



SAN FRANCISCO BRANCH, INC.

Teachers' Committee Meeting, May 8, 2010, minutes

Location: Home of Pat O'Brien

Note:

1. Where any or all of us is expected to do something as a result of discussion at the meeting, *italics* are used! Please *let me know if you need these action items to stand out more prominently.*
2. I have numbered the agenda items, for easier reference.

Present:

Cathy Bertics, Armin Busse, Laura Cooper, Juliet Davoren, Linda Henderson, Paula Jacobson, Susie Langdon Kass, Kathleen McAdam, Pat O'Brien, Sandra Schultz, Alan Twhigg

Regrets from:

Ellen Aaron, Kathy Allen, Gail Erwin, Bruce Hamilton, Jo Hamilton, Bradley Hobbs, Bob McMurtry, Trina Merriman, Jim Passage, Gary Thomas, Ron Wallace, Tim Wilson

Meeting called to order:

by Armin, at 2:10pm, with thanks to Pat for hosting. Those present signed in. The regrets list was read out and added to as needed.

Agenda review/edit:

The agenda was supplemented as needed (see #4, Topic Selection, and #13, Teacher Candidate Training, below). Also, Discussion on Dances was amalgamated into #10, the discussion on Asilomar dances/write-ups. Today's Special Topics: "Sir J.M.Barrie of Thrums" and "How to make demonstration sets of tunes using software" have also been included in these minutes.

Old Business

1. Minutes of Jan 23, 2010 meeting:

Accepted as written. (Proposed Juliet, 2nd Paula.)

2. Report on Party Program Committees:

Paula reported the Jean Patrick and Kim McGarrity Memorial Ball programs are complete, and that the musicians for Jean Patrick will be Catherine Fraser and Duncan Smith.

We discussed the process for making Ball programs available to teachers when they are not yet advertised to the dance community at large. We decided Ball programs should be sent (by the Ball Program continuity person, i.e. Paula) to the Teachers' web site contact (i.e. *Armin*), *who will send an email to us all* when he has made the program available on the Teachers' website.

3. Confirm Officers - Monthly Party Programming Continuity Person:

We agreed Bruce Herbold is the current Monthly Party Programming Continuity Person. He did not decline the role following being elected in his absence at the last meeting, and is continuing to do the job. Thanks, Bruce!

New Business

4. Topic Selection

Today's special topic was confirmed as "How to make demonstration sets of tunes using software". Post-its were made available for people to jot down ideas for the final agenda item: more "special topics" for future meetings, since, after next meeting, we will be getting low on the list. We also agreed we would dance "Sir J.M. Barrie of Thrums" following the meeting.

5. Fall 2010 Workshop

First, we reviewed the rationale for the decision not to have a Teachers' Workshop immediately before/after Asilomar. It was a) a busy time of year, b) difficult to get sufficient attendance from teachers (we'd had to invite non-teachers) and c) Asilomar includes a seminar of some sort well suited to Teacher development.

Next, we discussed a future workshop. Susie suggested we ask Bruce Hamilton, saying she'd attended two wonderful events he'd taught in the past: 1. a Sacramento workshop, where even the warm-ups were different and wonderful, 2. a Mendocino English callers' workshop, illustrating, for example, the same tune in an English, Scottish and Irish style. We agreed that *Armin should contact Bruce Hamilton* to request a workshop, where Bruce suggests both the topic and the date.

In addition, it was suggested that *we each, unilaterally, approach people we think could offer good teachers' workshops*, particularly taking advantage of out-of-town teachers visiting the area for other reasons, and suggesting we'd be able to pay part of their costs. If we find someone interested in offering a workshop, we can bring that information to the Teachers' Committee for discussion.

Finally, it was noted that Ron Wallace and Elaine Brunken have been announced as new examiners. Congratulations! Current West Coast examiners, following retirement of Mary Brandon, are Mary Murray, Elinor Vandegrift, and Ron Wallace.

6. Approve TC-BC Liaison

We are grateful to Jim Passage for continuing in the role of Teachers' Committee-Branch Committee liaison. Several teachers also commented how beneficial it is for teachers to be on the Branch Committee, how rewarding the job is, and that *we should consider volunteering, or encourage others to volunteer*.

7. Report from Branch Committee

Jim Passage reported via email that he is not aware of any issues needing immediate coordination between the Teachers' and the Branch committees.

8. Report on TAC

Paula reported that the previous report from TAC has been forwarded to us, as will the next.

9. Report progress on database for ball program write-ups

Alan reported the hit rate is gradually increasing on not having to write up descriptions. For example, for Asilomar 2010, only 8 dances needed write-ups from scratch. However, many,

many dances still need to be edited, or tweaked for consistency etc. Juliet asked if the database is yet a resource to us all, but no, that would still be in the future, though Alan can export from the program (Alan uses Filemaker, a Mac program). Meanwhile, Alan referred us to resources such as “Minicribs” <http://www.minicrib.care4free.net/index.htm>, or “Ghillietracks” <http://www.bletheringghillie.org/ghillietracks/index.php>. Some discussion ensued on the final destination for this database. It will not be on the open Branch website, nor on the Teachers’ Pages, as those are also open to the public. This led in turn to discussion of the public nature of the Teachers’ Pages. (For example, our regrets for non-attendance at a Teachers’ Meeting, will show up on a Google search. Thus, we do not put addresses of meetings on the web page, so that those remain private.) *We should each consider whether we have concerns about the public nature of the Teachers’ Pages.* (Note, this is not a topic for future discussion unless someone does have concerns.)

10. Asilomar Ball Program Write-Ups, & Discussion on Dances

Paula *urged us to please look and notify herself or Alan early of any questions of interpretation or variations in practice regarding the descriptions for any of the Asilomar dances.* Paula particularly asked us to *check Bratach Bana and Old Nick’s Lumber Room.* There followed discussion on the use of “cr” for “corner”, e.g. in the phrase “1st cr”. It was agreed it is unambiguous, and therefore satisfactory. It was further noted that “cr” is not used for “cross”.

11. Courtesy

Kathleen raised the issue. In the course of a fairly general discussion, the following points were noted: a) Lack of politeness and general courtesy can be an issue, due in part to a cell-phone culture where interruptions are constant and tolerated. b) By and large, courtesy at formal Balls is very good. c) Jamie Tanner has done us a good service by writing up the Valentine’s Ball Guide. d) The SF Branch Members’ Handbook, given when people first join the Branch, refers to matters of courtesy, but renewing members receive no reminders on this topic. e) *We need to educate our classes to be polite* (e.g. minimizing cross-talk while the teacher is talking. f) As teachers, *we should ensure the class knows how to notify us politely if we have a mental aberration while teaching a dance.* g) Some dancers are highly commendable in their courtesy in these instances, e.g. commenting, with hand raised, “Could you explain the bar counts on that?” or “I’m not sure I understand how...”. h) Beginners should be encouraged to ask more advanced dancers to dance. i) *If/when absolutely necessary, teachers need to have the courage to ask someone to sit down/leave the class if their dancing presents a danger to others.*

Other business

12. Starter Jigs

Kathleen had a suggestion from Angela Young, which *Kathleen will forward* in due course.

13. Teacher Candidate Training

Congratulations to Greg Reznick and Monica Pollard, who recently passed Unit 1. Thus far, there are 3 Branch members known to be attempting one or more Units at TAC this summer. *Alan will ask in the R&S* if anyone is interested in a local, SF-Branch run, class for Unit 5 next year. *We should also speak to individuals we think might be interested in Teacher Training.*

14. Special Topics for Future Meetings

Everyone should submit ideas for future Special Topics to Armin. (Submit by Post-it note following the meeting, or afterwards by email.)

At the September 18, 2010 Meeting, the Special Topic will be Visual Aids. We discussed what this should encompass. We concluded: a) *Everyone should bring at least one, and preferably several, visual aid(s) to the next meeting.* These might include pictures of castles, other buildings or objects (e.g a spurtle) illustrating the name of, or a figure in, a dance. b) *Those teachers who use creative manipulatives or visual aids as a means to teach SCD should offer to teach a short slot (maybe from 2-10 minutes) at the September meeting.* Ideas mentioned and known to have been used included pencil and paper exercises, use of toy cars, ropes, lego blocks, mirrors, bungee cords, and giant blow-ups of dance diagrams.

15. Dates and locations of next meetings

September 18, 2010, Kathleen McAdam's house, Lafayette

January 22, 2011, Armin's house, Milpitas

May 14, 2011, Location tbd.

Everyone should write these dates into their calendar.

Adjourned

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00pm. (Proposed Alan; 2nd Kathleen)

Post-adjournment

Since these items were post-adjournment, they perhaps belong in the next minutes, but it seems more logical (though perhaps less correct) to describe them here.

Sir J. M. Barrie of Thrums

We added ourselves to the great many around the Bay Area and around the world who danced "Sir J. M. Barrie of Thrums" (b. May 9, 1860) in celebration of the 150th anniversary of his birth. We learnt that some classes had dancers dressed up as Peter Pan characters (nightgowns, candlesticks etc). We put visual aids into action by viewing newspaper clippings of Peter Pan related activities etc.

How to Make Demonstration Sets of Tunes using Software

Armin gave a well constructed and excellent presentation of how to make demonstration sets of tunes using software, and went on to demonstrate exactly how to do it. I think we all learnt something. Only time will tell whether we learnt enough to be able to do this for ourselves, but some of us certainly came away willing to give it a try. Others, who already knew how, learnt a few short-cuts or refinements to add to their skills. Thank you, Armin.

Submitted by
Juliet Davoren