



Sacred Dance Guild

VOLUME 7, ISSUE 2

Fall 2007

IN THIS ISSUE

Letter from the President	1
Summer Board Retreat	2
David Taylor – Presenter	2
Mark Your Calendars!	2
Festival 2007	3
Pics from Spring Sharing	3
In Memoriam	3



A Letter from the President, Ann Marie Blessin



Dear SDG members and members-to-be:

On Saturday, November 10, 2007 we are privileged in having David Taylor as our workshop facilitator. It will be a wonderful opportunity for all of us, and I hope many of you will take advantage and plan to attend. He will offer us challenges as well as the joy of movement. So please support the Sacred Dance Guild with your presence. We are asking you to bring canned goods which can be distributed to the needy. So write that on your calendars for November 10th. See page 2 for more information on David Taylor and the workshop.

This fall has been a busy one with dancing at Parker United Methodist Church in their new sanctuary. Many thanks to Regina Bowman and Joceile Nordwall for joining in the dance there.

Our election ballot went out, thanks to Don Frickel, and we have a new board here to serve you for the next year—October 2007 through October 2008. I wish to thank Lesley Williams, Carolyn Lutito, Regina Bowman, Joceile Nordwall, Carole Sue Frickel, Doris Mekelburg and Judy Rutledge for serving this year.

I am also pleased to announce that the Connie Fisher fund for sacred dance at Iliff has reached \$114,000.

We have a sacred dance class at Iliff this fall, and I thank Carla Ficke for all her hard work in putting it together. So the dance goes on and on and on.....

I ask all of you for your continuing support of the SDG Rocky Mountain Chapter. Our work in dance does impact people's lives. We offer information, instruction, inspiration and encouragement in sacred dance. So keep those toes tapping.

Yours in Christ,

Ann Marie Blessin

BOARD

- President: Ann Blessin 303-377-9114
- Vice President: Joceile Nordwall 303-789-1145
- Secretary: Doris Mekelburg 970-848-2754
- Treasurer: Carolyn Lutito 303-433-1110
- Chapter Rep: Judy Rutledge 970-848-2549
- Publicity: Regina Bowman 303-238-5058
- Membership: Lesley Williams 720-859-3321
- Member-At-Large: Carole Sue Frickel 303-424-0067



David Taylor has been professionally involved in the Denver community for the past 37 years. He began choreographing in 1976 and since then has created over 100 original works. Particularly memorable for me was his work entitled "Rain Forest."

In 1979 David founded the David Taylor Dance Theatre. As Denver's premiere professional contemporary ballet company, the DTD has developed a reputation of presenting outstanding original and innovative works. Mr. Taylor has served as the company's principal choreographer. His unique creative focal point was a fascination with ancient cultures and their cosmologies, explorations into metaphysical and ritualistic archetypal dance. He received the City and County of Denver's first individual Artist Fellowship Award for Dance for his critically acclaimed collaborative work "Anasazi Dream" in 1987.

David was commissioned by Opera Colorado, The Colorado

Symphony, Denver Chamber Orchestra, The Up Close and Musical Ensemble, The National Repertory Orchestra, The Colorado Wind Ensemble, The Sacred Dance Guild Rocky Mountain Chapter and by the Ascot Dinner Theatre and Town Hall Arts Center in Littleton. In 1988 David was a guest teacher and presented a dance concert for the Sacred Dance Guild Festival.

In 1997, Mr. Taylor and his company in Denver were proud recipients of the State of Colorado's Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts. Since moving into the position of the DTD Artistic Director Emeritus in 2006, he continues to serve the DTD in an advisory capacity. He currently is adjunct faculty in the dance department of CSU, ballet master class and sacred dance teacher, dance history professor and guest speaker and choreographer throughout the Rocky Mountain region.

The SDG Rocky Mountain Chapter is proud to have David as the presenter at our upcoming workshop. The above attributes are only a few of his accomplishments as dancer, teacher, choreographer and artistic director.
Submitted by Ann Blessin



For our Board Retreat in June this year we were invited by member Rev. Betty Brown to visit La Veta (left) and dance at her church. Six board members, and some spouses, traveled to this quaint, artsy town just west of Walsenburg, nestled in a valley below the imposing Spanish Peaks, or Wahatoya. On Saturday, while spouses fished, we rehearsed and explored the town. In the eve-



Dancers (from left) Don, Ann, Carole Sue, Joceile, Lesley and Regina

ning we attended an exhibition of local artists, toured the Quilt Museum and danced with Betty and a few local dancers. On Sunday morning we danced at the United Methodist Church. We all



"The Fire of Pentecost"

agreed that the experience was memorable from the moving Pentecost dance, to the small town atmosphere where we were recognized as "the dancers", to being included and invited to the many happenings in La Veta. This small town has enough activities and happenings to fill any weekend with awe and adventure. We all hope to return to further explore the arts and get to know the area. We would like to thank Betty for her hospitality, and Marilyn who opened up her delightful 1899 *Bed and Breakfast Inn* especially for us, and was a most gracious hostess.

Mark Your Calendars!

When: November 10th, 2007

What: **Fall Workshop**

Presenter: David Taylor

Where: Iliff School of Theology

Time: 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

Registration begins at 9:30

Registration Fee \$20 members
\$25 non-members

See more information on
David Taylor above

When: May 3rd, 2008

What: Spring Sharing

Where: To be determined

Help!

We need a new, less expensive, location for our two annual events. If you know of a suitable venue, please contact a Board member.

When: July 20-25, 2007

What: **Festival 2008**

**Moving Mysteries
50th Anniversary
Festival**

Where: Connecticut College
New London, CT

Cost: Not yet available.

Check www.SacredDanceGuild.org for details as they become available.

Two Board members attended Festival 2007 and brought back reports that made us all wish we'd been there —

"Many Faiths, Many Forms; Dancing the Sacred Together" was the theme of Festival 2007 in Berkeley, CA, and the theme was carried out in morning rituals, workshops and concerts. In Carla de Sola's morning sessions, we studied a different faith tradition each day and learned movements from that tradition: Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist. One evening we watched Sufi Spinning (aka Whirling Dervishes) and even got to try that ancient meditation technique. Erika Thimey, a sacred dance pioneer, created wonderful and challenging choreography, and company members who are continuing her work shared a few of her dances in workshops and concerts - for me that was a highlight. The best part of any Festival is dancing with folks from all over - come to Connecticut College next July!

Submitted by Joceile Nordwall

5:30 am, I'm sound asleep when my bed starts rocking sideways, my eyes fly open and I clutch the sides of the bed knowing at once what it was. "Joceile," I gingerly asked my roommate, "was that an earthquake?" Thank God it was a mild one by California standards, 4.5 and the only damage was to windows at a grocery store. So it turned out to be rather exciting, but Joceile and I made sure we read the instructions on what to do during an earthquake after that. In spite of Mother Earth's shenanigans, Festival 07 was a relaxing meaningful experience. I started my mornings with a wonderful Yoga teacher who emphasized deep breathing, shared in the morning rituals where we danced and prayed for The Waters of the World, Africa, The Middle East, Asia, The Americas and Europe. I went with my heart when choosing workshops, going with Dances of the World with Mahea, African dancing with God and our Ancestors with Masankho Banda, and Drumming with Emmalyn. The evenings were filled with concerts, the banquet at the Pacific School of Religion and Dances of Universal Peace. I left Festival refreshed, happy to have renewed friendships and looking forward to next year's 50th celebration July 20-25 at Connecticut College. Watch your Journal for details. *Submitted by Judy Rutledge*



In Memoriam

Doug Adams, who died in July 2007 just after the Sacred Dance Guild Festival which was dedicated to him this year, was my friend and mentor. Under his enthusiastic encouragement I was instrumental in starting the Connie Fisher Endowment Fund for Sacred Dance in 1984.

His brief notes and letters always made me feel happy and proud throughout the years. He was the one who encouraged me to write my book, *Sacred Dance with the Physically and Mentally Handicapped*. He was such a prolific writer and I have read his *Dancing Christmas Carols*, *Congregational Dancing in Christian Worship* and *Involving the People in Dancing Worship*, just to name a few.

Doug was such a shining spirit to so many and will be greatly missed. Words are inadequate to describe the impact he has had on sacred dance, especially at Berkeley. I shall always remember him and think fondly of him. His sense of humor, his love of dance and people, all the endowment funds he started, the books he wrote, his joy of being with people and his teachings and classes at Berkeley are a flaming torch that I hold in high esteem.

St. Augustine will have no difficulty in knowing what to do with Doug. He's up there leading the dance. We love you and miss that shining spirit Doug, and thank you for making the world a better place. *Ann Blessin*

The following is part of an email that Doug sent shortly before his death

Dear Friend,

This message contains my Last Wishes and probably my last extended message to you as my energies are about gone. I wanted you to have these next two paragraphs now so you'll know at my fall memorial service that the coordinator Dr. Joan Carter and others are doing what I asked them to do with respect to these following matters. Do know that in whatever few days remain, I will enjoy reading any messages or have them read to me, but any responses from me may be brief if at all. I especially will be cheered by news of any additional gifts to the "Doug Adams Fund for Arts' Ministries, Practicality and Hospitality" at the Center for the Arts, Religion and Education (CARE) which I have specified as my memorial fund to carry on my work. As long as I have strength I will write thank you notes to all donors to that fund which

represents all that I have done and hope to see accomplished in the future.

"The Doug Adams Fund for Arts' Ministries, Practicality and Hospitality" will continue and extend my lifetime work to make connections between arts and religions to inspire and inform each other, and to broaden education so CARE helps schools and museums and congregations and other nonprofit organizations discover many ways in which they may enhance each other's efforts. My courses have often been held in art museums and at congregations beyond GTU ; and I have worked with many others to develop courses such as Arts' Ministries in New York; Arts' Ministries in Phoenix; Sacred Arts in Santa Fe; Liberation Art, teaching students how to work with homeless artists; courses working with immigrant young people with arts skills; and courses like Leading Multicultural Congregations with Arts where the arts help draw together persons of all ages, all races and all classes.

(Continued on page 4)



ROCKY MOUNTAIN CHAPTER

Editor
Lesley Williams
99 Moline St.
Aurora, CO 80010

Phone: 720-859-3321
Email: RMSDG@msn.com

***The Sacred Dance Guild
promotes sacred dance as
prayer, and as a means of
spiritual growth, connection to
the Divine, and integration of
mind, body, and spirit.***



MEMBERSHIP

Ruth Richardson, Membership Director for the
International Sacred Dance Guild
309-725-1027

Lifetime Membership — \$1,000.00

Annual Memberships:

Individual — one year \$50.00 / two years \$80.00

Regular Group Membership — \$90.00 (max 4 people)

Student (full time with ID) — \$25.00

Senior (65+) — \$35.00

Lesley Williams, Membership Director for the
Rocky Mountain Chapter
720-859-3321
RMSDG@msn.com

There is no separate local membership and you don't have to be a National member to be on our mailing list. Please let me know about changes of address, telephone numbers, email address etc. or if you are reading someone else's copy and would like to get your own. Email me if you want to be removed from our mailing list, or if you would prefer to receive newsletters by email.

We don't share our mailing list with anyone!

(Continued from page 3)

This Doug Adams Fund will carry on that work into the future. The immediate goal is to raise \$600,000 to continue many of these courses in the present and near future as taught by several adjunct faculty and to support part of a staff person's salary to develop future such connections between CARE and congregations and museums and other non-profit organizations. The long-term goal is to raise \$2.5 million for a fully endowed faculty position to carry on this work: the Doug Adams Chair in Arts' Ministries, Practicality and Hospitality at the Center for the Arts, Religion and Education, 2400 Ridge Rd, Berkeley, CA 94709. As I write this I have received the heartening word that gifts and pledges toward the near term goal of \$600,000 are nearing \$400,000, so we are already well on our way toward that first near term goal. I ask that you remember this need in the future and give as generously as possible to help this work with CARE.

Doug Adams

P.S. I must end this email with a lighter note:

You already know from past emails that I am glad to be descended from John Adams and John Quincy Adams, and you also know from how I treat genealogies in my book *The Prostitute in the Family Tree: Discovering Humor and Irony in the Bible* that I see much humor embedded there (including Jesus' genealogy in Matthew 1) as the worst of characters come out of the best and the best of characters descend from the worst, so as to undercut any sense of fatalism or determinism. My great grandfather, John Crocker Foote of Illinois, spent much time tracing genealogy and often took trips in pursuit of additional family connections. He made one trip to New York to meet the noted preacher Henry Ward Beecher as Beecher's mother was a Foote. Usually on his return home to Illinois, great grandfather bubbled over with revelations of new family connections to famous persons, but he was remarkably quiet after this return. Two weeks later a letter arrived from Beecher to my great grandmother. It read, "I enjoyed meeting your husband on his recent trip here to New York and was happy to learn that we are related through my mother, also a Foote. As I shared with your husband that he is related to me, he is also related to John Wilkes Booth." My great grandfather's interest in genealogy diminished somewhat after that time.