

Returning to the United States, she attended New York University and graduated with a bachelor of science degree in education. Later, in Philadelphia, she became activities director of the International Institute, now the Nationalities Service Center, a United Way agency.

In 1975 Temple University awarded her a master's degree in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages), a study which she pursued in connection with her work at NSC as co-ordinator of their English program.

Dancing has been Mrs. Gurzau's lifelong avocation. She has taught classes in folk dances of many lands and started several groups. Especially dear to her are the dances of Italy, the country from which her ancestors came.

In 1977 Mrs. Gurzau was assigned by NSC to a special project to stimulate and keep alive the folk arts and culture of Italy among Italian-Americans and others in the Philadelphia area and vicinity and integrate them into the ever-evolving fabric of American culture.

The following dances appear in her book *Folk Dances, Costumes and Customs of Italy*, unless otherwise noted, and are presented here with permission.)

ITALIAN FOLK DANCES

BALLO SARDO (or BALLO TONDO)

Ballo Sardo (Bahl-lo Sahr-do), or Ballo Tondo (Bahl-lo ton-do), is a dance from Sardinia. Although there are few Sardinians living in the United States, Mrs. Gurzau was able to locate Mrs. Julia Nuscis and her family, from Pittsburgh, from whom she learned this dance.

Sardinia is the only region of Italy that still has a line dance similar to the ones of the Balkan countries and the Near East. It is called Ballo Sardo, Sardinian dance, or Ballo Tondo, round dance. We know it was danced in pre-Christian times because Homer, the Greek poet, mentions it and has Ulysses marvel at the agility of the dancers of the island.

It is often danced by couples standing side by side in open circle formation, but also in an open circle or spiral with no partners. In old[en] times a man and a woman who were not married were not allowed to hold or touch hands. In some parts of the island it is danced rather sedately, often to the singing of three or more people standing in the middle of a circle. In other parts of Sardinia it is very lively and [is] danced to the music of the launeddas, the goatskin bagpipe or, more recently, the accordion; and in the absence of all of these to the ringing of church bells.

The launeddas is a primitive instrument, made of

canes of varying lengths, separate one from the other, which the player interchanges, depending on the sound desired . . . I am told that because some of the pipes are quite long, when there is much excitement the musicians stand in a corner facing away from the dancers in order to avoid the possibility of accidents.

There is no bouncing or springing in the Ballo Sardo; it is always done close to the ground, almost giving the effect of skating; however, when the music becomes lively, the men will kick higher and add a little fancy footwork. The women continue to dance smoothly in a very dignified manner, as becomes their regal-looking costumes. A few notes of the music of his favorite dance is all a Sardinian needs to get up and dance.

The figures follow each other according to the music and to the whim of the leading couple. However, from observing the Sardinian people dance, a pattern similar to the one described below seemed to emerge.

Record: Folkraft No. 1407 B

Formation: Open circle composed of couples or individuals facing center. A couple may be composed of 2 women or 2 men. *Leading couple is at left.*

Position: Partners stand side by side, very erect and serious, shoulder touching shoulder, arms straight down holding nearest hand. Occasionally all hold

San Antonio College Dancers. Photo by James F. Bartlett



hands in the open circle, but more often just partners hold hands.

Pattern

Introductory Figure

Dancers move rhythmically in place to the music for 12 counts (4 to a meas). The movement comes from a springing motion in the legs. At the 9th count, the leading couple raises the arm and hand, holding partner straight forward; all others do the same; then on the 11th count all arms are lowered rapidly to indicate the beginning of the dance.

Figure 1

Music A Throughout the dance the group inches gradually to the left, clockwise.

Step on R foot (count 1), point with L foot in front of R (count 2), step on L foot (count 3), point with R in front of L (count 4). Repeat 5 more times (meas 2 to 6, counting 24).

Figure 2

Music B Step on R foot (count 1), point with L in front of R (2), then, moving to the left with L foot, step-together-step (count 3 & 4), feet hardly leaving the ground. Repeat 5 more times (meas 7 to 18, counting 24). Music accelerates.

Figure 3

Music C All moving toward the center of the circle & Repeat and back. Walk forward on R foot (count 1), L (2), R (3), point with L in front of R (4); step to the left on L foot (5), swing R foot across the L (6); back, away from center with R foot (7), L (8), R (9), point with L foot in front of R (10) step on L (11), swing R foot to the left (12), (meas 13 to 18 & Repeat). Repeat this figure 3 more times.

Note: Each time this figure is started again, the R foot, which has just swung toward the left, makes a little circular motion in the air while the shoulders and upper part of the body help by moving forward momentarily.

Figure 4

Same as figure 2 except usually faster.

Music D When the music accelerates, the men enliven their dancing by lifting their leg higher and tilting foot instead of just pointing or

swinging leg. Girls continue to dance close to the ground, smoothly.

Repeat as many times as desired.

To join the circle or change position, couples often take several small slides in one direction or another in time with the music.

IL CODIGLIONE

A quadrille is generally a dance with 4 couples and sometimes 12 or 16 couples. It often has a series of figures which the dancers memorize and there is no need for a caller. The cotillion, on the other hand, needs a caller, or *caposala*. He is free to arrange the figures in whatever order he wishes and to adapt them to the ability and liking of the group.

It seems that quadrilles and codigliones have been danced all over Italy for many centuries—some say as far back as the time of the Romans—by both the peasants and the upper classes. It is recorded that at the time of the golden era of the Medici family in Florence, during the 15th and 16th centuries, there was much reason for rejoicing and that there was much dancing among all classes of people. When Catherine de Medici married King Henry II of France, she and her entourage brought the quadrille to France, where it was introduced at court. It met with great favor and it promptly was given French calls. It later came back to Italy with a new foreign flavor. (Studies were made by Anton Giulio Bragaglia and presented at the International Folk Music Conference in Venice in 1949.)

The codiglione, with any number of couples in a large circle, lends itself well to our folk dance parties because, having a caller, it can be adapted readily to the ability of the group. It can be made very simple for new dancers and elaborate for more experienced dancers. The speed also can be adjusted, young people will use a light running step, or even a skip, while older people prefer a walking step. There is no particular order that one must follow.

ITALIAN QUADRILLE

The following dance can be done to the same music as the codiglione, but it is a quadrille (a square) done with four couples. It is from Vyts Beliajus' book *Dance and Be Merry*, volume II, from which most of the Italian quadrilles done by folk dance groups around the country seem to have come. The dance has many more figures than those given here, but the more interesting ones have been selected.

The phrases of the music are all eight measures in length; no particular phrase goes with any particular