

## **A Brief History of The Living Tradition (1982 to 2019)**

By Patty McCollom, President of The Living Tradition,  
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December 21, 1994 was the official launch date for The Living Tradition as a non-profit organization, but the organization actually started 12 years earlier. In 1982, Carolyn Russell started hosting informal concerts and dances at her home in Garden Grove, California. Many of us remember going to Carolyn's house on warm summer evenings to hear talented performers and to do contra dancing on the patio.

Since the informal inception of The Living Tradition in 1982, to this writing in 2019, there have been four Concert Coordinators. Carolyn Russell was the first Concert Coordinator and Dance Coordinator from 1982 until 1998, when she retired from active involvement in the organization and moved to Lucerne Valley. At that point, Steve and Michele Dulson took over as Concert Coordinators. After eleven years, they turned over the Concert Coordinator position to Gary and Terri Trobridge, who had previously assisted as volunteers for a concert series in Texas. Gary and Terri managed The Living Tradition concerts for seven years from 2010 through 2016. At the end of 2016, they turned the concert series coordination over to Ron Bloom and Carol Schryver Bloom, who are the current Concert Coordinators.

There have been four Dance Coordinators from 1982 to this writing in 2019. The first Coordinator was Carolyn Russell, followed by Rich Di Marco. When Rich moved out of the area, Lynn Ricketts became the third Dance Coordinator until a job transfer took her to Florida in 2016. At that point, I, Patty McCollom, took over as Dance Coordinator, and I continue in that position.

An outgrowth of the monthly concerts and dances was the request by local musicians to have a monthly music jam where beginners as well as seasoned pros could make music together in an informal setting. To my knowledge, there have been only two Jam Coordinators: Emil Olguin and myself, Patty McCollom. The jams meet for a couple of hours prior to the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday contra dance and have become quite popular. These jams feature everything from Celtic music to Blues to Old-Time American music.

Many thanks to all of the volunteers who have worked tirelessly on behalf of The Living Tradition, so we can continue providing high-quality concerts, dances, and jams to our community.

## The Living Tradition Timeline

Year	Event
1982	The Living Tradition founded by Carolyn Russell. Concerts and dances held at her home in Garden Grove, CA.
1994	The Living Tradition officially qualified as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization on Dec. 21, 1994.
1996	First newsletter of The Living Tradition was published March 1996. It was written by Carolyn Russell and Ruth Bailey.
1998	Merger of the Folk Music Society of Orange County and The Living Tradition.
1998	Carolyn Russell moved to Lucerne Valley and ceases direct involvement with The Living Tradition.
1999	Jan. 1, 1999: first concert at the Anaheim Community Center. It presented a showcase of many local bands.
1999 - 2009	Steve and Michele Dulson served as the Concert Coordinators.
1999	Music jams became a regular monthly event at the Anaheim Community Center, led by Emil Olguin and Patty McCollom.
1999 - 2010	Rich Di Marco served as the Dance Coordinator.
2010 - 2016	Contra Dances reduced to once per month after closing the Bellflower and El Segundo dances due to financial constraints.
2010 - 2016	Gary and Terri Trobridge served as the Concert Coordinators.
2010 - 2016	Lynn Ricketts served as the Dance Coordinator.
2017 - present	Patty McCollom serves as the Dance Coordinator.
2017 - present	Ron Bloom and Carol Schryver serve as the Concert Coordinators.

## Dance and Concert Locations

- Carolyn Russell's Garden Grove Home (dances and concerts)
- Anaheim Arts Center on Harbor Blvd. (Saturday dances; hall subsequently torn down)
- Ball Junior High in Anaheim (Saturday dances and concerts)
- Woman's Club of Bellflower (Friday dances)
- Rebekah Hall in El Segundo (Friday dances)
- Anaheim Downtown Community Center (Saturday dances, concerts, and jams)

## Sources

Dulson, S., Romano, B., & Romano, J. "Featured Organization-The Living Tradition" [PDF file]. *Folkworks* January/February 2001: p. 13. Web. <<http://folkworks.org/FWIssues/FWv01n01/FWv01n01.pdf>>.

S. Dulson, personal communication, Aug. 5, 2019.

L. Ricketts, personal communication, Nov. 11, 2018.

T. Trobridge, personal communication, March 30, 2019.