

Contra Musicians' Week At John C. Campbell Folk School In Brasstown, NC

By Steve Whitmore

It's the week after Contra Musician's Week and I already yearn for next year.

If you want a vacation spent in the foothills of the Appalachian's, on a picturesque 300 or so acres, meeting wonderful new and old friends, dining on some of the best homemade dishes, playing music for hours and dancing every night, then plan to attend Contra Musician's Week next July.

John C. Campbell has been around since the early 1900's and is open year round. This particular special week also included Tin Can Art, Clay, "Basketeers" (whatever that is), Woodburning, Chair Seat/Back Weaving, Quilting, Cooking, Blacksmithing, Glass Beading, Water Color Painting and Windsor Chair Making.

A typical day began with coffee at 6:00 AM, followed by a morning walk, morning song and breakfast. Then, of course, there were classes for three hours in the morning and afternoon with an all school activity in late afternoon and early evening. Contra dancing was each evening from 8:00-10:00 PM. So now you have an idea of the setting.

The Contra Musician's Class had 28 participants of all ages and origins (though most were from NC, SC, GA & HSV, AL). Our instructors were David Kaynor (fiddle & contra caller... you may remember him from our last Blue Moon), Susan Conger (fiddle), Susie Secco (keyboards) and Peter Siegal (banjo, guitar & mandolin). They were not only



very impressive, accomplished musicians and teachers but they were also fun, down-to-earth folks.

We danced, played, discussed and sang for 5 days and nights. I learned great new tunes, played in a band of all women, except for me... naming ourselves "Close To Cool"... I wonder if they would have shortened it to just "Cool" if they didn't have a "token" man.

Huntsville had a good percentage of musicians with Stevie Nix, Babette Ford, Don Evans, Jane Norrell and me.

Two Huntsville couples, Bryan & Diane Walls, and Donna Deaton and Wayne Hitt visited the school and danced for a day or so during the week.

I could go on and on but here are little gems that keep surfacing for me this week:

- Memories of beautiful flower gardens,
- Singing blessing before meals,
- Jamming and singing until midnight each night after the dance,
- Playing as a group on the porch and seeing appreciative faces file into the dining hall
- Waltzing with a beautiful lady named Lynday,
- Walking by the river, watching an eagle soar and touring the sculptures along the path,
- Dancing, dancing and dancing,
- Watching the dancers as we played "all out" on stage, leaving nothing to spare,
- Savoring the homemade breads, wonderful vegetables, and delicious desserts,
- Early morning cups of coffee
- Hearing Peter sing about his wife's "PokaPokaPokadot bikini... that she looked great in, on or off"

(continued)

- And most of all enjoying all my new friends, especially at the end of the dance each night when we would hold hands in huge circle and sing:

*“Good night, good night, good night
my friends, it’s time for us to part.
In work or play, all through the day,
I’ll keep you in my heart.
Sharing my trials, sharing my joys,
Though we may be so far apart.
And if or when, we meet again,
your face will warm my heart.”*



Register for classes at www.folkschool.org 1-800-FOLK-SCH or 828-837-2775

Huntsville group: Steve Whitmore, Don Evans, Babette Ford, Bryan Walls, Jane Norrell, Steve Nix , not pictured, Diane Walls, Donna Deaton, and Wayne Hitt



Getting To Know You!

The Two Steves – Steve Nix & Steve Whitmore

Steve Nix –

NACDS Property Custodian, Sets up sound for all dances

Steve Whitmore –

NACDS President-Elect, Plans Blue Moon Dance Weekend

Now figure out which is which!

Steve #1

Test Lead/Engineer for US Army Project Office

Family – Divorced with 3 daughters and 1 granddaughter

Something unique - Raised daughters after divorce

Collects paintings and antiques

Hobbies – fiddling, golf, tennis/racquetball, dancing, skiing
Been contra dancing since early 1990’s

Travel as far as UK to dance

Steve #2

Family – Ollie Cat

Unique – Nearly 50, unmarried, no kids, pierced by not gay!

Hobbies – dance, guitar, books, arm-chair science, gym

First impression of contra dance – Epiphany! “I knew I’d found my people, my place to be.” I started dancing with Harriet Grable’s danc group in 1994.

Some people think I’ve studied clogging, ballroom and even ballet, but no – contra is my love.

My favorite thing is being in the moment – seeing the light in someone’s eyes when they “get it” and I know I helped.

Traveled as far as St. Croix, Lake Superior and Denver.

Yahoo Group Reminder

To find out about dance gypsy opportunities and discuss dance related issues, join our Yahoo group at:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/NACDScontraCommunity/>

Huntsville Calendar

Huntsville dances are the 1st & 3rd Saturdays of each month in the gym at Faith Presbyterian Church, 5003 Whitesburg Dr., South, in Huntsville (corner of Whitesburg & Airport Rd.). Beginners' Workshop at 7:00 PM then the regular dance is from 7:30 – 10:30 PM.

Admission is \$7 (\$6 for members), \$4 for teens, free for ages 12 & under. Remember to bring comfortable, non-scuffing shoes for dancing. Bring someone new to a dance this month!

Contact Bryan Walls (256) 837-0656 or email: bwalls@pobox.com or visit <http://secontra.com/BACDS.html> for more info.

Date	Caller	Band
August 6	Chrissy Davis-Camp	Jim & Inge Wood, Tabitha Mowen
Plus! A concert at 5:30, in the gym. Please park in lot near Airport Rd. and enter gym from the back, to avoid a wedding party being held near the usual front of the church entrance. \$5.00 for adults/\$3.00 for teens, free for ages 12 & under.		
August 20	Harry Delugah	Maple Hill
September 3	Jane Ewing	Kaleidoscope
September 17	Harry Delugah	The Biscotti Boys



Area Dance Gypsy Calendar

DATE	LOCATION	CALLER	BAND
Aug 5	Nashville	Chrissy Davis-Camp	Nashville Weather
Aug 12	Nashville	Susan Kevra	Russ Barenberg, Fred Carpenter & Brian Christianson
Aug 13	Birmingham	Becca Impello	Corner House, Celtic Band from Columbia, SC
Aug 19	Nashville	Eddie Doss	Playin' Possum
Aug 20	Nashville – FREE Centennial Park	Susan Kevra	Russ Barenberg, Fred Carpenter & Brian Christinson
Aug 26	Nashville	Kendal Broadie	Ed Baggot & Elsie Peterson
Aug 27	Chattanooga	TBA	Crosstown Traffic
Sept 10	Birmingham	Doug Singleton	Smoke & Mirrors – Sandy Goldring & Ann Whitley
Sept 10	Chattanooga	Nick Boulet	Nashville Weather
Sept 23-25	Chattanooga	Dance Weekend See website	Wild Asparagus & others
Oct 28-30	Nashville	Robert Cromartie	String Beings (Dance Weekend – see website)

FoOTMaD (Birmingham) dances 2nd Saturdays at the YMCA, 3rd Ave & 23rd St, 7:30 PM <http://www.bamalong.com/bed.him>

CTDS (Chattanooga) dances 2nd & 4th Saturdays at All Saints Academy, 310 E. 8th St., downtown; 8:00 PM. Contact Steve at (706)937-4991, Claire & Bryant at (423)876-7359 or <http://contranoooga.org>

Misty Mountain Dancers (Sewanee, TN) dances at 8:00 PM at the Legion Hall in Sewanee, TN. Call (931) 598-0814 <http://www.mistycontra.zoomshare.com/0.html>

NCD (Nashville) dances almost every Friday at 8:00 PM at Woodbine Community Center, Burbank & Oriel. Contact Chrissy at (615)210-6808 or John, email: DanceFools@aol.com or <http://dancenashville.org/>

A Bit Farther Away, But Well Worth The Travel

CCD (Atlanta) dances on Fridays & alternate Tuesdays. <http://contradance.org>

KCD (Knoxville) dances every Monday. <http://www.kornet.org/kcd/>

MCD (Memphis) dances on the 1st & 3rd Fridays. <http://hometown.aol.com/horse lovers/index.html>

Sautee Community Dances (N. GA) once a month from Sept – May. <http://sauteecontra.home.mindspring.com/>

Upcoming Dance Weekends

Mentone 500 is Birmingham's weekend in Mentone, AL. Aug 19-21. <http://banalong.com/2005weekend.hrm>

Chattaboogie is Chattanooga's 1st ever dance weekend. Sept 23-25. <http://chattaboogie.com/>

Music City Masquerade is Nashville's weekend. Oct. 28-30. <http://www.mistycontra.zoomshare.com/0.html>

Yes! We're Dancing On Aug. 20th!

There will be a dance in Huntsville on August 20, even though many of our dancers will be at Birmingham's dance weekend in Mentone. So, come and bring a friend so we can do some fine dancing ourselves.

Thanks to Doug Roth, Steve Nix Harry Delugach and Maple Hill Band for making this dance happen!

Contra Courtesies

1. Finish a move or swing in time to make it to the next move on time.
2. As lines are forming for a dance, you and your partner join in at the bottom of a line or set. It is not considered good "contra etiquette" to jump in the middle or front of a set.
3. Dance with newcomers and help newcomers. They'll feel more welcome and become confident dancers much faster. Once upon a time, you were a newcomer too, you know.

Remember, it's only a dance. Have fun!



Once In A Blue Moon Shirts Still Available!

Here's a fun way to help spread the word about our dance group – by wearing a shirt with this artwork around town.

Women's scoop neck and men's t-shirts for only \$15, while supplies last!
Call Doug at 882-63787 or buy at the next dance.
Great gifts! Trade 'em! Collect 'em!



4304 Holmes Ave. N.W.
Huntsville, AL 35816

Address correction requested



Send just \$10 for one, or
\$15 per family, to the address above.

Make checks payable to NACDS.
(mailing label shows renewal date)

Members receive monthly newsletter,
2 guest passes, and a \$1 DISCOUNT to
each regular dance!