

THE FOLK DANCER

By Vickie Austin
Spring 2011

Dear Alumni,

This year has been full of exciting events and inevitable change as we have transitioned into the College of Fines Arts and Communications. Our one constant is to know that we will continue hearing from and interacting with our wonderful alumni. Thank you for the many ways in which we stay in contact... through Christmas cards, e-mails, and as we see you at our performances both locally and during our mid-semester tours. We have the best alumni on earth!

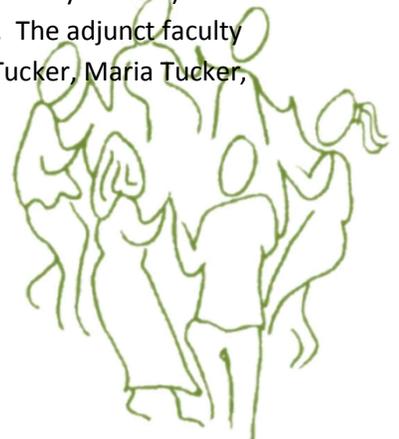
NEWS FLASH

New Department Chair—the College of Communications and Fine Arts named Marilyn Berrett as our new Dance Department chair the end of Fall Semester. She has replaced Lee Wakefield who so ably served for 11½ years in this position. We are enjoying all of the energy and expertise Marilyn is bringing to the department in her new assignment.

Sabbatical —Ed is taking a leave of absence this fall to examine and document the transmission of traditional dance through the Samoan family. This opportunity will allow Ed to retool in the Samoan language and present his findings through a written publication. He is very excited to revisit Tutuila, Upolu, and Savai'i—the islands of Samoa where he served his mission in 1973-74. (He is waiting for final approval from the College for his proposal and we wish him all the best.)

Interim Director —Jeanette Geslison has been offered a one year contract and has accepted the assignment of Artistic Director of IFDE while Ed is on leave. She will direct the group during the 2011-2012 performance season. We wish her well and know she will do a terrific job.

Current Faculty—The faculty changes from time to time (and, of course, some of us stay forever). Currently the World Division fulltime faculty includes Ed Austin and Colleen West. The adjunct faculty includes Vickie Austin, Jeanette Geslison, Amy Thurston Jex, Delynne Peay, Greg Tucker, Maria Tucker, Kau'i Tuia, and Emilee Savage Wright.



PAC Performances

The Performing Arts Company has had one of their busiest seasons in many years. They performed regionally in Nevada, Utah, and Idaho. In addition, their mid-semester tour took them to Northern California. By the time they gave their final performance of *The Gathering 2011* in the Covey Center for the Performing Arts, Provo, they had become seasoned performers and presented a nearly flawless show to an enthusiastic and full house. Their repertoire this year included:

BRITISH ISLES: Ceilidh
IRELAND: Minor Reel (Mountain Strings)
ISRAEL: Eretz Hakodesh
SCOTLAND: Hebridean Mists
ROMANIA: Călușarii
ROMANIA: Plaiuri Oltenesti
SPAIN: Saran Donga (Mountain Strings)
COLOMBIA: Cumbia
USA: Southern Reflections
USA: Orange Blossom Special (Mountain Strings)

USA: Elkridge Mountain
INDIA: Bharata Natyam
SLOVAK REPUBLIC: Lúčnica
FRANCE: Minor Swing
HUNGARY: Az Utolsó Tánc
HUNGARY: Férfi Mulatcság
RUSSIA: Khoroovodnaya Pliaska
CELTIC: Mother Nature (Mountain Strings)
IRELAND: Irish Blessing
UKRAINE: Hopak

In June the group is looking forward to traveling to Hungary, Czech Republic and Croatia. They will be performing in Budapest in the *Danube Carnival Festival* June 11-19. During this time, they will also reunite with members of the *Hungarian State Folk Ensemble* whom they performed with in 2008. It's director, Mihayli Gabor, visited BYU in 2010 when he choreographed their newest Hungarian suite.

June 21st will find them performing in Prague with the group, *Dvorana*, a Czech folk dance ensemble that performs and international repertoire. While in Prague, our dancers will also present a workshop to clog dancers from within the Czech Republic, including members of the groups *Dvorana* and *Carmella*.

Then the group will make their way to Croatia where they will first perform in Zagreb, June 24th or 25th, before arriving in Poreč to participate in the *Slatna Sopela Folk Festival* on the Adriatic Sea, June 27-July.

Note: The ensemble first traveled to the then known "Yugoslavia" and performed in Beograd and Kragujevač, Serbia, Ljubljana, Slovenia, Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Skopje, Macedonia in 1971. In 1972, they returned to this area to perform in Dubrovnik, Sarajevo, Bihač, Rijeka, Kraljebič, Portoroz, Bled and Poreč, Croatia. This will be the first time they have returned to Croatia in almost 40 years.

World Dance Showcase

Delynne Peay once again directed the spring performances in the elementary schools which began April 26th and continued to May 20. The World Dance Showcase,(the name is still being examined), had an unusually talented and exciting group of dancers this year. They had a marvelous experience in the schools with little injury or illness.

They are now looking forward to traveling to Nauvoo. The group departs June 6 and they will perform nightly in Nauvoo through June 19. Besides performing in Nauvoo proper they will also be able to do some other shows. On June 9 they will present their program in Carthage and on June 10 they will be performing in Fairfield, Iowa. The band will be able to give a short program in Macomb, Illinois on June 15. (The way things look they may also be dancing knee deep in water!)

If any of you are in the vicinity during this time. They would love to have come and say hi.

Scholarships

Congratulations to the following scholarship recipients for the 2010-2011 school year.

Mary Bee Jensen Endowment

Brian Watson
Brittany Christensen

Viltis

Michael Romney
McKenzie Morrill Keene

Excellence in Folk Arts

Michael Steele
Tesha Jones

Norma Pardoe Performance Award

Greg Rawlings

Harman Scholarship

Justin Kelly
Joshua Park

Marian Jensen Scholarship

Lindsey Watson

Performance Missionary

Emily Carpenter Park
Scott Johnson

New classes

We are excited to announce that we will be adding two new classes into the World Dance curriculum. The first class, D-474R, will start Fall 2011. It will be focusing on advanced percussive footwork which will be an amalgamation of many percussive styles in world cultures (i.e. tap, French Canadian, American clogging, Irish, Cape Breton, etc.) The second class, starting in Winter 2012, is D-279. This class will be focusing on elements of classical and modern dance technique of India.

We have also adjusted our World Dance Minor. The biggest change to the minor is the class numbering system. Each class now has its own catalog number rather than being clumped under the ethnic dance umbrella. The number of classes under each category has also shifted. For example: the core class section has changed from 6 credit hours to 7.5 hours.

Don't you wish you could come back to school and take advantage of the many ethnic courses we are now able to offer the students! We also hope that your sons and daughters at BYU will want to participate in this diverse program.

SPECIAL REPORT ON MARY BEE

Mary Bee recently had a hip replacement on Monday April 11. She is presently recuperating at Jimmy's home in Alpine, Utah. Delyne saw her 11 days later and reports that, "Mary Bee is doing great and is having no problems. She even met me at the door. The doctor said he wanted to use Mary as his poster girl because she is doing so fabulous. She was in great spirits and is very hopeful that this will all turn out very well. Mary is already making future plans and hopes to get back living in this area where she says 'all the action is.'"

STUDENT RESEARCH

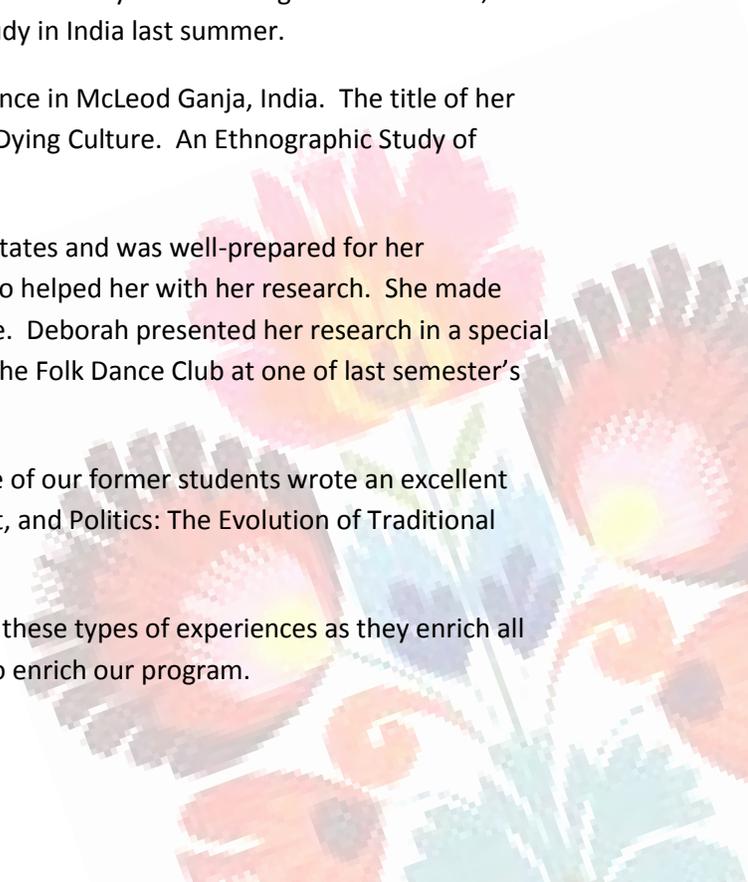
Deborah Colby one of our folk dance students majoring in Chemistry and minoring in World Dance, recently completed an independent international field study in India last summer.

Deborah spent three months studying and researching dance in McLeod Ganja, India. The title of her final paper was, "A study of Tibetan Dance: Insight into a Dying Culture. An Ethnographic Study of Tibetan Dance in McLeod Ganja, India".

Deborah conducted research before she left the United States and was well-prepared for her experience in India. She met several key people there who helped her with her research. She made recordings of the music and studied the culture and dance. Deborah presented her research in a special presentation in October 2010 and taught a folk dance to the Folk Dance Club at one of last semester's "Rec" nights.

Catherine Leavy, daughter of Jeff and Deon Leavy and one of our former students wrote an excellent capstone paper in Political Philosophy entitled, "Myth, Art, and Politics: The Evolution of Traditional Dance Performance as Symbolic Form."

We hope to have more of our students take advantage of these types of experiences as they enrich all our lives and bring interesting and valuable information to enrich our program.



In Memoriam

We've placed a new page on our alumni web site that pays tribute to those alumni who are no longer dancing among us. Please visit our page ([In Memoriam](#)) and let us know if we are missing any of our dear alumni.

alumni@byufolkdancealumni.com

Babcock, Ron (*dancer*)
Benschneider, Don (*dancer*)
Bingham, Dave (*dancer*)
Bramhall, Dorothy (*tour leadership*)
Cameron, Elliott (*tour leadership*)
Carter, Jeff (*dancer*)
Christensen, Lars Odell (*dancer*)
Clark, Robert (*dancer*)
Conlee, Marianne (*tour leadership*)
Farr, Lorna Kerby (*dancer*)
Firmage Ellis, Becky (*dancer*)
Gandy, Kim (*dancer*)
Graf, Kathy Swensen (*dancer*)
Goodwin, Julie Corbett (*dancer*)

Hopkinson, Gary (*dancer, technician, tour leadership*)
Holt, Cary (*dancer*)
Jacobsen, Phyllis (*tour leadership*)
Jensen, Don (*tour leadership*)
Pack, Dallan (*dancer*)
Parks, Cristen (*dancer*)
Phillips, LaRue (*tour leadership*)
Porter, Allen (*dancer*)
Reynolds, Connie (*dancer*)
Richards, Nancy (*tour leadership*)
Shaw, Don (*tour leadership*)
Spencer, Jack (*dancer*)
Tucker, Terry (*dancer*)
Wilcox, Julene (*musician*)
Wolf, Barbara Pryzbezewski (*dancer*)



www.byufolkdancealumni.com/alumni/Pages/InMemoriam.htm