

The Hambo And The Black Hole

By Harriet Grable

The scene was the Nashville Country Dancers' usual location, a vast church hall. The time was some 25 years ago. It was a Friday night dance and someone requested the Swedish Hambo, my personal favorite.

Actually, hardly anybody knew the dance. But since there was no live music (ironic for Music City USA), the request was easily accommodated with the right record (Remember records?).

A few words about the Hambo: It's a couple dance and it looks deceptively simple – a couple whirling around the dance floor, gazing ecstatically into each other's eyes. I think the ecstasy is a byproduct of the flying sensation. But in actuality this dance takes a whole weekend to learn, and the man's and woman's parts are wickedly dissimilar. On this particular night there were only two men who knew the Hambo, and I did not snag either of them, darn it! But my friend Marty Wilson did.

The two couples began the dance on opposite sides of the huge room and had the whole vast dance floor all to themselves.

The rest of us sat admiring, and envying, and enjoying the lovely Swedish fiddle music. But as the dancers happily whirled their way around the room, we in the audience began to notice a curious trend. A sort of invisible black hole seemed to have developed in the center of the room and the two couples were being drawn inexorably toward it. Shouted warnings went unheard and unheeded, drowned out by the Swedish fiddlers and deflected by the fog of dance-ecstasy. Obviously, inevitably the dancers zoomed ever quicker toward the black hole's event horizon until – CRUNCH! Four bodies lay sprawled on the floor. To the accompaniment of lush Swedish music, three

dancers struggled to their feet and limped away. The fourth dancer, Marty, remained lying immobilized on the floor, her mangled glasses resting where they had skidded to a halt some five feet away.

Now to understand what happened next you have to know the group's professional profile: in a word – Medical. Most of the dancers were at Vanderbilt either as medical students, interns, or residents. The remainder of the group boasted EMTS's, Eagle Scouts and Scout Masters. We were a dance group ready for medical emergencies.

Immediately an absolute swarm of medical experts descended upon Marty, gently and expertly consulting and questioning: "Where does it hurt?" "Cover her with a coat so that she does not go into shock!" "Check her pulse!" "Are there broken bones?" But Marty could not answer. She was laughing too hard. In fact, the only real injury sustained was to the glasses, and they recovered fully following minor surgery.

Thus ends happily the tale of my one and only experience with the convergence of dance and astronomical phenomena. But when Ross retires we intend to move back to the Rocket City, and in that space-rich environment (pun intended), who can say what other such events may lay ahead?

Harriet began folk dancing in Nashville 30 years ago and played in Nashville's first in-house band, Hit and Miss. At the Nashville dance she met Ross Grable. They married and then started The Huntsville Folk Dancers and the band, Hey for Five, here in Huntsville. They also played in Lykittor Knott and The Graybull Revelers, a Renaissance performing troupe. We look forward to their move back to Huntsville from Southwest VA.

Getting To Know You

Erin Maguire

Erin is a music major (voice) at UAH as well as a piano teacher and section leader in her choir at Central Presbyterian Church. It is interesting to note that she discovered UAH through a Blue Moon Weekend and ended up coming from hometown, Memphis, to Huntsville for her college years. She sings with the UAH Concert Choir and is their music director; is the UAH Chamber Choir; is a violinist; and plays violin; and directs the Memphis contra dances. Whew!



Erin comes from a family of active contra dancers. Her parents are Joan Kelly and Bill Maguire and her step-sisters are Martha Kelly and Marian Kelly. She says that she tried contra dancing when she was five years old with her father and did not enjoy it at that time. However, after a seven year break, she tried it again and “has been addicted now for about nine years.” She said, “Hey, this is really fun and not just something weird my parents do to embarrass me!”

Memphis, Knoxville, Atlanta, Asheville, Birmingham, Nashville, and Little Rock are just a few of the places Erin has enjoyed dancing. She enjoys swing and Irish ceildh dancing but contra “allows me to cut loose and have fun after a long week at school.”

Linda Maier Kolchin

Linda is an Associate Professor of Spanish and the Chair of the Department of Foreign Languages at UAH. She has her Ph.D. in Spanish from the University of Virginia. Her husband, Fred Kolchin, is a logistician at Redstone Arsenal. Besides dancing, Linda enjoys reading, aerobics, travel and cooking. She spent two years in Spain and has traveled extensively in Mexico, Puerto Rico, Ecuador and Chile. In the nineties she played flute in the Huntsville Concert Band.

Linda started contra dancing when she moved to Huntsville in 1993. “My former boyfriend, a contra dance fanatic, suggested it, and I met my husband dancing. I have danced in Mentone, Birmingham, Chattanooga, Asheville, Nashville, Winston-Salem and Greensboro. Before being involved in contra dancing, I did ballroom dancing.”



“I really like the friendly people at contra dances and I think it’s exercise disguised as fun! I like the high energy and choreography,” Linda said.

Linda and Fred are enthusiastic regulars at our local contra dances.

NACDS Steering Committee Meeting

Monday, April 10

6:30 PM

Donna Deaton’s House

Mark Mahon, President, is encouraging everyone to attend this meeting to help plan our Blue Moon Weekend and do regular business. Directions to reach Donna’s home at 3219 Riley: from Memorial Parkway South, turn east on Drake, right on Riley (after crossing railroad tracks); from Whitesburg Drive, turn west on Drake, and left on Riley – before railroad tracks and Parkway Place Mall. Donna’s home is in the fourth block of Riley. Call Donna at 883-7486 if you are lost!

Huntsville Calendar

- Huntsville dances are the 1st & 3rd Saturdays of each month in the gym at Faith Presbyterian Church, 5003 Whitesburg Dr., South, (corner of Whitesburg Dr. & Airport Rd.). Beginners Workshop is 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.NACDS.html> for more info.

Date	Caller	Band
April 1	Harry Delugach	Edwin Wilson, Karen Falkowski, Michael DeFosche, Brooke Allen
April 15	Beth Molaro★★ SPECIAL DANCE \$8.00 & 5.00 No passes accepted	Avant Gardeners – Laura Light, George Paul & Roger Gold <i>This band and caller are “weekend” quality. Don’t miss!</i>
May 6	Bryan Walls, Erin Maguire, Doug Roth	Kaleidoscope
May 19-21	Blue Moon Dance Weekend Becky Hill, Barbara Groh	Latter Day Lizards, The Evil Twins



Area Dance Gypsy Calendar

Date	Location	Caller	Band
Apr 11/25	Flat Creek, TN	Chrissy Davis-Camp	Inge Wood & anyone who wants to play
Apr 28	Sewanee	Emme Anderson	The Furies
Apr 7	Nashville	Jane Ewing	The Cumberland Tenderfoots
Apr 14	Nashville	John Sharlet	Nashville Weather
Apr 21	Nashville	Chrissy Davis-Camp	Cunningham & Coe
Apr 23	Nashville English Dance /Friends Meeting House	Kendal Broadie	Calliope
Apr 28	Nashville	Susan Kevra	Plaidgrass
Apr 8	Birmingham	Tony Mates	The Stripling Brothers
Apr 8	Chattanooga, Waltz Workshop Covenant College	Frederick Park	Contraindicated
Apr 22	Chattanooga	Vicki Herndon	Kaleidoscope

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

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 the Legion Hall in Sewanee, TN. For details, call (931) 598-0814 or check <http://www.mistycontra.zoomshare.com/0.html>

NCD (Nashville) dances almost every Friday at 8:00 PM at University School.

For directions, contact Chrissy at (615) 210-6808 John, email: DanceFools@aol.com or <http://dancenashville.org/>

Flat Creek dances – 2 & 4th Tues, Flat Creek Community Center <http://www.nashvilleoldtime.org/Dances/flatcreekcontradances.htm>

A Bit Farther Away, But Well Worth The Travel

CCD (Atlanta) dances on Fridays & alternate Tuesdays. <http://contradance.org> (What the Hey! Dance weekend – May 5-7)

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

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

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

NACDS

North Alabama Country Dance Society

4304 Holmes Avenue, NW, 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!

Advice

Bill Holm

Someone dancing inside us
learned only a few steps
the "Do-Your-Work" in 4/4 time,
the "What-Do-You-Expect" waltz.
He hasn't noticed yet the woman
standing away from the lamp,
the one with black eyes
who knows the rumba,
and strange and jumpy rhythms
from the mountains in Bulgaria.
If they dance together,
something unexpected will happen.
If they don't, the next world
will be a lot like this one.

*Poem from the Anthology
"The Rag and Bone Shop of the Heart"*



Dance Weekend, May 19-21, 2006 UAH Campus

Callers: Becky Hill & Barbara Groh

Bands: Latter Day Lizards & The Evil Twins

Register prior to April 27 for best prices.

Check <http://secontra.com/bluemoon.html>

or call Mark at (256) 533-5956 for more details.