

הקשר היהודי שלך

Your Jewish Connection

Brought to you by the Lifelong Learning Committee – *Written by Linda S Trapasso*

Happy Feet

Don't you just love to dance? I've danced since I was a young girl, taking ballet and tap lessons. As a young adult, I would dance at concerts and always at weddings. I eventually moved to country line dancing. A few years ago I discovered ballroom dancing. I don't dance much now, but I'm very happy when I am dancing.

I'm thinking about trying contra dancing. The other type of dance I love? Jewish dance!



How many kinds of Jewish dance are there? Well, there is Israeli folk dancing and [Yiddish or Klezmer dance](#). (Most of us lump these into the same category.) Did you know that there is Yemenite dancing based on hopping in place? Or that in Russia and France, many Jews were responsible for ballet? In the US, the list includes Jerome Robbins, Anna Sokolow, Arthur Murray, and Lincoln Kirstein (one

of the founders of The School of American Ballet). Moreover, King Juan Carlos I of Spain honored an Israeli flamenco dancer for training generations of flamenco dancers in a Tel Aviv studio.

([Wikipedia](#))

The Romanian Jewish dancer Baruch Agadati introduced [the hora](#), a circle dance, in Israel. In



1924, he worked together with a composer and songwriter to choreograph a show performed by the Ohel Theater Company, which toured the pioneer settlements of the Jezreel Valley. *Horah Agadati*, as the dance was known, became an instant success, is danced now throughout the diaspora, and often is danced to the music of *Hava Nagila*.

According to [MyJewishLearning](#), Israeli folk dance was part of an effort to increase Israel's folk culture and was a way to bolster



national identity. One of these dances is *Mayim Mayim*, created in the late 1930s when water was discovered at *Kibbutz Na'an*. Many Eastern European folk dances were given a Zionist twist to become Israeli folk dances. The [Yivo Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe](#) has an interesting article on dance divided between traditional dance and theatrical dance. Unfortunately, folk dance is not as popular now in Israel as it was, and Israelis are turning to more [contemporary forms of dance](#).

However, there is still time to dance!

The [MIT Folk Dance Club](#) has Israeli dancing at the Jewish Community Day School in Watertown, MA, and information on other dancing and dance groups.

Note that The Israel Folkdance Festival of Boston is March 10, 2019.

[Information on Israeli folk dance around Boston](#) has many links, but be sure to call to verify events. And don't forget to check out the videos on [YouTube](#) of Israeli dance (just search on Israeli dance). After watching some of those videos, I bet your feet will be happy!

Alan J Green, MD

Certified Mohel

מוהל מוסמך



22 Chester Street, Nashua NH 03064

603-440-3444

www.mohelnh.com