director for the Living History Centre in 1973–1979 that continued long after his association with the Renaissance Faire; writing the influential *Poor Richard's Guide to the Queen's Tongue*, the *Faire Person's Elizabethan Bag*, and *Basic Faire Accent Pronunciation Guide*; creating the ever-popular Saucy French Postcard Tableaux Review for the Dickens Christmas Fair in 1974; performing his one-man show "Shakespeare's Clown" at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in 1982; the 1988 publication of his *Pipe & Tabor Tutor* (which remains the definitive instruction book for the instruments); starring in the 2004 Portland Revels as Tom Sly; and Goat Hall's production of his chamber opera "To Hell with Heroes," which features Osama bin Laden welcoming George W. Bush to hell, at its New Voices Festival in 2014. The family is planning a virtual memorial. Please contact [Gillian Bagwell](#) for more information.

—Gillian Bagwell



*Dick Bagwell appearing as Merry Will Kemp, with pipe and tabor.*



*Dick on alto sax performing with BACDS team Deer Creek Morris.*

## Family Week's First Fall Gathering

BACDS Family Week branched out from their summer camp format on Friday, September 25, to offer a fall gathering. The gathering combined some familiar features of camp with some unique experiences. It was a time to greet old and new friends, visit with people we usually only see at camp, and share some much-needed laughter. The event featured Sam Bartlett (from Indiana), who is well known as a contradance musician and has been to many West Coast camps. He was joined in a short concert by his wife and daughter, who are also experienced dance musicians. But what some people didn't know was that Sam is also a teacher of Stuntology and we were treated to a half hour show of his talents. Sam taught us entertaining stunts to do at home using everyday objects, things that will amaze and annoy our families. You can find out more about Stuntology by viewing his videos on YouTube or, even better, you can order his book through his website: [sambartlett.com](http://sambartlett.com). And then there was Kalia Kliban and (probably) the first ever remote potato-dangling race. This "sport" was brought to camp by Kalia and brought many laughs to us on Friday.

Claire Takemori taught a dance for all and Gordon Allen provided the music. We also enjoyed two bedtime stories from Greg Begin and were led off to bed by our beloved Pied Piper (David James). This whole evening flowed smoothly thanks to stellar MC Julie James and the BACDS Family Week committee. Family Week has been a heartwarming summer experience for the past 28 years. Our virtual camp this summer brought campers and staff from all over the US (and a few from abroad). The message from the summer gathering was that we are more than a week of summer camp, we are family, we are a community. Zoom has given us the opportunity to gather in a different way and we will continue to hold camp in whatever way we can. Stay tuned for details about BACDS Family Week 2021. —Rhonda Cayford

## Odd Sundays English Solo Dances on Zoom

On April 12, 2020, Kalia Kliban and Sharon Green inaugurated the world's first California-based online English country dance, welcoming about 80 single individuals and couples to enjoy dances from the 17th to the 21st century, adapted for pandemic times. They soon adopted a biweekly format, holding sessions on the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Sundays of the month, and alternating callers, with Kalia running one Sunday and Sharon the next. Since that opening session, the dances have more than doubled in size; anywhere from 160 to 200 people now tune in to the Odd Sundays English dances to enjoy seeing friends from all over North America and the UK and listening to great recordings and to splendid live music performed by Jon Berger, or Shira Kammen and Jim Oakden.

(If you would like an invitation to the Odd Sundays English dances on Zoom, email [sharon@bacds.org](mailto:sharon@bacds.org), or look for the link in your next BACDS-announce mailing.)

## Pandemic Survival Tips and Stories

I suggest playing duets. After the Golden Gate Symphony (where I play cello) shut down and the SF Symphony (where I usher) shut down, I felt out of touch with the music I love. In July, I started playing duets with my teacher, Jill Brindel from the SF Symphony, and I love doing this. She is a very close friend, and it allows me to focus on aspects of my playing that can get lost when I'm madly learning a symphony by Beethoven or Mahler. —Diane Frank

I am a dancer living alone. I meditate for my mind. I exercise and stretch for my muscles and joints. I eat on time. I sleep on time. I dance from my heart. —Faye Middleton

### *My Online Story*

When I first heard about an online waltz in March, I didn't think it would be very interesting. I'm actually an introvert (who will step up when needed), so the idea of dancing & sharing my video feed online was scary. Well, turns out someone I was missing dearly was there, we tried a waltz holding our phones with each other's video pinned on the screen, and it was the *best* virtual dance I've ever had. It felt almost real, with leading twirls, self-dips, pivots, etc. So then I thought maybe contra could be interesting online too. I called one dance at the first Hayward Contra Zoom. I used a slow motion video with choreography captions to help teach a simple contra dance. Then I played a video from Catalina dance weekend with lots of locals dancing and Nova playing fabulous music to dance along with. Feedback was that the videos were

not needed, and folks would like to try more contra dances. Folks ask how online contra works when it's just one person (or maybe one other person) at home. Callers (with dancer feedback) have been working on innovative ways to make dancing solo or one couple more interesting than just imagining your hands four. We are trying dances that face the camera (which is very entertaining for the band and folks who just watch), medleys of traditional contras where you imagine neighbors (& partner), English country dances (that contra dancers can do easily), French BalFolk, international folk, and country line dances to contra music. We're finding that everyone has their own preferences, depending on their space, floor, how dizzy they get, whether they like to imagine or get confused by it, etc.

Since May, BACDS has had an online contra (trying various formats and adding entertainment) on 4th Sundays 4–6pm PT with over 100 (devices) attending. Yeah, if you mostly like the tactile feel of shared weight, this will not satisfy you. It does not satisfy my need for good dancing either. But, if you'd like to hear good music (always live) and see friends (and meet new folks) from our community, and have a fun time, I hope you'll give it a try! —*Claire Takemori*

## President's Corner, October 2020

*"Very pretty!" said Gandalf. "But I have no time to blow smoke-rings this morning. I am looking for someone to share in an adventure that I am arranging, and it's very difficult to find anyone."*

Here we are in the fall already, and you may have noticed we're still not having dances.

With the best information we can find, we will probably continue not having dances for quite some time, quite some time indeed. Most probably, and this is what we've gleaned from the best authorities we can find, the trees will be turning color again next year before we're having our dances again. That's not an optimistic estimate, but we'd be happy if it was that soon, and not later.

If all goes according to plan over here, you'll soon be seeing a plea from us not to forget to **renew your membership**. It's hard for us to remind people if we're not all crowding into a room together, and we're a little worried that our membership will drop off.

**"But why," you ask,** "why would I renew my dance membership if we're not dancing? It doesn't get me two dollars off at the door anywhere, and it doesn't go to support fun things I like to do like the No Snow Ball or the Playford. That's the silliest thing I've heard this week."

It's a fair question. As an answer, how about: "Have a membership just to support the organization"?

Because **we are doing things**, lots of dance-y music-y things:

- We're funding **scholarships to workshops**
- We're funding **outright grants to a number of musicians** for a variety of projects
- We're **paying musicians to record bespoke music** for the Odd Sundays dance series
- We're **paying minimums to musicians** for Claire's replacement for the Hayward Contra.

And that's besides the boring expenses we have like maintaining a storage facility for all the supplies we use for camps, keeping the website up and the mailing lists functional, some things just need to keep happening.

Look on the [bacds.org](http://bacds.org) website for a [membership renewal form](#). Or you can use the **Big Green Button** to pay membership dues, did you know that? **Some banks** will let you pay bills automatically; that's how I pay my quarterly team dues to Berkeley Morris, it just happens by magic!

*So they laughed and sang in the trees; and pretty fair nonsense I daresay you think it. Not that they would care; they would only laugh all the more if you told them so. They were elves of course.*

**Things are going on** even if we're not getting together in person. **Claire Takemori** has been organizing **musician workshops**, **caller workshops**, **sound tech workshops**, **live concerts**. **Contra dances on Zoom**. Sign up for the BACDS-announce mailing list to find out about all those. Did I mention the **Odd Sundays English dance** that Sharon Green and Kalia Kliban have been doing? The International Pirate Day they did for last weekend's shindig was hilarious, were you there? I'm still wincing over the bad jokes.



**Eric Black has pioneered** many of the technical details that make online music and dance events work, and continues to make that work globally available to all, **underwritten by a grant from BACDS.**

*“And why is it called the Carrock?” asked Bilbo as he went along at the wizard’s side.*

*“He called it the Carrock, because carrock is his word for it. He calls things like that carrocks, and this one is the Carrock because it is the only one near his home and he knows it well.”*

One last thing, an update on **the status of AB 5**, the new law this year that would force us to treat all our musicians and callers and sound engineers employees of the BACDS, instead of independent contractors like we do now, with all the bookkeeping and extra expense that implies.

The fixup bill, AB 2257, also from Lorena Gonzalez (D–San Diego), passed both houses of the legislature and was signed by the governor. It’s retroactive back to the beginning of this year, **huzzah!** That lets us go back to The Way Things Were for musicians and callers and sound engineers doing recordings. It does unfortunately explicitly leave out sound engineers for live performances from its exception to the new rules. Your friendly neighborhood Board will be discussing various options and working on a solution to hopefully be ready by the time live in-person dances start happening again. That’s it.

Pardon me while I go sit on my porch and blow smoke rings.

—Kevin Goess

## Volunteer Opportunities

### *Membership Secretary*

Seeking someone with basic database skills and software to take on BACDS Membership. We are currently on FileMaker and need to change platforms anyway, so moving to your preference will be fine. Duties include entering any new data, mailing membership cards and any extra donation letters, making deposits and reporting them to the Treasurer. The current team will train and assist in the transition, and will continue to be available for consultation and backup. Contact Mary at [mary@luckhardt.com](mailto:mary@luckhardt.com) or phone 510-604-6060 for more information.

### *Help with online events!*

It takes a village to put on a dance or concert on Zoom. Even aside from the performers and the host or MC, and aside from the arcane sound requirements for getting remote people to play together, it’s helpful to have additional moderators who can monitor the chat and ask questions or help toss out Zoom bombers. If you’ve got a good internet connection and a fairly large screen on your desktop machine, you can be of great help! Training is available! Get in touch with Claire Takemori—[claire@bacds.org](mailto:claire@bacds.org)—to help with concerts or contra, Sharon Green—[sharon@bacds.org](mailto:sharon@bacds.org)—to help with Odd Sundays English.

### *Join the BACDS Board!*

The Board could use more members! We meet monthly—by Zoom during the pandemic—usually third Thursdays 8:00–10:00 pm. The minimum obligation is to attend meetings and participate in email discussion (including looking at documents distributed beforehand); you can volunteer for additional tasks as they come up. All terms expire in May but we can bring new members aboard as long as we have openings. (By charter, we may have 11–15 board members, and at present have 11.) Meetings are respectful, collegial, and good-humored. Write to chair Alan Winston at [AWinstonDance@gmail.com](mailto:AWinstonDance@gmail.com) if you’re interested.

## **Volunteer Thanks**

*Huge* thanks to Claire Takemori and all the volunteers who have helped her make online events happen since March! Audrey Knuth (So Cal), Alan Roberts (Seattle), Nicholas Dahlman, Les Addison, Kelsey Hartman, Larry T (So Cal), Jacqui Grennan (So Cal), Sharon Green, Jen Bamesberger, Matt Mathis, Rhonda Cayford, Drew Delaware (CAN). And the biggest appreciation for all the time and research Eric Black did to get us up and running (with help from Ian Brehm of Mt. Airy, Philly contra).

### ***Odd Sundays Volunteers***

Thanks to Sharon Green, Kalia Kliban, Lindsay Verbil (Zoom tech support), David Brown (mailing coordinator), the musicians both live and recorded, and the occasional odd volunteers.

### ***Editors' Thanks***

Thanks to Simmy Cover and Em Holland for proofreading, Mailing Czarina Ellen Eagan for organizing printing and mailing, Chris Folger for doing this job very well for a long time, accompanied by our hopes for a speedy and full recovery.