

Sherry and his protege, **Harry Cowgill**. Sam was one of the leaders of the clogging revival, while Harry is 3-time winner of England's most prestigious clogging competition.

Our Tuesday Contra series continues in a new location, the **Cambridge Old Baptist Church**. Besides a beautiful hall, the site has that rarest of Harvard Square commodities, free parking! We hope the move will make the dance more attractive to younger dancers. The New England Dance Committee is still looking for campus groups interested in co-sponsoring a dance at a local college. If you have a campus connection, please contact **Andy Koehler** (617-495-2885) or **Chris Reynolds** (617-893-7464), who are the NEDC co-chairs.

Our English series returns on Wednesday nights and First Fridays. The Fall Favorites dance, organized by **Arthur Ferguson**, and one of the most enjoyable events of the year, will be on Saturday, Oct. 25.

As we dance through the Fall, for late breaking information about our dances, directions on how to get there, dance photos, and history, check out our web site at www.math.neu.edu/gaffney/cds.html.

— Terry Gaffney, President



The format for the third Tuesdays will be open mike/open band. **Steve Boylan** will coordinate the calling at the open mike, and **Jon Weinberg** will coordinate the band. **Larry Jennings** will continue as the series advisor, being available to give feedback to new callers. Callers and musicians of all experience levels are invited to come. (Prospective callers with questions are invited to call Steve at 629-2749; musicians can reach Jon at (508) 481-4802.

There will be a special open mike dance on Sept. 30, a fifth Tuesday, coordinated by Ann Cowan.

Readers can contact **Andy Koehler** at (617) 495-2885 for more details.

New CDS News Editor

I'm not sure exactly how it came about that I am the new *CDS News* editor, but I seem to be. Well, yes, taking over a newsletter has many pitfalls and obstacles, as former editor Mike Bergman said. It's an adventure!

As you can see, I have already made a few changes in the type and the layout, and more changes will come as I become more familiar with Pagemaker and have more time to set things up. At this point, my main concern is getting this issue out in a timely fashion.

—Lyril Ahern, Editor, CDS News

A Brief History of the Boston Centre

The following installment from a history of the Country Dance Society, Boston Centre, was written by Jean Krogh, drawing in large part on historical facts and perspective provided by Ed Wilfert. Many thanks to Ed and to George Fogg, Ellen Mandigo, Helene Cornelius, and the CDS archives, including Evelyn Lamond's multi-volume chronicle of CDS Boston, "Up A Double and Back."

The history of the Country Dance Society, Boston Centre is primarily a history of people. Without the contributions, vision, energy, interest, and/or money of each of these people, the Boston Centre would not have come into existence or continued to exist over the past eight-plus decades. This is an introduction to some of those individuals.

Cecil Sharp (1859-1924) was an English musicologist, folklorist, music teacher, frustrated composer. In 1899 he saw Morris dancing for the first time. He became a collector and teacher of traditional English dances and

in 1911 founded the English Folk Dance Society (EFDS) to further the cause of restoring these traditional dances to the prominence he felt they deserved. He directed a summer school at Stratford-on-Avon where English traditional dances were taught and danced.

George P. Baker was an American-born professor of Dramatic Literature at Harvard. He went to Stratford-on-Avon in England in 1912 where he saw Sharp's dancers. In 1913 he brought one of Sharp's EFDS dancers, A. Claud Wright, a "very attractive man," to America to teach these dances. Claud Wright taught classes at Chorua, N.H., Lincoln, Mass., and elsewhere.

Helen Osborne Storrow (1864-1944) was a wealthy Boston woman who was interested in music and dance. She formed a School of Dance in Boston where women (there is no record of men attending the classes) enjoyed various kinds of dancing, including international folk



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Come to the party!

CDS Boston Centre and the Patriots Girl Scout Council are sponsoring a picnic and dance party in memory of **Helen Storrow** on Sunday, September 21. The picnic starts at 1:00 and dancing begins at 2:00. The ritual community will participate. The party will be on the Esplanade, on the island next to the MDC playground.

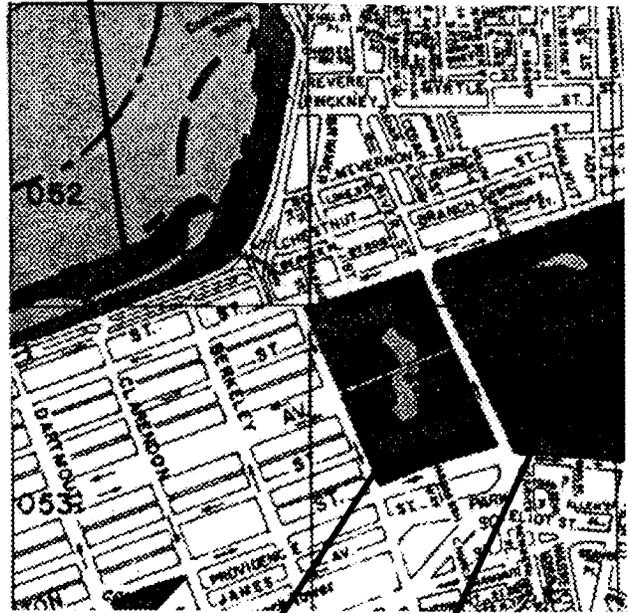
Parking will be available along Storrow drive. The Public Garage under the Common is also nearby (closer than the Longfellow Bridge and Charles St. Red line stop.) The Jane Doe Walk-a-thon runs concurrently, so we can expect a lot of people passing by, whom we hope to bring into the dance.

For many years the Society had a similar get-together close to Mrs. Storrow's birthday on September 22. At the suggestion of Ingrid Christiansen we are reviving the event this year, hoping it will again become annual.

As many readers know, Helen Storrow and Cecil Sharp were responsible for bringing country dancing to Boston. Mrs. Storrow was also a guiding spirit in the development of the Girls Scouts worldwide. The organizations she supported dealt with social problems still faced by us today and with the environment. Empowering people was a common thread in her activities.

The Esplanade site is a particularly appropriate place for remembering Mrs. Storrow, as the Storrows helped develop of the Esplanade park. The island we'll be dancing on was created during the improvements of 1929-1935, which were sparked by a large gift from Mrs. Storrow in memory of her husband, James.

Location of
Helen Storrow
Memorial Party



Public Garden Boston Common

Planning is being done by Ingrid Christiansen, Terry Gaffney, and Ed Wilfert.

This event is a chance to enjoy an afternoon on the banks of the Charles with your friends, enjoy some dancing, and share our dance form with Scouts and others, while celebrating the memory of Helen Storrow.

Boston Centre History. Continued from page 2

→ dancing. There was a great emphasis on physical fitness in the early part of this century in this country, and Mrs. Storrow was interested in international folk dancing in part because it encouraged good posture, was healthy, and was fun.

Emma Wright Gibbs was a friend of Helen Storrow who presided over Mrs. Storrow's School of Dance. She knew A. Claud Wright, and may have been, along with George Baker, instrumental in introducing Helen Storrow and Claud Wright in 1913. After Mrs. Storrow discovered English dancing, English dances replaced the international European dances at her School of Dance.

In December of 1914, Cecil Sharp came to the US, the first of several trips he made back and forth across

the ocean between 1914 and 1918. His primary reason for coming in 1914 was to direct the dancing in a masque, a production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" (produced during the spring of 1915). His second reason was to interest Americans in forming a U.S. branch of the English Folk Dance Society. He was asked to direct a summer school in Eliot, Maine, where he and his dancers taught English dancing. He also traveled to various other U.S. cities to drum up interest in an EFDS American branch.

In Boston, Cecil Sharp found already high interest in English dancing, due to Claud Wright's visit and teaching the previous year and to Helen Storrow's embracing of this dance form. Claud Wright had laid a foundation

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for Cecil Sharp's work in this country, as had Mary Neal and Florrie Warren on their 1911 tour of the U.S.

On March 23, 1915 at a meeting held at the Colony Club in NYC, the United States Branch of the English Folk Dance Society was established. The object of the Society was "To disseminate a knowledge of English Folk-Dances, Singing-Games and Folk-Songs and to encourage the practice of them in their traditional forms" (from the preamble to the U.S. Branch Constitution) George P. Baker was elected the first president and Helen Osborne Storrow was elected secretary. Mrs. Storrow was elected president the following year, 1916, a position she held until her death in 1944.

In 1915 there were four to seven EFDS centers or branches in the US: Boston, New York, Pittsburgh, Chicago, and possibly Cleveland, Cincinnati, Rochester, and/or St. Louis. In most of these cities there was someone with money, usually a woman, who was interested in supporting these new centers of the EFDS and in getting more English dancing going. In Boston that person was, of course, Helen Storrow, who had money, time, energy, and a love of dancing.

In 1915, Mrs. Storrow asked Mr. Sharp to "send us a teacher." She wanted a man teacher but because of the war, there weren't any. In 1915 Lily Roberts, one of Sharp's Stratford-on-Avon teachers, came to help Sharp with the masque interludes he was arranging, to teach dancing at the Eliot, Maine, summer school, and to direct folk dancing for a pageant at Wellesley College. Lily Roberts "came under Mrs. Storrow's wing." She and Mrs. Storrow changed the School of Dance into a place for teaching English country, Morris, and sword dancing; this School of Dance was, in a way, "recycled" into the Boston Centre in the spring of 1915.

Emma Wright Gibbs was the first president of the Boston Centre; she was president until 1921, when she remarried and moved west. Helen Storrow was the second Boston Centre president. Members of the Boston Centre in 1915-1916 numbered 200, and the annual dues were two dollars. Six parties were held, with average attendance of 80. Lily Roberts was hired to be the first paid director/head teacher of the Boston Centre. With her marriage in 1917 to Richard (Dick) Conant and the demands of raising a family, Lily Conant no longer served as head teacher, though she remained very involved with the Boston Centre.

More to come in the next issue

WANT AD

Musician Wanted

Rose Galliard Northwest Morris, of the Boston area, is seeking a musician. We are a women's team of ten years, currently practicing in Sudbury on Tuesday nights. Please contact Luisa Granitto, squire, at (617) 275-5265, or by e-mail at WendellS@TIAC.net.

Pinewoods Albums

Is anyone willing to help prepare an album of CDS Boston Centre at Pinewoods Camp? We have pictures from the fifties onward and some of the camper lists, but would like to find more, especially material from 1940-1951. The resulting albums would be placed into CDS Boston Centre's archive, in the archive corner of the Camphouse at Pinewoods, and in the collection at UNH. We're interested in other material about/from Pinewoods, especially early pictures and camper lists. If you have something to share or are willing to help put it all together, please contact Ed Wilfert, 45 Cottage St., Cambridge MA 02139 (617-661-8091).

Preview of Winter Calendar

(Save these dates!)

January

Ralph Page Legacy Weekend

1/16-1/18, UNH Durham, NH. **Chris Ricciotti, Mary DesRosiers, Lisa Greenleaf and Dudley Laufman**, with *Old New England*, and *Old Grey Goose*. Great dances and workshops on dancing, music, and calling. Info: NEFFA 354-1340.

Pre-Ground Hog Day Contra, January 31 at the Concord Scout House. **Linda Leslie** with *The Valley Girls*.

February

Dance Flurry 2/13-2/15 **TENTATIVE DATES** Saratoga Springs. More musicians and callers than you can shake a stick at. Sheraton special Flurry reservation line for rooms: (518) 584-4000, Info: (518) 274-5356

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Summer sessions of dancing were held in 1915 at Eliot, Maine, and in 1916 and 1917 at the Mass. Agricultural College (now UMass/Amherst). Teachers at the 1916 Amherst summer session/camp ("under the personal direction of Cecil Sharp") were Maud Karpeles, Lily Roberts, and Nora Parkes Jervis. (There were interpersonal tensions even then in the dance world. Maud Karpeles and her sister were not pleased, for some reason, with Claud Wright, so he was not invited back to the U.S. after 1914. And Cecil Sharp had a falling out with Mary Neal even earlier.)

Louise Chapin became interested in dancing in 1913 or 1914 on Mrs. Storrow's lawn at the Storrow estate in Lincoln. She and Dorothy Bolles, two adventurous young women, went to England to Cecil Sharp's summer school, learning directly from Sharp and coming back to teach in the Boston Centre. Louise Chapin became the head teacher of the Boston Centre, following Lily Conant's marriage. Louise Chapin in Boston and May Gadd in New York were the "grande dames" of English dancing in their respective cities. Dorothy Bolles also taught in Boston and at the Amherst summer schools. In these early decades of the Boston Centre, the classes were subscribed classes, some separated by gender and age; some were more ritual, some more English country.

During the years from 1918 to about 1927, the number of branches of the U.S. Branch of the EFDS dwindled to two, Boston and New York. Strong, interested people in both cities kept the dancing going. The two branches had little contact with each other, though each retained affiliation with the Society in England. In 1927 the Boston and New York branches merged, cooperating to revive the Amherst summer school, which had not been held since 1917 (though both New York and Boston had run summer schools during the earlier years of the 20's). Several EFDS-U.S. annual meetings were held in Amherst in the late 20's. In 1932, Mrs. Storrow invited teachers from the Amherst summer camp to a Girl Scout camp she had started on Long Pond

in Plymouth. The following summer she suggested that the summer dance camp transfer from Amherst to the camp on Long Pond, which it did. Except during one or two of the World War II years, dancing has continued each summer since then at Pinewoods Camp.

(An interesting historical note: Mrs. Storrow was very instrumental in the early years of Girl Scouting in this country. She founded Our Chalet in Switzerland and started a leadership training camp for Girl Scouts. In the early 1930's she divided her Long Pond camp into two parts: the Girl Scout camp (Pine Tree) and Pinewoods Camp. Boston dancers referred to Pinewoods as "Long Pond" through much of the 40's. Lily Conant and May Gadd from New York had a role in naming the cabins and pavilions at the camp. Eventually Mrs. Storrow willed Pinewoods Camp to Lily Conant. For 30 years the Conant family ran Pinewoods Camp, until Pinewoods Camp, Inc. was formed in 1975.)

The organization which started out in 1915 as the United States Branch of the English Folk Dance Society went through various changes of name and organizational structure over the years. In 1928, after years of minimal ties between the Boston and New York branches, "The Federation of American Branches of the English Folk Dance Society" was formed to encourage greater cooperation among the branches, which by then also included Rochester. At a 1937 meeting, it was voted that the New York Branch should be dissolved and that New York should become the national headquarters of The English Folk Dance Society of America. People in the Boston Centre agreed to this organizational change. The name of the organization centered in New York eventually evolved into the Country Dance and Song Society (CDSS), which today is considered the "parent organization" of the Country Dance Society, Boston Centre, as well as of hundreds of other organizations. In 1940 the Boston Centre name was changed, from The English Folk Dance Society, Boston Centre, to the Country Dance Society, Boston Centre; this change reflected the fact that American square dancing had been officially added to its activities. (Boston may have used the word "Centre" rather than "Center" to indicate that it was more than just a center of the New York organization.)

American country dance had been part of EFDS/CDS activities for years. As early as Cecil Sharp's time, people were aware of American country dancing. Louise Chapin, Mary McNair, Gene Gowing, and others encouraged American dance. During the hardships of

World War II, dance organizations which were focused primarily on dances from other countries (like England) had to justify their continued activity in part by including forms of American dancing. By the end of the war, Louise Chapin was teaching square dancing. (In the last week of her life, in 1944, Helen Storrow had attended a square dance as well as an English country dance party.) At the same time, Ralph Page was teaching contras and squares in New Hampshire and the Hermans were setting up Folk Dance House, teaching primarily international dancing, in New York City. All of these strands of dancing were becoming aware of each other by the end of the 40's. Contras and squares were becoming more "official." Louise Winston, Ted Sannella (whose father-in-law, Irvin Davis, played an important role in CDS, Boston), and others were central figures in the American dancing of CDS, Boston.

Helene Cornelius started English dancing in 1951. She had been square dancing with Ralph Page before that, and as part of his evening dances, Ralph Page often taught a few international dances. Liking that international exposure, Helene started dancing other nights, including doing some Scottish. One of the nights at Scottish, Connie Wilkes came and gave a demonstration of Morris dancing, inspiring Helene and a friend to try a Wednesday English dance (then held at the Charles Street Meetinghouse in Boston). At that time Louise Chapin was teaching. There was usually a Morris class taught first, then country dancing was taught, and sometimes sword dancing after that. Usually about 20 people attended; the crowd was small. After attending two Wednesday dances, Helene and her friend were asked to be in a Christmas demonstration, directed by Lily Conant. Eventually Helene started going to the Boston weekend at Pinewoods, which was at that time held the last weekend in June. She liked English country dancing. Helene with her husband Arthur Cornelius for a time parted ways with Louise Chapin, but eventually Louise asked Arthur to come back and teach Morris, which he did. In 1963, Helene was asked to start teaching the regular Wednesday dances. As no one else wanted to do it, Helene agreed and has been teaching ever since. At that time only one and half hours of the evening were devoted to country dancing. However, that changed as dancers wanted more English country and as there was less interest in the CDS Morris classes.

The mid- to late-70's saw a "changing of the guard" in the Boston English dance scene, with the deaths of many of the people who had been so instrumental in the early decades of the Boston Centre. Lily Conant died in 1973, Dick Conant, Sr. in 1975, Louise Chapin in 1978,

and in New York, May Gadd died in 1979. (Dorothy Bolles had died earlier, in 1935.)

Over the years there have been many, many callers, musicians, leaders, and dancers people instrumental in the ongoing success of the Boston Centre but this history of facts and people is only part of the story, for the other part of the history lies in the flow of music, movement, laughter, and community that are the threads that have held all this together over the years of the Boston Centre's existence.

Officers & Committes 1997-98

President: Terry Gaffney

Past President: Jean Farrington

Vice President: Margaret Keller

Secretary: Maureen Carey

Treasurer: Ralph Jones

Directors: Steve Boylan, Nora Daoud, Jenny Hango, Jean Krogh, Chris Reynolds, Anne Richardson, Tony Saletan, Bill Schultz, Eph Weiss, Alison Woodman

Ex-Officio: George Fogg

Membership Chair: Arthur Ferguson

Newsletter Editor: Lyril Ahem

Mailing Chair: Art Anger

Pinewoods Camp Rep.: Frank Attanasio

Endowment and Grants: Margaret Keller (Chair), Robin Rogers-Browne, Ralph Jones (Ex Officio)

Finance: Terry Gaffney (Ex Officio), Ralph Jones (Ex Officio)

Nominating Committee: Susan Janssen, Gene DiSalvatore

English Dance: Arthur Ferguson (Chair), Lyril Ahem, Jean Farrington, Terry Gaffney, Elizabeth Morris, Liv Toftner, Allan Wechsler, Jenny Hango, Lilo Gallagher; Helene Cornelius (Artistic Advisor)

New England Dance: Andy Koehler, Chris Reynolds, (Chairs) Terry Gaffney, Julie Owen

Ritual Dance: Doug Reiner (Coordinator)

Special Events: Gene DiSalvatore (Chair), Maureen Carey

Playford Ball: English Dance Committee

Festival Food Booth: George Fogg, Harriet Hayward, Jean Farrington, Maureen Carey

June Weekend: Katy Petersen, Jerry Callen (Chairs)

July 4th Weekend: Lilo Gallagher, Bill Schultz (Chairs)

English-Scottish Session: Deb Hawkins, Lisa Greenleaf, Christina Wasch, Charlie Hornig

Labor Day Weekend: Judy Francis, Deborah Gerstein (Chairs)