

People Worth Knowing

By . . . Eve Meyer and Daudee Douglas



CHARLES BLUMBERG

(Photo taken in 1962)

"Folk dancing keeps you young", says Charles Blumberg, and Charlie ought to know, he is 86. He began folk dancing at the Jewish Community Center about fifteen years ago.

For several years he was a member of the Fun Club. When they had to drop some of their dancing nights, Charlie, after *shopping around*, joined Carrousel.

High point of Charlie's dancing life was a three month Folk-Lore Tour of Europe conducted by Vern and Millie von Konsky in 1952. Millie and Vern say the tour was much more fun because Charlie was along. He participated in all the activities, was always cheerful and ready to go, and always had real fun-ideas to share. On shipboard, he began the folk dance programs by taking a lady from the audience and doing the Viennese Waltz.

While in Europe he bought two paintings; copies of Van Gogh's Self Portrait and the Mona Lisa, which he refers to as "My Lady". When the tour started home, he went on to Israel to visit relatives for a month.

Charlie was born in Latvia and came to San Francisco about 1897. He married in 1901. Going through the Earthquake and Fire of 1906 was too much, though, and he moved to Sacramento, where he changed his profession from tailor and went into business for himself cleaning and blocking hats.

He and his wife raised five children, and busy as he was, he made it a point to play handball at the YMCA and to hike as much as possible. When it was time for the children to go to college, the family moved to Berkeley.

Charlie has outlived his wife and one son. The other son, Al, is a high school teacher in Sacramento. One daughter, Sadelle, teaches grade school in Berkeley. Another daughter, Gertrude Resnick of Kentfield, is an artist.

And the other, Esther Jacobs of Oakland, is a licensed pilot and ardent square dancer.

Charlie takes complete care of himself and his apartment. Both are immaculate. He's more or less vegetarian in his cooking. He's always busy but never rushes. At home he listens to good music and reads. His children have tried to give him a television but he won't have one, *waste of time*, he says.

He swims every day at the Jewish Community Center and suns himself while helping with the gardening. He loves to putter in his Kentfield daughter's garden too. And every day he walks, "Now that President Kennedy has started the fifty-mile hikes, I'm not such a freak anymore".

In addition, Charlie folk dances at Carrousel, Fridays, at other clubs' parties, attends all the local festivals if he's in town, and never misses the Camellia Festival in Sacramento or the Woodminster performance in Oakland . . . all this by a man who broke his back in 1934!

Charlie likes the friendly people who folk dance, and he likes the music; he likes "Let's Dance", he's been a reader and subscriber for many years. And he is so happy that he still can dance.

Carrousel's members are very proud of Charlie, and now that they can no longer surprise him on his birthday, he's been put in charge of giving his own party. Charlie asks you, "*Please come to my birthday party next year, January 3, 1964*".

Charles Blumberg - on Folk-Lore Tour in Europe



*Charlie on Tour in 1952
(Partner unknown)*



On Shipboard 1952 Tour