

The Miami Valley Folk Dancers' 35th Anniversary

Dayton, Ohio November 7-8, 1987

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Registration exceeded expectations. They came from nine states as distant as Colorado. Of Course, Dick Crum traveled the farthest from Los Angeles, where he is the senior editor for a subsidiary of MacMillan Publishing Company, Berlitz Translation Services. By profession he is a linguist, fluent in more languages than one can count on fingers and toes. Fortunately for us, he has retained his folk dance leadership as a hobby. Jane Farwell retains folk dance and recreation leadership as her profession. She has taught around the world and inspired the origin of folk dance camps as well as groups like ours. Much of the strength of the Miami Valley Folk Dancers rests on her early leadership here. For many years she has been deeply involved with the growth and preservation of Folklore Village Farm, located on her own farm homestead in Wisconsin.

We planned and worked most of 1987 toward a happy, meaningful celebration and were rewarded handsomely for our efforts. Louise Van Vliet and Grace Wolff chaired the event. Adele Nellis, assisted by Sara Fletcher and others, designed and executed the lovely invitations, name cards and syllabus cover, as well as the decorations for the Burkhardt Center dining room and gym which included a costume display. The dinner tables were works of art. Leslie Kay Hyll coordinated the weekend dance programming and assigned the new dances to be reviewed. Ed Anderson toted equipment to Burkhardt Center and back to Solomon Pavilion. Madge Hart cut out the name tags and Pat Hennessey lettered them. Peggy Booher assembled and displayed the interesting memorabilia. Margorie Darragh did the promotional typing and Louise Van Vliet typed for the syllabus. Others brought flatware, cutting boards, ivy, ran errands, met planes, supplied needed names and addresses, served snacks, "etc., etc., etc." Sam Ballinger held, and continues to hold, the money bags! (We came out in the black).

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The weekend was at hand, ready or not! Jeanette and Dick Singer arrived from Florida to videotape the big event. Former members, the Donley's, came from Colorado. The Silberman's came from Chicago, Jan and Peter Taylor, from Milwaukee, Miriam Bell and Erika Brenner from Detroit, and the Tanabe's from Penn State. Former members, Dick and Judy Weaver and son, Bruce, came from Greenwood, Indiana. Former member, Florence ~~Seger~~<sup>Gray</sup>, and Ron Teare came from Cleveland. Numerous other dear old friends and newer friends from closer by, Kentucky and Ohio, joined us to grace the floor at Burkhardt and at Solomon Pavilion.

At Burkhardt Center, on Saturday, in addition to two dance sessions and the evening party, a former member, Evan Larkin, showed his slides during the "brown bag" lunch break. They recalled our many colorful weekend workshops representing different folk cultures, and our community service activities, including our Dayton Art Institute performances. Seeing ourselves was fun and it was rewarding to be united again with those who were unable to be with us, some of whom have "changed worlds." Before dinner many dancers put on colorful ethnic, or bordering on ethnic, dress, but they had great difficulty tearing themselves away from Jane's discussion of recreation and Dick's spellbinding, autobiographical anecdotes.

The interesting and colorful hand-made, mid-European village centerpieces set the stage for our home-cooked slavic dinner. Zora and Charlie Krainz made the cabbage rolls (which Dick and Jane declared, over and over again after each serving, the best they had ever eaten) and took charge of all the food and serving of 120. Homemade whole grain bread was plentiful and delicious.

The evening party began with a super grand march and the videotape caught each one of us. Later in the program, the Zivio dancers and musicians presented a number, which they had performed in Yugoslavia the previous June. The evening ended with a songfest accompanied by Jeanine Yeager.

The Sunday celebration, in the Scandinavian tradition, took place in our loved and cherished Solomon Pavilion. A beautifully appointed smorgasbord table greeted those who assembled early for conversation and further perusal of memorabilia. Soon the colorful dirndles began popping out of the kitchen, creating a culinary offering to delight the eye and palate. Ann Ballinger took responsibility for this meal and the food was prepared by individual MVFD. It was a glorious celebration dinner climaxed by Jo and Paul Bonnell's presentation of a 35 year plaque from the Miami Valley Dance Council. We appreciate it very much! All who attended were introduced by the year each became associated with the MVFD. Several of us represented 1952. The warm glow of many remembered weekends, for our own group and folk dance friends, permeated this weekend and we are grateful to everyone who helped to make it that way. Those who worked very, very hard, those who worked a little, those who simply came, those who couldn't come but thought of us, and those who wrote to wish us well, all had a share in our successful and memorable 35th anniversary celebration. God bless us all!

Grace Wolff