



Bay Area Country Dancer

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<https://www.bacds.org>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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—Alan Winston



Virtual Family Week: How it started ... and how it went in 2020.

Virtual Family Week 2021

SAVE THE DATE: Our family gathering will be happening July 4–9, 6:30–8:15pm PDT.

Family Week will be back with a virtual camp in 2021. It was all of our hopes and dreams to be gathered together at Monte Toyon for Family Week this year, but COVID has ignored our plans and our only safe option right now is to plan for another virtual camp. Another fabulous, fun week of music and dance and the activities that tie our community together.

THE PROGRAM: Much like last year, we will have dances, music, stories, and favorite camp activities like Camper of the Minute, What's in the Bag, and the Pied Piper. We will also have time for breakout rooms, jokes, crafts, and virtual Potato Dangling Races. And more, still to be scheduled.

—Rhonda Cayford

Please mark your calendar and plan to join us for Virtual Family Week 2021.

Your Donation to BACDS Helps Far Beyond the Bay Area!

Just over a year ago, BACDS had to make the difficult decision to shut down all of our dances and other in-person activities. We had no idea how long it would last, and at first we were hopeful that it would only be for some weeks or a few months. As time went by, it became obvious that our traditional dances, concerts, camps, weekends, *everything* would be cut off for a very long time. A year later, we still don't know how long it will last or what it will be like when we get back together on the dance floor.

Like most of the country, our activities shifted to online, what we've been calling "Virtual Dances" and "Virtual Concerts." In March 2020 we saw the first online music and social gatherings in the dance community, including concerts, online musicianship lessons, and opportunities for the dance community to gather online and "check in" to maintain our social connections. April saw the first online Virtual Dances. Those first efforts were, well, rough, and a far cry from sharing the energy and joy we know and love. Still, by May we were up and running with a fairly full calendar of online events for our community members.

That community has grown far beyond the Bay Area and now includes regular attendees from all parts of the country, and even around the world. *BACDS truly has a wide reach and beneficial influence!* Today's online concerts and dances are much more enjoyable for everyone on either side of the microphone because of our pioneering work in online sound. These techniques have been built on and improved and are used by dance organizers and groups around the world. A whole new style has been developed of choreographing and calling dances for dancers who are isolated and dancing solo, or, if fortunate, with a partner.

I encourage everyone who has enjoyed our in-person events to continue their BACDS membership, even though we're not holding those in-person dances for now. If you're not currently a member, or if you've let your membership lapse, *please join or renew!* Whether or not you join our online events, your continuing donations help BACDS keep its operations going while we have no income from events. It's very similar to your membership donation to your local public radio station; it helps keep the programming coming your way, and it's even tax-deductible (yes, really!).

Even though we're not holding dances in dance halls, BACDS has ongoing expenses, including insurance, website, the storage space for all the equipment and gear used at weekend and summer camps, the Zoom accounts that make it possible to hold our online events without any time or participation limits, and the usual accounting and similar expenses of any nonprofit organization. Also, BACDS followed through on our commitment to pay performing artists (musicians, callers, and sound engineers) who had contracts for events that were canceled last year.

In 2020, BACDS authorized and disbursed \$29,800 in grants and work projects to a number of musicians and sound techs who went on to develop and share such great gifts with the online dance and music community during this time when enjoyment and social connection have been so hard to come by. Most of that money came from generous donations by BACDS members as well as non-members who attended BACDS events.

There are several ways you can donate. If possible please use one of these methods to avoid a service charge being deducted from your donation:

- Mail a paper check to BACDS Treasurer, PO Box 6147, Albany, CA 94706
- Use your bank's electronic Bill Pay so your bank mails a check to that same address
- If you have a PayPal account, log into PayPal and use the Send to Friends & Family feature to donate from your PayPal balance or your checking account, sending the donation to "bacds-treasurer@bacds.org"

For your convenience, you can also donate using a credit or debit card, and the service provider (PayPal) will deduct a service charge; *you do not have to have a PayPal account to use a credit card.* Click on the big green "Donate!" button on the bacds.org website and click through to the donation form on PayPal.

It is also possible to make an automatic monthly donation to BACDS. Many dancers have been regularly donating the amount they would have spent on door admissions if they could go to dances. You can do this using your bank's online Bill Pay feature, and no service charge is deducted from your donation. Again, follow that big green "Donate!" button on the bacds.org website, click through to the PayPal form, and check the "Make this a monthly donation" box. —Eric Black

Philippe Callens

The international country dance community suffered a huge loss earlier this year when Philippe Callens, of Belgium, was found dead in the Ardennes this February after a fall.

Philippe was an extraordinarily beautiful dancer, an analytical and precise teacher of English dance style, a scholar of dance history who reconstructed historical country dances from the pan-European country dance tradition, and an ingenious choreographer of contra and English dances. The best of these beautifully express emotional music, like "Autumn in Amherst" and "An Early Frost" (written in response to the withering effect of AIDS on a generation). Philippe frequently visited and taught in the Bay Area—his "Spring in Sebastopol" celebrates his Mad Robin Ball connection—as well as at many East Coast events. An artist, a scholar, and a friend, he will be greatly missed around the country-dancing world, and his influence will continue to be felt.

—Alan Winston

Chris Folger

On February 15, 2021, the Bay Area Country Dance Society lost a joyful dancer and *The Bay Area Country Dancer* lost a hardworking editor with the death of Chris Folger. In the next newsletter we hope to share details of a memorial for Chris as well as an article about his life. In the meantime, we send our condolences to his partner Karen, his son Ian, and all those who loved him. —Sharon Green

Ed Gutman

It is with sadness that we share the news of the death of Ed Gutman, bridge player, physicist, English country dancer. After Ed's retirement as a Research Fellow at Xerox, he and his wife Hilary became BACDS's own snowbirds, traveling from Rochester, NY, each winter to their Alameda home.

A celebration of Ed's life will be held this summer. Memorial donations may be made in Ed's name to the Myasthenia Foundation of America, 1707 N. Randall Road, Suite 200, Elgin, IL 60123 or to the charity of your choice. —Sharon Green

President's Corner, April 2021

Our inestimable **Mary Luckhardt** has been BACDS *dance coordinator* for almost twenty years now, and is currently the organization's *Treasurer* and *membership coordinator*. What's more, she's been our *paid bookkeeper* for some time now. She really has been a pillar of BACDS, for all the time I've been here. But she and David are *retiring!* They want to travel! How will we ever replace her, when we can't even begin to *thank* her?

How many people does it take to replace Mary? Well, let's start by counting them:

1. It is our good fortune that **Michael Jones** has stepped up to assume the mantle of *Treasurer*. He's been the bagman for Berkeley Morris for who knows how long now, starting in the misty depths of ages past, and has filled that post with a grace and efficiency that have earned him the respect of more than one board member. Thank you, Michael!
2. The duties of *bookkeeper* are being taken up by **Allen Dodson**, adding on to work he already does for the Calaveras Humane Society. Allen has already been doing grand work for us in bringing our liability insurance policy up to date for the 21st century (and beyond!). Thank you, Allen!
3. Our *membership* rolls haven't quite yet reached that level where journalists describe us with cliched formulas like "If the BACDS were a country, its economy would be larger than Bolivia!" but keeping track of all you members is still a non-trivial task. Fortunately, **Judy Rose Dornbush** is returning to fill that role, something that she's done for us in the past. Thank you, Judy!

Speaking of memberships, the board noticed that a large number of members hadn't renewed. When there are no dances to go to, it's hard to *remind people to renew*. So the board members banded together and sent out dozens of personalized reminders, which prompted quite a few of you to pull your memberships back from the abyss and renew them. Thank you for that!

After years of service, **Cat Fox** and **Doris Atkinson** have *retired from the board*. Their service was much appreciated by the board in general and by me personally, and if you happen to cross paths with them, you should be sure to thank them yourself!

But stepping in to help fill the empty chairs is **Aleta Oryall**. Welcome to the board, Aleta!

Remember, the board still has *many open positions*. If you're interested in the experience, or would like to contribute to the community, or want to add a bit to your resume, or you're so bored from sitting at home for a year you can't stand it any more, come join our friendly faces. A benefit of the lockdown-inspired changes is that our monthly meetings are over Zoom, so you can attend from your own corner of the world without having to schlep across town. Please come help!
—Kevin Goess

Zoom zoom!

So much is happening online and things are changing just as quickly. A year ago, we were figuring out how to call in sync with a band on Zoom, and now I'm teaching how to Zoom.

4th Sunday in October was 1/2 the Syncopaths with Ryan McKasson & Jeff Spero with Jacqui Grennan calling. November was EmmaLee Holmes-Hicks & Peter Zay (VT, MA) with Wendy Graham (CO). December was Figments (Anna Patton, Ethan Hazzard-Watkins (VT) Owen Morrison (DC)) with Nils Fredland calling!

Then for New Year's Eve, I helped a small but mighty committee produce an online music & dance extravaganza. There were over 2500 people registered, and we exceeded Zoom capacity of 1000 devices by 12 am EST and celebrated six midnights. There were tracks in Zoom breakout rooms for the UK celebration, contra dancing, English country dancing, concerts, Balfolk, salsa, Scandi, Tai Chi, singing, and games. We also had John C. Campbell Winter Week, Berea Christmas Country Dance participating. We heard many had a wonderful time, but the most touching appreciations came from folks who said things like, "We were sitting at home alone getting ready for a depressing NYE, then remembered the Sea to Sea event. It was the BEST NYE we've ever had, so many friends and so much fun! Thank you"

4th Sunday in January was 3/4 of the Syncopaths with Lisa Greenleaf (MA) calling, and 150 participants! February was the fabulous Texas musicians Kendall Rogers & Katie Geringer, with Mary Wesley calling from Vermont. We tested a new-dancer lesson beforehand—thanks to Seth Tepfer for leading that. We had Cheryl McKinney teaching yoga warm-ups before the dance. And tried out *games* after the dance, which was *huge* hit. Seth did "Just One," Gaye taught "Hanabi," Jacqui offered "Skribbl," and Jen offered jigsaw puzzles. It was so much fun and a great way to chat with folks from all over, so we'll do it again for 4th Sunday Concert, Contra, Party with music by Joyride from Oregon (George Penk, Sue Songer, Erik Weberg, Jeff Kerssen-Griep), with Cis Hinkle teaching Tai Chi warmups and calling superfun online dances.

We are continuing to learn new technology and learn from others who are creating amazing events online. We have started a committee for 4th Sundays. I'm so grateful for the time and help of these volunteers: Jen Bamesberger (publicity), Rebecca King & Rhonda Cayford (volunteer scheduling), Matt Mathis (data), and Sharon Green. So all the volunteers can also enjoy the events, we would love more zoom savvy volunteers to learn and help us put on the events. Let me know at claire@bacds.org, and we will train you.

We're grateful for your attendance, smiles, dancing, chat, and donations when you can. —Claire Takemori

BACDS Grants—Spreading the Love Around!

As part of our efforts to maintain momentum in the traditional English and American music community during lockdown, BACDS has been helping underwrite a variety of musicians' activities. Here are responses from some of our grants:

PLAYING
with
PHANTOMS



**ENGLISH COUNTRY
DANCE MUSIC**
Minus One

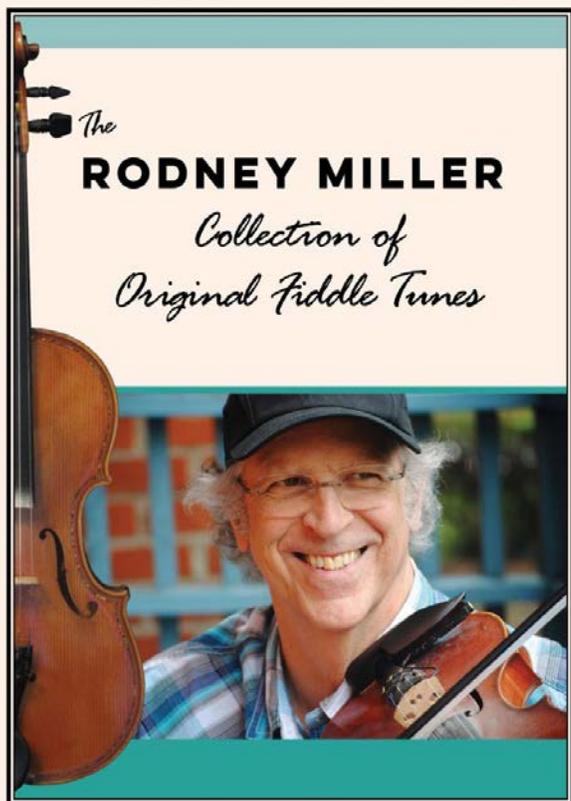
Explore and practice different musical roles of English Country Dance music with an ensemble of lively Phantoms playing a variety of instruments, including clarinet, fiddle, viola, recorders, folk harp, piano, guitar and more!

Shira Kammen is running a website for her **Phantom Players** project, where English Country Dance tunes are recorded multiple times: once without the melody instrument, once without the harmony track, and once without the chordal backup. For musicians whose only practice option has been to sit alone by themselves and play through tunes in Barnes, this is an amazing resource.

Shira writes:

As a fortunate Grantee of a BACDS grant, I was able (along with my colleagues Jim Oakden, Charlie Hancock & Rebecca King and graphic designer Allison Rolls) to launch the project that was funded, and our first 10 recordings are up on our website : www.phantomplayers.com. We have reached a good number of musicians, and we hope to reach many more! Recently we have added more options to what people can download, including simple harmony parts and transcriptions of the versions we played. The hope for the future is to get people more interested in English Country Dance music—my personal hope is to somehow connect with high school music programs (or junior high), and offer a way for all to practice either during a pandemic (hopefully gone soon?), or when your band isn't together.

This is an ongoing project and we are continuing to record ECD tunes for it.



Rodney Miller has been an icon in the world of dance and fiddle for decades. When we found he was working on a major book and CD project featuring his compositions, we asked if we could help out with it. Rodney wrote us to say:

My tunebook project came to completion in mid-December, 2020. Aided by the generosity of your grant, I was able to successfully publish my book of original fiddle tunes. The grant enabled me to cover some of the high costs of publication, including several choices that resulted in what I consider to be a high-quality and easy-to-use publication.

Lynn Martin Graton, retired Acting Director of the NH Arts Council, has written to me stating that I should “send a copy to the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress for their collection . . . In addition to its deserving location in the music book collection of fiddlers far and wide, it is worthy of being in every important library in the country..”

The response from the traditional music and dance community has far exceeded my expectations.

Thank you BACDS, once again, for your support in helping to make this all possible.

Audrey Knuth has been instrumental in making music on Zoom happen in dozens of different contexts (did you know she went to college to be a sound engineer?), but she's also an inspiring and effective music teacher. Every Monday for months now she's been holding an online class she calls "Tunes 'N Stuff." We've been helping underwrite the students who can't pay the full price and have helped her hire backing musicians:

Audrey told us:

I've had five successful Zoom Tunes 'N Stuff classes, happening on Monday afternoons. Without being too biased, I would call these classes a success. I've had between 35–45 people in attendance and have featured a few guests to impart their contra dance wisdom on the class. The money was very much appreciated and covers the folks who can't afford to contribute. I've wanted to make this class as accessible as possible and want to make sure folks can join without feeling pressure to pay because of the financial strain.

With this grant, I've been able to hire guest musicians. I've also now been able to guarantee backing tracks each week for the class. I'm planning on each week hiring different musicians (and particularly musicians who have lost income) to record a rhythm track so the students can play along. I had Jacob Chen, Rodney Miller and now will have Everest Wittman providing backing tracks for the classes.



For more information on these projects, see <https://phantomplayers.com>, www.rodneymiller.net/tunebook/, and www.audreyknuth.com/tunes-n-stuff.

–Kevin Goess

Volunteer Thanks

Huge thanks to Claire Takemori and all the volunteers who have helped her make online events happen since last March: Linda Wahler, Nana Lopez (TX), Les Addison, Kelsey Hartman, Matt Mathis, Lori Honzik, Drew Delaware (CAN), Sharon Green, Jacqui Grennan (So Cal), Audrey Knuth (So Cal), Larry T (So Cal), Jen Bamesberger, Alan Roberts (Seattle), Nicholas Dahlman, Anne Heimlich (OR), Dan Vilter (So Cal), Rhonda Cayford, Ellen Eagan, and Brian Lindsay (Seattle). 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 and Mailing Czarina Ellen Eagan for organizing printing and mailing.