FOOTNOTES

Serving folk arts in the Inland Northwest since 1977

April 2022 Volume 47 No. 4

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SPOKANE FOLKLORE SOCIETY PRESENTS
SECOND SATURDAY DANCE SERIES

SPRING FLING
CONTRA DANCE
SATURDAY, APRIL 9, 2022, 7-10 PM

All Ages Welcome
Newcomers Welcome

Caller: Nancy Staub
Band: Banna Damhsa

$11 for nonmembers
$8 for SFS members

East Spokane Grange,
1621 N. Park Road

Bring Snacks and Desserts
to share during the break

Proof of Vaccination and wearing a mask required
For More Info: www.spokanefolklore.org

MEMBERSHIP FORM

SFS Mission
The purpose of the Spokane Folklore Society shall be to promote a broader community awareness and involvement in cultural folk traditions, such as music, dance, and other folk arts through such social and educational events as concerts, dances, festivals, workshops, lectures, demonstrations, and newsletters.
www.spokanefolklore.org
Support Folklore Society Business Members

Business memberships not only provide valuable support to SFS, but the businesses receive extra benefits. New business members are listed monthly in the newsletter and have links on our website: www.spokanefolklore.org.

David Lohman
Collaborative Lawyer
208-664-5544
DavidWLohman@hotmail.com

Calendar of Contra Dances
At the Woman’s Club

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>BAND</th>
<th>CALLER</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 6</td>
<td>Banna Damhsa</td>
<td>Susan Dankovich</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 13</td>
<td>River City Ramblers</td>
<td>Karen Wilson Bell</td>
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<td>April 20</td>
<td>Jam Band</td>
<td>Nancy Staub</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 27</td>
<td>Prestwold Players</td>
<td>Nora Scott</td>
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You can still renew your SFS Membership
Thanks to you even if you aren't coming to dances. And we plan on sponsoring dances for the next three and a half months so there is plenty of time to renew your memberships and save $3 every time you come to our Wednesday night dances.

Board Candidates Needed!
We need your help. We have three board positions to fill for the next term which begins in July. Board duties include hosting one Wednesday dance every four to six weeks and attending our monthly board meetings currently done via Zoom. Our dances need volunteers in order to keep them going.

Please call Penn at 509-838-2160 for more information.

The Spokane Fall Folk Festival Assistance
The Fall Folk Festival strives to attract a variety of cultures every year. The Festival Committee does this by attending as many events as possible and visiting with groups who might be interested in performing. Spokane has a continually increasing number of multicultural events; so many that the committee is unable to attend them all.

For complete information, check on the Festival website at spokanefolkfestival.org or contact Sylvia Gobel at dancer@moxxee.com to see how YOU can help!

Business Sponsor
David Lohman
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A healthier alternative for divorcing and separating couples-Licensed in ID and WA
DavidWLohman@hotmail.com (208) 664-5544
Thank you, David, for your support of the SFS
Lady of the Lake invites you to our new camp...

Dance S'More
Aug 7-13, 2022

Featuring contras, singing, art, and more!

- Gender-free calling and facilities
- Welcoming all generations
- Options for 6-night or 3-night attendance
- Sliding scale fees

Our 2022 staff
Calling: Susan Michaels, Abigail Hobart, Sue Hulsether
Music: Audrey Knuth, Amy Englesberg
Alex Sturbaum, Brian Lindsay
Singing: Nicole Singer
Art: Reinaldo Gil Zambrano, Ashley Vaughn

Camp N-Sid-Sen ~ Lake Coeur d'Alene ~ North Idaho
ladyofthelake.org/dancesmore
Lady of the Lake Dance Camps on Facebook

All up-to-date COVID precautions will be in place, including proof of vaccination
Not many remember the string instrument repair program that was offered at the Spokane Falls Community Colleges in the late 1970s. While short lived, it did have a long-lasting impact on some of its graduates as well as the Spokane folk dance and music community.

During the 1970s, the Spokane Falls Community College was able to secure state and federal funds to offer vocational programs like brass instrument repair, saddle making, typewriter repair and window display. Perhaps because the brass instrument repair program was so successful, the school began a string instrument repair program in February, 1976. Its first instructor was Glen Stockton.

Glen was born in Minnesota and grew up in Arizona. At an early age, he was exposed to classical music when every morning his next door neighbor would play his violin. He became “totally entranced.” In spite of his family moving from state to state, community to community, and school to school, Glen remained dedicated to playing the violin, relying on public school teachers and band leaders to give him inspiration and guidance. During his sophomore year in a Scottsdale, AZ high school, he was reunited with his elementary school band instructor at an instrument repair shop. Instead of repairing Glen’s violin, his previous mentor showed him how to repair it himself. Seeing his enthusiasm, the owner of Otto Stein Music offered him an apprenticeship. Within a year, he had earned the reputation of repairing instruments quickly and efficiently. By the time he graduated from high school, Glen had built his first violin.

For the next ten years, Glen played, made and repaired violins. He opened his first shop at age 18 in Phoenix; then he moved to Minnesota to attend college; and he returned to Scottsdale at age 21 to open another shop. By the time he had read about an opening for a string instrument repair instructor at a community college in Spokane, WA., Glen had built several violins and was qualified to repair multiple stringed instruments.

In February, 1976, Glen interviewed successfully for the job at Spokane Falls Community College. He immediately realized that the school did not fully understand that the hands-on approach, that shaped his learning, would in turn be the foundation of this program, relying less on theory and more on practice. To that point, the school had not provided any equipment for the students. Instead, Glen shared his own tools with them. During that spring, Glen reached out to public schools giving demonstrations of both playing and repairing violins. He realized that there was a need for another string instrument repair business.

Once the semester ended, Glen approached Walter Hunt who was seeking to sell his repair business and retire. When Walt died unexpectedly, Glen bought the business from his widow and opened his shop on the second floor of the building that was home to a long-time music business, Sampson Ayers, on June 28, 1976.

In the fall semester of 1976, the administration of SFCC and Glen came to an understanding. Since Glen was not willing to work as a full-time instructor, the two parted company.

Glen’s business had really taken off. He later explained to a reporter for the Spokesman-Review that it took him nearly a year to finish all the repairs that were carried over from Walt’s business. In 1977, he expanded his business to include the instruments from local school orchestras and bands. In the summer, Geoff Seitz, traveling through the West from Missouri, stopped at Glen’s shop for a repair of his violin. After multiple attempts to convince Glen to take him on as an apprentice, Geoff finally won his spot because of “his tenacity” and a Comprehensive Employment and Training Act grant. In February, 1978, a robbery occurred at the shop resulting in the loss of thousands of dollars worth of instruments. After getting married in January, 1979, Glen got an offer to open a shop on the East coast. He sold his business to Geoff that spring and left Spokane that summer. Glen continued to be involved in making and repairing violins until 1992 when he “ran out of steam.” He returned to Minnesota in 1995 where he still resides today.

In the meantime, SFCC put a hold on the string instrument repair program until the fall semester of 1977 when they hired a European trained luthier from Switzerland. Glen remembered his name as Gunter Raas. After a month, Raas informed his students that he needed to return to Europe in order to buy equipment. Obviously, he encountered the same issue that Glen had. Student Anna Weiland’s last memory of Raas was his polishing of the door knob as he left the room. He never returned.
Faced with a class of ten students and no teacher, SFCC reached out quickly to Armin Barnett who later remembered that they seemed “desperate”. The school offered to fly him out from his home in Chicago for an interview in the late fall. By now the school had realized some of the issues; once hired, Armin was given a substantial budget to equip the program. He arrived in Spokane Christmas day, 1977, and began teaching in January, 1978.

Armin grew up in Chicago. He began playing a banjo when he was 10 and later discovered Southern old time music. By the time he entered the University of Chicago majoring in literature, he was playing fiddle and visiting old time music festivals in West Virginia. After leaving graduated school at the University of Virginia, he fell in with a number of old time musicians as well as Melvin Artley who taught classical violin at Elon College in North Carolina. He also had a shop where Armin spent many weekends exposing himself to the trade.

After three years in the East, Armin decided to visit his sister in California; however, he stopped in Chicago to earn some money. On what he described as “a whim” he called several instrument repair shops and found a high-end shop with an open bench. He started his violin repair apprenticeship in January, 1973. For the next four years, he worked five to six days a week, first learning the trade and then excelling at it.

When Armin arrived in Spokane, he found a program in disarray. Besides purchasing the appropriate equipment for the program, he also helped students buy their own tools. Anna Weiland still has those tools. He also introduced a curriculum that served as the foundation for the program. The goal of the program was to offer a two-year program that would train students to be “bench ready” for an instrument repair shop. Because Armin was not trained to repair guitars, he focused on repairing of violins and violas including the repair of bridges, sound posts, fingerboards, bow rehairing, minor bow repairs and much more. About twelve students were enrolled. A core of them including Anna Weiland, Ray Kohlstadt, Steve Loeffler, and Tim Barber had been enrolled the semester before. John Nave had followed Armin out from Chicago. In addition, there were veterans who were funded by the GI bill as well as what Armin remembered as “mountain men who were mildly disruptive.”

With equipment in hand and a curriculum to follow, the students successfully completed their first semester of the string instrument repair program in the spring of 1978. However, Armin had come to realize that while he loved repairing instruments he did not like teaching. At the end of this semester, he gave his notice to the school. Armin then moved to Seattle and has remained in the instrument repair business ever since. But before leaving, he gave SFCC a gift: he found Anton Smith, his replacement.

Anton grew up in Oregon and unlike either Glen or Armin, he didn’t start playing until after high school and he never played the violin very well. (He admitted just enough “to scare a cat away.”) His instrument of choice was the banjo and while he appreciated and played old time music he was interested in a variety of genres including Eastern European music. In the summer of 1964, he traveled to Europe to visit his sister and check out the music in places like Yugoslavia. He also planned to visit a friend from San Francisco who was going to attend a violin making school in West Germany. When he arrived at the school, he found that his friend had changed his mind and remained in San Francisco. However, Anton decided to enroll in what he later referred to as “a fortuitous occurrence.” Attendance was low at the school; the administration waived all the requirements and gave him a scholarship. Anton had never intended to repair or build violins but instead his career path “just evolved. I just didn’t really know what else to do.” Anton had found himself in Mittenwald, one of Europe’s major centers for violin making. Over the course of the next four years, he learned how to repair and build violins and other instruments. He also was mentored in historic and early Baroque instruments.

Anton returned to San Francisco in 1968 where he worked at Cremona Musical Instrument shop for several years; he also took two apprenticeships in construction of the Baroque viola; then in 1971 he spent a year collaborating in England with a lutanist in ways to build Renaissance style lutes to better suit modern concert hall conditions; he then opened up an instrument making shop in Vancouver, BC. Finally, in 1975, he was hired by the Violin Making School of America in Salt Lake City as their lead instructor.

When Anton arrived in the fall of 1978, he was the most qualified of the three previous instructors. He found a program already in place with a strong foundation that he could build from along with a core of gifted students. Each day Anton would arrive at school early, about 8AM.
He remembered that the program had its own small building which allowed students to work after school hours. About 20 students attended class for five hours a day, Monday through Friday. Anton prepared daily lectures involving a subject related to their work.

He quickly realized that the program attracted students at a variety of skill levels and interests. Some moved slower and others quicker. The core of students that he inherited from Armin grew to include Steve Haas his first year of teaching and Bob Childs his second year. This group progressed so well that it became harder and harder to find common ground for the class lectures. Fortunately, students spent much of each day working on specific instruments. The school advertised in the community for repairs—owners were charged just for parts and not labor; schools and trade shops could donate old battered instruments that needed salvaging. Students learned the basics of the trade including peg work, carving bridges, taking tops off, replacing bass bars, neck grafts, peg bushings, varnish work including touch up, French polish, sounds posts, neck resets, bow rehauling, and fingerboard dressing.

After attending a violin repair school for a year in Minnesota, Anna Weiland came to Spokane for a CETA apprenticeship with Glen Stockton in 1977. She soon realized that she was more interested in the SFCC program and enrolled that fall with Gunter Raas. She remembered Armin as being “a good instructor” who taught her many techniques including bow rehairing. Anton was “incredible; he was always available and so knowledgeable. He imparted perfection in a very gentle way. The job was not done until it was done perfectly. He a had good sense of humor but was incredibly honest.” For Anna, his major contribution was instilling in her the importance of “high ethical standards”. There was honesty. For Anna, his major contribution was instilling in her the importance of “high ethical standards”. There was honesty.

Spokane Falls Community College finally had the program that was envisioned back in 1976. Unfortunately, state and federal funding began to disappear. The administration informed Anton that in order to continue the program, he would need to almost double his enrollment. He felt that under the current conditions, a two year program was barely enough time to actually prepare most students. Adding more students would mean less one-on-one time with them and make it even more difficult to really prepare them. Consequently, Anton decided to close the program after the spring term of 1980. He recalled, “It broke my heart.”

Anton left the summer of 1980 to Sisters, Oregon where his sister lived. Bob Childs, who had enrolled in the fall of 1979 in order to learn how to build violins, followed Anton to Oregon where he spent the next year working with Anton and living in a trailer next to Anton’s home. Later Anton lived in California working construction and keeping his hand in building and repairs. In 1992, he was offered a job at Shar Music in Ann Arbor, Michigan in the restoration department. He spent the next 15 years working on historic and very expensive violins. He is now retired and continues to live in Michigan.

While the string repair program lasted just two and half years, several of its graduates found careers in their field. Anna Weiland opened her own repair shop in Moscow in 1980 and then later moved to Colorado Springs, CO where she owned and operated a very successful and ethical business for the next twenty-five years. Anton helped both Tim Barber and John Nave find jobs with Frank Passa’s music business in San Francisco. Tim remained there for seven years working on high end instruments and selling violins ranging in price from $5,000 to the hundreds of thousands of dollars. Once he returned to Spokane, he turned to other work but in his spare time he specialized in bow repair having helped out many of the local music shops for nearly thirty years. Steve Haas moved to the Midwest eventually settling in Milwaukee, WI where he established his shop Classical Strings. Besides repairing instruments Steve mentored many others. He had a reputation as a fine bow maker. He passed away in 2018. Ray Kohlstadt remained in Spokane where he worked for several music stores. After spending a year with Anton in Sisters, OR, Bob Childs moved to Philadelphia to work in a trade shop. Then he moved to Boston where he opened his studio. Bob retired in 2019 after having made nearly two hundred violins.

The short-lived string instrument repair program also had an important impact on the Spokane folk music and dance scene. After Armin Barnett arrived in town, he soon connected with many of the local musicians including Geoff Seitz, Bill Siems and Dawn Holladay. He often played for concerts and dances as well as jamming with the musicians in the community. Bob Childs met Penn Fix at an SFS fundraiser in November, 1979. The two collaborated in bringing contra dancing to Spokane; Penn organized the dance series that began in January, 1980 and Bob called the contras and played with the newly formed band Irish Jubilee. That monthly dance series continues to this day.