

# Folk dancers celebrate 50th

The year was 1952. Dwight Eisenhower defeated Adlai Stevenson in the run for the White House, Princess Elizabeth was coronated as Queen of England upon the death of her father, King George VI, "I Love Lucy" topped TV, Steinbeck's "East of Eden" was a must read, and the New York Yankees defeated the Brooklyn Dodgers, four games to three, to win the World Series.

And the Miami Valley Folk Dancers came to being as a folk dance class sponsored by the City of Dayton's recreation department. The class became so popular that a new club came to be.

The club was headed by Michael Solomon, a former City of Dayton employee who was instrumental in the development of many dance groups in Dayton. The club's been around for 50 years — one of only two dance clubs in Dayton to reach that milestone — and is still dedicated to learning new dances and increasing members' appreciation for a variety of diverse cultures.

The dancers meet each Thursday night to build that appreciation through instructional classes. They have also held over 65 weekend workshops with both nationally and internationally known instructors. The group studies not only the dances of other countries, but also the music, costumes, food and customs. Each week, the dancers include programs from the Balkans, the British Isles, Germany, Poland, Israel, central and eastern Europe, Russia and Scandinavia.

Over 100 members and



Submitted photo

**Members of the Miami Valley Folk Dancers dance during a recent festival.**

guests attended the group's major workshop in March that included a day-long series of classes in Balkan and Scottish dances.

That workshop also honored one of the group's founding members, Grace Wolff-Moran of Kettering.

Among the group's activities include appearances at nursing homes, Schools, festivals and community outings. The group took part in the International Day at Wright State, the World A'Fair in Dayton, and the Americana Festival in Centerville. Many of the 90-plus members are also active in other cultural groups.

The Miami Valley Folk Dancers are a recreational dance group open to all. No partner or experience is required. The Thursday night program begins with a beginner's class at 7 p.m., followed by request dancers who come from all walks of life. The average meeting draws 45 to 55 members.

The next Open House will be held September 25 at the Michael Solomon Pavilion, which is located on the grounds of the Dayton Community Golf Course.

For more information, call Dolores Brooks at 885-5170 or go to the web at [www.geocities.com/mvfolkdancers](http://www.geocities.com/mvfolkdancers).