

Dorothy Daw, 11/23/37—2/01/04

This obituary appeared in the Folk Dance Scene, the magazine of the Folk Dance Federation of California South, March, 2004.

The folk dance community has lost another cherished member. Dorothy Daw passed away Sunday, February 1, after an all-to-short struggle against cancer. Some folk dancers have no idea of the depth of this loss to our community. Maybe you think of Dorothy as a nice person and a good folk dancer. That's true, but she was so much more.

Dorothy first began dancing in a Norwegian exhibition group in Long Beach in the early 60s. She soon was dancing at Silverado, where she began teaching, and where she met her beloved Tommy. Together they were members of the Gandy Dancers. They were married January 10, 1970, and remained deeply in love for the next 34 years.

In the early years, Tommy and Dorothy enjoyed water skiing and cross-country skiing. They also spent many happy times camping and backpacking with folk-dance friends, and later, motor-homing to various folk-dance events, as well as to Yellowstone, Orlando, Carlsbad and Vancouver (where they saw a performance of Lado). Dorothy and Tommy dearly loved to travel. In addition to the usual destinations of Southern Californians, they visited England and Scotland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Poland and Dorothy's favorite, Croatia. This is not surprising since Dorothy's love of tamburitza music was legendary. In later years they enjoyed cruising through the Panama Canal and across the Atlantic on the Queen Elizabeth II.

Luckily for us Tommy did not mind sharing Dorothy with the folk dance community, which at times made huge demands on her. She was president of the Folk Dance Federation South for two terms. She was on numerous Statewide committees and co-chaired them twice. Dorothy was on the committee for the San Diego Folk Dance Conference until the camp ended. More recently she was a member of the Committees for the North/South Folk Dance Seminar and for Stockton Research.

For many years Dorothy WAS the Research and Standardization Committee for the Federation—a Committee of one. She was the reason so many dances were documented, both on paper and on video, so that they remain as the original teacher presented them. Teachers sent their notes to Dorothy, who spent endless hours formatting and correcting them, putting them into the exact vernacular we have all come to expect. If a teacher was better at teaching than notating, this involved watching videos dozens of times to help write the notes exactly. If the teacher's English was poor, or if the notes were drawn figures instead of words, this just meant a little

more challenge for Dorothy. But the final product was always meticulously prepared and available to all for the asking. Dorothy was the keeper of the Federation archives, both syllabi and videos. She was a real authority on different kinds of dance styling and also on costuming.

Dorothy was so giving of her time and energy. Her dedication to the Folk Dance Federation and to the San Pedro Balkan Dancers (where she taught weekly), her enthusiasm for folk dancing, music and ethnic costuming, her knowledge of the history of folk dancing, her warmth and friendliness—there are many reasons to mourn the passing of Dorothy Daw. She will be sorely missed by her family (husband Tommy, daughter Pauletta and granddaughter Charla) and by the entire folk dance community.

By Laura Bremer

Dorothy Daw Celebration of Life, May 2

The event will be held on Sunday, May 2, 2004 at Veselo Selo in Fullerton. It will start with a potluck at 1 pm, a tamburitza concert with the Yeseta Bros. at 2 pm, and dancing from 3-6 pm. Wearing of costumes in Dorothy's honor is encouraged. We will also be having a tribute time and a possible performance by Dorothy's old performing group. Additionally, there will be a Memory Book for people to sign and write comments if they wish. I am soliciting comments via e-mail or snail mail from anyone who wants to be included but cannot attend. —*Laura Bremer*
