

EARLY DANCE CIRCULAR

No. 91, September 2012

Big Dance 2012

Early Dance at Big Dance 2012 in London

by Sharon Butler

London was buzzing for Big Dance Week, from Saturday 7th July straight through to Sunday 15th. While events piled up across the city, the rain fell unrelentingly, dark clouds sending us all scurrying for cover and making it rather difficult to keep audience numbers up.

Modern dance was to the fore, but the Early Dance Circle put the centuries on display throughout the week. Our contribution opened with Darren Royston exploring cosmic dance at RADA and Barbara Segal's Chalemie company making two appearances at the new Golden Gates of Kensington Palace. The show, 'Very Victorian Dancing – from Country to Polka', celebrated the two Diamond Jubilee Queens, Victoria and Elizabeth II. Afterwards, the company was treated to a private tour of the Palace, a treat not to be missed!

From Monday to Friday, a series of demonstrations/classes was held at Charlton House in Greenwich. This historic Jacobean house made a beautiful venue, thanks to the generosity of Greenwich Council. Each evening a different group performed and taught. On Monday, **Nonsuch** introduced the principles of Early Dance by exploring what we know about medieval dancing. **Pastime** performed 16th-century dances in costume on Tuesday. **Anne Daye** represented DHDS on Wednesday and led an inspiring recreation of a 17th-century masque, with musical support from Roger Gregory and friends. On Thursday, **Rostibolli** travelled all the way from Salisbury for an evening with the Dancing Masters of the Italian Courts, again in costume. Finally, Barbara Segal's **Chalemie** dancers performed on Friday, drawing everyone into their company for dances of the 19th century.

BIG
DANCE



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Diary Dates

- **Friday 12th to Sunday 14th October 2012, Norwich – THE 29TH ANNUAL EARLY DANCE FESTIVAL**
- **Friday 15th February 2013, 7.15pm**, The Hall at the Art Workers Guild, 6 Queen Square, London WC1N 3AT – **THE ANNUAL EARLY DANCE LECTURE: Professor Katherine Duncan-Jones**, Somerville College, Oxford, presents '*When Kemp did dance alone-a: The active career of William Kemp.*

Sunday's afternoon concert and Regency dance provided the highlight of the week and not only because we saw the sun! But see it we did and on St Swithun's Day!

Audiences arrived and were treated to a rousing version of the *Radetzky March* to start, followed by short intense performances from the week's participants. The dancers' enjoyment in their dancing was infectious and the crowd responded. The young members of RADA Stagecoach came en masse and performed a number of dances before Sian Jones's good Queen Bess, in their special Royal livery – Big Dance T-shirts! Some harlequins managed to force their way in to add to the fun and we closed the concert with a *Weather jig of Sun and Rain*, led by Stuart Hopps in time to *Sumer is icumen in*. This became a mass movement to general hilarity and ended with a welcome break for refreshment.

The day was rounded off by a Regency Dance called by Diana Campbell to the playing of Ian Cutts. Our guests, who had often not met this kind of dancing before, responded with enthusiasm and the dance floor was full for two hours. Some photos of the event can be seen on page 2 of this *Circular*.

All in all, members of The Early Dance Circle gave considerable time and effort to this year's Big Dance. Everyone who took part deserves congratulation. We hope that we have raised our profile with the public and introduced some wonderful dances to people who might never have encountered them otherwise.

Big Dance 2012

Photos 1 to 6 are of the closing concert of Big Dance 2012 at Charlton House, London (see p. 1) © Martine MacCormack

- 1 Pastime in Brando Gentile
- 2 The 'Radetzky' Grand March
- 3 Nonsuch Thrills with La Volta
- 4 Harlequins at Play
- 5 Stuart Hopps sets up the Grand Finale
- 6 Barbara Segal's Baroque Solo

Photo 7 shows the Capriol Dancers, with their musicians performing Hunsdon House for Big Dance in Cambridge (see p. 3)



Big Dance 2012 in Scotland

by Junella McKay

A small square dance floor, enticing South American music and a group of captivated travellers held my attention one mid-August morning as I was passing through Glasgow Central Station. I had a little time to investigate before my train left. The recorded music emerged from behind two large sheets which were advertising – guess what? – Big Dance in Edinburgh. About five weeks late but nevertheless a very welcome piece of publicity – though I'm afraid most folk were too engrossed in the intertwining legs of the two superb Argentinian Tango-ists to absorb the message, and I had no time to speak with the organisers, alas.

It got me thinking about Big Dance outside London and I recalled that in 2010 members from no fewer than six areas – Cambridge, Leeds, Norwich, Dumfries, Orcheston and Chichester – had all bravely presented programmes of Early Dance with varying degrees of success. Had anyone, I wondered, repeated the experiment this year?

Dumfries was deeply involved in a John Cairney production on the life of Robert Burns and the only other group to get in touch was Cambridge, who, after their very successful programme in 2010, were invited back to dance in the same venue. You can see Liz Russell's report in the next column on this page.

But what about Edinburgh? Consulting the Internet I discovered that a highly comprehensive programme took place this year. Everything from aerial, African street jazz and ballet to Scottish country dance, tango, tap and zumba. Morag Deyes who is artistic director of Dance Base in Edinburgh had circulated invitations to every dancing school, organisation and university and was astounded at the staggering line-up of participating dance forms. The weekend culminated on Sunday 1st July with a Tea Dance in which, with a four-minute foxtrot, the organisers intended challenging the *Guinness Book of Records*. (A genuine tea dance apparently has to sport sandwiches of a certain size, tea and cake.) Reading further I discovered that they were planning to break the record that Dance Base had themselves set up in September 2010 in Glasgow, when 306 couples participated – my home town and I was totally unaware of this event I am ashamed to say!*

Unsurprisingly, Early Dance did not feature in the Edinburgh Big Dance list. We do have several Scottish Groups who practise Early Dance, but despite various approaches over many years, none of them appears to wish involvement with the EDC.

** I understand that 335 couples took part this time but unfortunately some of them left before the end of the event without handing in their tickets, so the challenge was unable to be registered as a success. What a pity!*

www.earlydancecircle.co.uk

The Early Dance Circle website contains information about forthcoming and recent EDC events, as well as details of classes, groups and societies, EDC contacts, etc.

Big Dance 2012 in Cambridge

by Liz Russell

Somehow our Tudor dance display in 2010 must have been considered just the thing for exhausted shoppers on a very hot Sunday afternoon, for in 2012 we had a positive response from the management of the Grafton Shopping Centre to return there to perform Playford country dances on Sunday afternoon, 8th July. And we actually managed a reasonable audience despite clashing with Andy Murray's Wimbledon final.

This year the temperature was much kinder to dancing, and we had live music from friends who usually play for our Mediaeval performances. Gina and Dave were joined by their young daughter, Emily on her cello, an added pleasure for us all. Our dances included *Picking of Sticks*, *Goddesses*, *Nonesuch*, *Confesse*, *Mundesse* and *Lord of Carnarvans Jegg*, and we sneaked in the later edition *Hunsdon House*, because we like it (see photo opposite). Despite the colourful shopping centre background, we didn't get thrown off our presence in those ambiguous two-couple squares, *Cuckolds*, *Parsons*, *Heartsease* and *Hit and Miss*.

Capriol had a new publicity handout in the form of a postcard with three photos and the essential phone numbers, so we did a good first distribution to our audience, but – as always – we shall only know if we have a response when classes resume in the Autumn.

By courtesy of the Editor of the DHDS November 2011 Newsletter, as well as the writer of the article (in other words the Rogers family!), we are reprinting the following short article to show you how Early Dance has recently widened its horizons.

A Regency Event [With a difference! – Ed.]

by Ellis Rogers

On 8th October at the Royal Overseas League, London, The Romantic Novelists Association held their Regency Event to celebrate the writings of Georgette Heyer and others. One of the day's events was an introduction to the dancing that might be found in, or introduced into romantic novels set in that period, and I was invited to take this session. I was assisted in the dance instruction by Diana Campbell and we found ourselves surrounded by about forty lady novelists and their enthusiastic readers. Fortunately, their enthusiasm extended to the dances and they thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to join in the country dances and cotillons.

Diana and I were able to attend some of the other sessions that made up the programme of this entertaining and extremely enjoyable day. We also examined the house's famous Crinoline Staircase, where the vertical supports of the handrail are bowed out at the bottom to accommodate the fashionable large-diameter skirts of the mid-19th century.

Part of the afternoon was devoted to a discussion on 'Sex and the Georgians' and my most vivid memory of the day is sitting silent and agog among 70-plus women earnestly discussing how much detailed sex scenes should be included in their novels, and hearing informed comment on the practical aspects of various forms of birth control.

I look forward to being invited again.

Julia Sutton (20 July 1928 – 1 July 2012)

We have received the following two appreciations of Dr. Julia Sutton who died in July. First from Barbara Sparti:

Julia Sutton, musicologist and dance historian, died peacefully in a nursing home on 1st July after a short illness. She was professor emerita of New England Conservatory of Music, where she served as chair of the Music History/Musicology department for over twenty years as well as teaching in the Performance of Early Music department and directing the Collegium Terpsichore.

A life-long enthusiastic dancer and teacher of American squares and contradances, international folk, and English country dance, Dr. Sutton devoted her scholarship to the interconnections between music and the dance in Western cultures.

She directed and reconstructed the dances for the New York Pro Musica's cross-country tours of An Entertainment for Elizabeth, the Pennsylvania Orchestra Association's Renaissance Revisited, the Ensemble for Early Music's Renaissance Revels, and a production of the great Florentine Intermedio of 1589, The Descent of Rhythm and Harmony (Cavalieri). She was a guest lecturer at many universities and colleges, and presented workshops and courses on aspects of Renaissance dance and music in the United States and Europe.

Dr. Sutton wrote numerous articles on Renaissance music and dance for scholarly publications including The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians and The International Encyclopedia of Dance. She published a new edition of the French dance manual by Thoinot Arbeau, Orchesography, and translated and edited the Italian manual by Fabritio Caroso, *Nobiltà di dame*. Her most recently completed publication is a teaching video, *Il Ballarino*. In 2009, as editor-in-chief, she published the scholarly edition of *Dances for the Sun King: André Lorin's Livre de Contredance*.

And second, from Wendy Heller, Professor of Music at Princeton:

I just wanted to add a note about Julia Sutton. I had the privilege of working with her for many years at New England Conservatory. In fact, she deserves the credit (or blame) for my interest in Baroque music. In an era in which few American music schools were committed to early music, Julia was a pioneer in bringing together scholars and performers. As an undergraduate voice major, I danced in the Collegium Terpsichore at a time in which concerts such as Mr. Handel's London or An Evening with Queen Elizabeth were original in their attempt to bring to life the cultural context of early music. Julia was responsible as well for maintaining high standards for Music History at New England Conservatory, hiring excellent faculty, and insuring that all students for the MM degree passed a rigorous comprehensive Music History exam. In those days, one could study medieval and Renaissance notation at NEC and even – thanks to Julia – do an MM degree in Early Dance. When I was trying to decide whether to do graduate studies in voice or musicology, Julia Sutton (along with Anne Hallmark) persuaded me to enter the department there. I first discovered Cavalli while writing a paper on Lully for Julia's research seminar. The rest, as they say, is history.

Julia could be exacting and exasperating; not everyone wanted to adhere to her high standards, particularly when they thought practicing a concerto was more important than music history. However, her passion for music and music scholarship impacted generations of conservatory students. She also had a generous heart and was always supportive – even as she remained amazed that a singer could succeed in musicology! I think of her with great fondness and will always be grateful to her.

The Annual Lecture

on Friday 15 February 2013, 7.15 pm
at The Artworkers' Guild, 6 Queen Square, London WC1N 3AT

Professor Katherine Duncan-Jones,
Somerville College, University of Oxford

'When Kemp did dance alone-a': The active career of William Kemp

This quotation from a madrigal by Thomas Weelkes (*Ayres or Phantasticke Spirites for three voices*, 1608), celebrates William Kemp's virtuosic dancing and travelling, in a style often described as that of the 'morris', but not necessarily involving group or formation dancing. Early records of Kemp's performances, in the Netherlands in 1585, evoke spectacular 'leaps', which continued to be a feature of his performances up to and including his 1599 'Nine daies wonder', in which he danced from London to Norwich. His roles in plays by Shakespeare and others will also be discussed, as well as the likely extent of his career post 1600.

Fairy Queen Workshop – Border Marches Early Music Forum

Tutors: Philippa Waite and Andrew Wilson-Dickson

by Sue Warren

On 16th June it rained cats and dogs on the small market town of Kington in Herefordshire. It drummed on the roof, providing extra texture to the joyous music of Purcell's *Fairy Queen* played and sung by members of the Border Marches Early Music Forum (BMEMF) under the direction from the harpsichord of Andrew Wilson-Dickson. Philippa Waite was the dance tutor for the day, using her own choreographies throughout. Unusually, this was not primarily a workshop for musicians and singers. BMEMF had devoted a previous one to music from *The Fairy Queen*. They now wanted to explore the dances and re-visit some choruses. People were invited to dance, sing and play as they wished. This sounded a logistical nightmare but the day flowed along magnificently by dint of good humour and flexibility.

By 11.00 am the hall was full of people milling around, many had not danced since student days but enjoyed Purcell's music. Philippa and Jeremy Badcock wore baroque costumes for the day which gave historical and visual context. A handful of us had some baroque experience and we were able to partner newcomers. Warm-up sent several uncertain people following the sound of singing and playing elsewhere.

The remaining group of some 20 to 30 enthusiastic dancers quickly responded to Philippa's cheerful encouragement. We applied ourselves to mastering five baroque steps sufficiently well to be able to think about spatial patterns as well as being in the right place at the right time, with some fudging. We were all soon dancing a country dance to music from Purcell's first inter-act masque for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Recorded music distracted the musicians so we agreed that the dancers would practise to the bursts of live music coming from behind the stage-screen; different tempi, interruptions and re-starts notwithstanding. One big advantage was that the dancers knew the music very well and filled in the gaps.

Philippa's choreography for the opera's final Chaconne used the now familiar five steps in complicated patterns. These demanded full concentration and spatial sense, especially from new dancers, but everyone learned very quickly. Enthusiasm for the dance was growing, pleasure was palpable, no one pleaded tiredness and some singers went reluctantly to practise their choruses.

After lunch the stage-screen was opened, music and dance were connected! The choreography for 'Sing, sing we and trip it...' which comes just prior to Titania's sleep is a less structured piece and gave people more difficulty than the earlier precise patterns. However, fudge and humour won the day.

Philippa and Andrew worked extremely well together and gave a fine example of co-operation and understanding between dancers and musicians. I hope BMEMF members recognised this process. Everything drew together apparently

seamlessly. New dancers gained in confidence and obviously enjoyed responding physically to the music. The singers and soloists sang with great heart and enjoyed watching the dance.

In the final run through Philippa and Jeremy performed two dances in slow triple time to, 'If love's a sweet passion' and 'One charming night'. We, the chorus line, shone in our three choreographies. The musicians were excellent, their playing invited us to dance and one or two singers did pick up their scores and sing from the floor. The day was a consummate success and there were sincere thanks and delight all round.

Review of Rothenfels Conference

by Bill Tuck

High up on a tall wooded cliff overlooking the river Main stands Burg Rothenfels, a former castle and monastery now used as a conference and vacation centre – see photo below. For several decades now this has been the location for a series of workshops devoted to Early Dance, with two or more per year. Since 2004 it has also been the venue for some of the most important international symposia on this subject. From the 6th to 10th June this year, the third of these four-year gatherings was held. And what a star-studded collection of performers and researchers it was! Not often, for example, can one enjoy a joint presentation by Barbara Sparti, Christine Bayle and Carles Mas (this on the curious evolution, transformation and dispersion of the 'Spanish' pavan or '*pavaniglia*') – all to the accompaniment of live music from a fine five-piece baroque band.

The four mornings were devoted to the presentation of papers (usually four) while afternoon and evening sessions held workshops (two per day – usually repeated). Over the four days of the conference some 14 papers and 10 workshops were presented.

In addition there were short entertainments every evening by some very well-known names, including Ana Yepes (Spanish baroque), Irène Ginger & Hubert Hazebrucq (minuets), and Barbara Segal (baroque dance & English hornpipe). Incidentally, a splendid video of Ana doing her Spanish style baroque is to be found at www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lw_3gyetYYY; Irène can be seen at www.youtube.com/watch?v=L0l1cc9XwZQ,



and Hubert at www.youtube.com/watch?v=6uviHATzRac.

The whole event culminates in a Grand Ball (for which almost everybody dresses up) to the lively music of the resident baroque band led by Walter Waidosch on the bass viol.

The papers presented at the conference are all published and available beforehand in a well-edited collection available from Uwe Schlottermüller at Fagisis Press (www.fagisis.de). Only half the papers were given in German, the rest being in English, while both German and English summaries are given in the published proceedings. It is difficult to summarize the content in this brief review, for it covered a large and varied range of topics, all under the title “*All’ungaresca – al español*” The Variety of European Dance Culture from 1420 to 1820.’

The most remarkable thing about the conference, however, was the international nature of the participants – there must have been at least twenty countries represented, from as far away as Australia and America, to the north by Russia and the south by South Africa. Russia alone had sent nine, second only to the Germans (and far ahead of the UK’s paltry two!). The next such international event is scheduled for St Petersburg in March 2013. I can only recommend that you really ought to go – be there or be unaware (as they used to say)!

Following the conference, I had the great pleasure of staying for a few days in Munich and, along with several visits

to museums (chiefly to investigate their important collection of early sackbuts), it was of great interest to witness a baroque dance class for a group led by Jadwiga Nowaczek (from La Danza München). What was most striking was to witness the discipline and commitment of the members, many of whom turn up two nights a week to rehearse (baroque and renaissance dance) and even travel from as far as Vienna – a round trip of nearly six hours! Check out their website for an indication of what they do:

www.barocktanz.de

Our final evening was spent in pleasant company discussing the ins and outs (and politics) of Early Dance – without reaching any memorable conclusions. The one reportable outcome – purely by way of lightening the generally serious nature of this publication – is the winning contribution to the evening’s Limerick contest:

There was a young lady from Munich
Fell in love with a chap in a tunic.
“I’m a soldier”, he cried.
“I’m a dancer”, she sighed.
And the Buffens they then danced was unique.

Not the greatest, perhaps, but a good deal better than many of Edward Lear’s (whose collection we were perusing at the time)!

Letter from Barbara Sparti

Rome, 12 July 2012

Dear friends and colleagues of SDHS,

I have just returned from attending a week-long conference of the International Musicology Society held at the Rome’s Parco della Musica – a beautiful and perfect venue (designed by architect Renzo Piano) for the hundreds of participants. (It was a part of a Music Iconography session at which I presented new interpretations of the dancers in Lorenzetti’s Good Government fresco in Siena.)

During the week we received the news of the death of Julia Sutton, musicologist and dance historian: her translation of Caroso’s *Nobiltà di dame* (1600) was an important first, and more recently she was editor-in-chief of the scholarly edition of *Dances for the Sun King: André Lorin’s Livre de Contredance*.

It made me realize that the first researchers in dance history – Julia Sutton and Ingrid Brainard – were musicologists; they were mainly concerned with Italian 15th- and 16th-century dance. They were founders and active members of SDHS. Our field was further enriched by two more musicologists working on French sources – Carol Marsh and Rebecca Harris-Warrick for the 17th and 18th centuries (also members of SDHS). Marion Smith, musicologist, has contributed uniquely to investigations about music for ballet pantomime (in *Giselle* for example), and much more. At the Rome conference I heard an excellent paper by another musicologist, Margaret Butler, about the city of Parma during the period of Austrian occupation of northern Italy when there was an Italian opera company with Italian dancers as

well as a French dance troupe! She urged the audience to go to the Parma archives that were so rich.

Other musicologists talked about the comédies-ballets by Lully and Molière and how much of Lully’s music incorporated Italian style music. Why then, I asked, did Lully not use Italian style in his dances? (Unanswered question.) I also discovered from Bruce A. Brown, a musicologist who collaborated with Rebecca Harris-Warrick on the book about Gennaro Magri, published by SDHS, that while Noverre’s pantomimes were walked (which the Roman audiences didn’t like or understand) and dance was kept separate, Angiolini insisted that the pantomime ballets incorporate dance.

Two French female scholars from the Versailles Association pour un Centre de Recherche sur les Arts du Spectacle aux xvii^e et xviii^e siècles, Centre de Musique Baroque de Versailles, working in Rome on French families living in Rome in that period, have found many previously unknown references to specific dancing masters!

These are some of my thoughts after the IMS conference and the death of Julia Sutton. Musicologists continue to unearth things in archives or by studying works in depth. I believe, and have believed for many years, that most dance historians are not keeping up. There is, of course, some ‘new musicology’, but it is rather minor. Hence I am not at all comfortable with the tendency of SDHS to give primacy to theory studies. When there is so much to be discovered about dancing in, for example, Italy and France in the 15th to 18th centuries. Are we going to continue leaving this research to the musicologists?

Barbara Sparti

Krakow Review 2012

In reading Bill Tuck's review of this year's Krakow Dance Festival, it is interesting to hear yet again how well our Continental European colleagues manage to enthuse their youngsters with a high level of interest in various aspects of Early Dance. Their great enthusiasm to practise, improve and return year upon year ensures that there is always a reserve of young dancers waiting in the wings in many countries of mainland Europe. Would that it were so in the UK.

A further interesting point made by Barbara is that the *Vento del Tempo* group from St Petersburg have all made their own gorgeous costumes, which she says are stunning. [Ed]

The Cracovia Danza Festival of Court Dance is now into its 13th year. It is also seven years since I first visited this annual event, initially to perform a reconstruction of 18th century English pantomime (as part of the Chalemie Theatre Company) and more recently as bag-carrier for Barbara Segal, who has been teaching and performing there regularly since 2008. What changes are discernible over this period and where is the Festival likely to go in the future?

The professional company, Cracovia Danza – probably the only fully professional Early Dance company currently working in Europe – is facing increasing difficulty in getting financial support from government sources due to general cutbacks. It had been feared that this would severely curtail the programme planned for this year's Festival. In the event it was able to go ahead as usual (though with some limitations on performance – such as no grand covered stage in the courtyard of Wawel Castle for the final evening performance). Despite these fears, demand from students was even higher than usual, with some 180 or so enrolled in the various classes.

A new venture for the Festival is into the baroque – something which until now has been the preserve of the professional Cracovia Danza group itself. A very successful workshop for beginners in baroque dance attracted some 25 students, while an intermediate course for those with a little experience of this form got over 30 applicants. Both were

expertly handled by Barbara Segal, who also gave a well-attended course on English Country Dance to beginners (including a number of very enthusiastic 9 and 10 year-old children, who mastered even some of the more complicated manoeuvres with aplomb!).

It is very noticeable that the skill level of amateur performers of Early Dance is going up as the youngsters who joined several years ago are now maturing into quite skilled dancers, well able to tackle the standard repertoire of notated dances, with enthusiasm if not always with the practised elegance of the professional performer. This included a very large contingent from St Petersburg where Barbara had previously taught.

At the same time, the amateur groups are becoming increasingly confident and competent in what they are trying to create – as well as more ambitious. The evening performances in the informal setting of the renaissance Villa Decius included several ambitious productions by such amateur groups eager to demonstrate their ability to weave their dance repertoire into a plausible story – such as a charming if under-played re-working of Cinderella (the ugly sisters were much too pretty for it to be entirely convincing!) by *Antiquo More* from Irkutsk in Siberia, and a stunningly costumed masque *Le Triomphe de l'Amour* from the St Petersburg group *Vento del Tempo* (see photo below). Also impressive was the young Polish group *Capella Antiqua Bialostociensis* in their *Princesses – Fairytale*.

As Baroque Dance was the main theme of the Festival this year, it was fitting that the public concert presented in the Philharmonia Concert Hall on the final evening reflected this interest. Here the focus was very much on developments of the 18th century – from the elegant presentation of stage dances by Pécour and L'Abée by Barbara Segal, through the Rococo fantasies of Cracovia Danza in their re-working of Mozart social dances and ending with an exuberant reconstruction of the final chaconne from Mozart's *Idomeneo* by choreographers Claudia Jeschke and Sibylle Dahms, and danced by Rainer Krenstetter.

This latter performance was the subject of the recent EDC lecture so it was interesting to see it live rather than just the video version presented earlier. While there was no denying the skill of the soloist, it didn't really say much that was



1 Students of Cracovia Dance Festival at the Wawel Castle.

Photo © Zbigniew Skorupka

2 *Le Triomphe de l'Amour* by St. Petersburg dancers Vento del Tempo



convincing about the extraordinary transition between the dance of the late 18th century and that of the 19th-century Romantic Ballet. One would have to concur with an earlier review in this journal that it was somewhat disappointing in its 'lack of understanding of the historical dance styles, while referring to the past in other respects'.

The inclusion of a performance by Kathak dancer Alaknanda gave a splendid opportunity to see the parallels between the classical Indian dance style and that of the baroque. In addition to the virtuoso rhythmic complexities of her performance, she showed a polished and very skilful mime technique, and one could see from this the way it has been incorporated into the 'company style' of Cracovia Danza itself. Perhaps baroque dance really did originate in India!

Live Music Again

A review of two recent events

by Bill Tuck

It is not often that one gets to perform to a really good band, but this was the experience of *Contretemps & Company* at a recent concert event: the *Notting Hill Mayfest*. The theme was English Baroque and it formed the opening concert of a week-long celebration organised by St John's Church of Notting Hill. The music was provided by a group of young musicians – two violins, viola, cello and harpsichord – led by trumpet player William Russell. Going under the named *Spiritato* they specialise in English baroque music, in particular the work of Henry Purcell. At the first rehearsal our usual trepidations of using live music seemed justified – tempos were wrong, repeats were missed and the style was uninspiring. But all that disappeared very quickly on the second run-through. I think this is the mark of a really good band – first rehearsals are inevitably something of a mess, but the speed of recovery and adaptability is what marks out a top class ensemble for accompanying dance. Our concern was even more justified in the case of the comic duet *Courtly Dance meets Country Capers* (reprised from the last EDC Festival) because we had gone to a lot of trouble creating a CD with rather precise gaps between sections and some rather important segue jumps. However, apart from the tendency to play too fast or to speed up the tempo – always the problem with the young, I find, getting carried away with their enthusiasm – the accompaniment was perfect and served to create a much more interesting concert experience than could ever have been achieved with CDs.

The selection of music by *Spiritato* came largely from the stage works of Henry Purcell and included some of the more memorable scenes from his operas, all played instrumentally in this case. These served as a perfect accompaniment to the dances, which included several of the less well-known Playford country dances plus a selection of notated couple dances and a piece for two Harlequins, along with the comic Segal-Tuck duet already mentioned. All in all, I believe it made for a very entertaining concert, with a variety that would have been difficult to achieve by a fully professional company, if only because the costs would have been prohibitive.

Our initial fears that we may have been paired with an accompaniment of six amateur recorder players (prompted in

part by the organiser's demand to see the music a full six months in advance) was immediately allayed after our first meeting with the lead violinist one week before the concert. Despite the fact that none of the musicians actually looked at the music until the first rehearsal the day before the concert, their competence and professionalism were sufficient to carry it off.

Another opportunity to witness 'historical dancing to live music' came a week or two later at the 'Festival of Town Pipers' held this year in Colchester in conjunction with the famous 'Oyster Fayre'. Held every two years, the Town Pipers Festival is a meeting of groups of town pipers or 'waits' from all over Europe. Many amateur re-enactment bands, together with well-known groups such as the **York Waits** and the **Stadspijpers van 's-Hertogenbosch**, meet to exchange tunes and ideas while at the same time providing some colourful entertainment for the townsfolk. This year – for the first time – a strong dance element was included by linking up for several performances with the **Colchester Historical Dance Group**. Led respectively by Lizzie Gutteridge and Jackie Marshall-Ward, the **Colchester Waits** and the CHDG have been working together for some time on projects integrating the live music of the Waits with historical dance. On this occasion the dancing was to the massed band of waits at the conclusion of their 'Big Blow' performance. While I suspect it was never usual even in Renaissance times to see some forty-odd musicians armed with shawms, sackbuts, trumpets and drums playing for a group of a dozen dancers, it certainly made for a lively if rather deafening performance – and the dancing added a dynamic element that contributed significantly to the whole spectacle!

New Clothes for Dancing

A snippet from Ann Kent

I've recently returned from Chalemie Summer School, which includes singing, dancing, Commedia dell'Arte, music, and costume-making. I spent an excellent week in good company, being well-entertained and very well fed, at Headington Girls School in Oxford. This year we had a new tutor in costume making, Ann Susan Brown, who taught me new techniques for drafting patterns and cutting with a wheel on a special mat. I managed to make elaborate trunk hose based on a costume in the V & A and detailed in one of the Janet Arnold pattern books. The actual costume in the book had a 56" waist so considerable adjustment was needed to make it fit Paul! As I found that I had barely enough of the posh fabric, it was necessary to make and fit a toile (trial in rough material) to ensure that I got the shapes correct before cutting the top material. I was expertly guided by Ann. While I had considerable sewing experience, Brian had never picked up a needle before yet learnt to use a machine, cut a pattern, and complete a lined caped cloak – despite giving half of his time to the dancing class.

So, if you have a costume that needs adjustment, improvement, or you want to make a new one, I can recommend this week at Chalemie – it's the same time in August next year – where I shall be returning to make a doublet to match the hose.