

Cecchetti Societies

International Newsletter

1996

This is the second International Newsletter of Cecchetti Societies worldwide

participating countries

**Australia, Canada, Great Britain, Italy, Malta, New Zealand, Southern Africa
and the United States of America**

The news items have been shown in alphabetical order of the countries from whence they came

This second edition of the International Newsletter has been collated by Great Britain

News from The Cecchetti Society of Australia Inc

First of all many thanks to Mary Jane Duckworth, and The Cecchetti Society in London for taking over the gathering of information for this newsletter for 1996. I hope she enjoys the experience as much as we did.

The Cecchetti Society in Australia has been making steady progress towards public awareness of the name Cecchetti, the method and the Society here in Australia. Although we are the longest established organisation for the teaching of Classical Ballet in Australia, preceding the RAD by about 2 years, we are quite small in comparison with that august organisation, and our title - Cecchetti - is not self explanatory as is The Royal Academy of Dancing.

We must thank Laurence and Miriam Adams of Dance Collection Danse in Canada for assisting us to increase public awareness by publishing the marvellous book on the maestro and his family. We are very proud of the book, and have been marketing it to as many people as possible, including our secondary and tertiary dance educational institutions so that students of all dance styles can learn about him and his (and our) heritage. We also hope for an article on this book in our National dance magazine - Dance Australia.

The Australian Ballet School, which is based in Melbourne, has initiated a 3 year teachers course as from 1996. We were delighted when Miss Gailene Stock, the director of the school, advised us that the Cecchetti method was to be one of the three international methods which would be studied during the three year course. The other two methods are R.A.D. and Vaganova. Teachers emerging from this course will have an excellent range of techniques on which to call.

Still on education, we are delighted that Cecchetti students who are attending The Victorian College of the Arts in Melbourne, will now have the opportunity to take Cecchetti classes "on campus" at the college. Distinguished Cecchetti teachers in Victoria will teach these classes. We hope to have this practice also introduced into our Queensland Dance School of Excellence during 1996.

We are delighted that we are to have Miss Diane Van Schoor as our international examiner here in Australia during 1996. She has also been invited, with her husband Roland Thomson, to be the special guest of our annual Congress, which will be held on July 13th and 14th in Adelaide in South Australia (the home of the Barossa Valley which produces some of the best wines in the world).

During 1996 we will be printing and distributing a new Cecchetti brochure, with some marvellous photographs and promotional information. It has been on the agenda for such a long time, and we are very pleased that it is finally going to the printers.

Can we all consider an inaugural meeting of key administration personnel during 1997 to discuss an International Cecchetti Congress and Ballet Competition. It has been suggested that this might take place in Canada, so let us all think about it.

We send our best wishes to all the Cecchetti communities all over the world.

News from The Cecchetti Society Canadian Branch

It has been a stimulating time of travel, of plans bearing fruit and others being born.

Visitors to Canada: Shfela Darby, Richard Glasstone, Audrey King, Gillian Robinson, Diane van Schoor and Faith de Villiers. Visitors are always welcome at the National Ballet School in Toronto: please phone ahead if you wish to visit.

Travelling Canadian members: Joyce Shietze visited England last summer, enjoying the Cecchetti Summer School at Chichester immensely. Carol Behnan, Deborah Guibord-Stay, Cathy Jarry, Peter Moir, Carol Lynn Taylor and Elaine Werner Hutchison attended the Cecchetti Course in Boca Raton, Florida. Elaine Werner Hutchison taught at the Cecchetti Course in Hartford CT in December. Sheila Kennedy visited Plattsburgh, NY, Hamden, CT, Sarasota, FL, St. Croix, USVI, Willoughby, Ohio and Shreveport, LA, on the US spring examination tour. Many of our members and their students are making plans to attend the International Summer Course in Valencia, California, in August '96, where the faculty will include Ross Alley, Franco De Vita, Richard Glasstone and Diane van Schoor.

Viva Cecchetti: As the Cecchetti Historical Photographic Exhibit has been called in Canada, is being enjoyed by many wherever it is shown. After months of preparation across the country, it arrived in Regina, Saskatchewan, in -25°C temperatures. It coincided with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet Company's season there and it inspired many groups of school children to think more about dance, from history right into their own classrooms. It next travelled to Vancouver, B.C. where it was displayed for a month in the beautiful new Public Library with a few of the photographs across the road in the Queen Elizabeth Theatre where the Royal Winnipeg Ballet Company and Ballet B.C. were performing during that time. The exhibition was opened by André Lewis, the Artistic Director of the RWBC. On hearing some quotes on dance training that were very pertinent to the present day, André Lewis wanted to know where they had come from - the answer was, of course, the Manual. In Montréal, where spaghetti dinners, 'Viva Cecchetti' aprons and sweat shirts raised funds, the exhibit was combined with a collection of photographs from the area's own rich ballet history, including a collage showing the early days of Les Grands Ballet Canadiens contributed by Madame Chiriareff. Many Cecchetti roots were discovered. Then on to Ontario, namely Ottawa, and two locations in Toronto; to Winnipeg, Manitoba, and finally to St. Albert in Alberta for 6 weeks in August. It will have travelled 8,350 miles by truck and air while in Canada. We would like to thank the Italian communities in Canada for their tremendous enthusiasm and support. We are most grateful to all involved in Italy in assembling this very special collection. On viewing the exhibit, one feels very privileged to have had such an intimate glimpse of the past. It is an inspiration and a reminder to all who teach the Method of the versatility, the humour and the humanity of Maestro Cecchetti. Ripples from this exhibition will reach far and wide.

Cecchetti - A Ballet Dynasty: The result of months of work, the highly successful publication in English of Livia Brillarelli's book is being enjoyed by many people. Over a thousand copies as well as all 250 of the limited hard covers have been sold. Our sincere thanks go to Raffaello Bencini for his wonderful work on the original photographs, Brenda Hamlyn Bencini, Lawrence and Miriam Adams of Dance Collection Danse Educational Publications and to Deborah Oslansky for her translation and delightful pronunciation guide cassette. We would like to congratulate Lawrence and Miriam for receiving the Craftsmen's Society Design Award for the overall book design and the printers, Ampersand, who received an award for the quality of the printing.

Cecchetti Days: Cecchetti days have been held in Alberta, taught by Christine Richardson, in B.C. Ontario and Québec. In Toronto the Grades were reviewed by Sheila Kennedy in permanent 'pas de chat' position, caused by a broken collar bone. There was a large attendance of teachers from Ontario and Québec who enjoyed it as a social, as well as a business event. Next came Gillian Robinson's visit that passed all too quickly. Approximately 150 students and teachers were there to delight in her musicality, artistry, quality of movements and humour. She emphasised dance quality, the quiet calm and balance of the Major work, the fine nuances of the port de bras in the Adages and most particularly finding finesse in all movements quick and slow. Our Ontario Representative, Pat Bradshaw and Secretary, Susan Thorn are to be congratulated on another excellently organised and attended day for young students studying the grades in March. The teaching faculty included Carol Behnan, Sheona Bell-Williston, Carina Bomers, Deborah Bowes, Beverley Feder, Mary Goodhew, Candice Helm, Paula Ramsay and a team of fine musicians. Theatricality, musicality and eye focus

were again highlighted as essential ingredients. The students worked extremely hard and were very well supported by their teachers.

Cecchetti Summer Course: This will be held in Ottawa, June 25-29 '96, where the focus will be enrichment for the Grades, as well as unset, Advanced and Diploma classes. The faculty will include Jean Geddis, Glenn Gilmour and Mary Goodhew.

The Margaret Saul Scholarship: A professional development award, has been awarded twice since the last newsletter. The 1995 recipient was Caroline Sinden Udeschini, from Sudbury Ontario, to attend a Summer Course in Red Deer, Alberta, with guest teachers Diane van Schoor and Christine Richardson. The 1996 award goes to Carol Behnan, from Montréal, Québec, to attend the Course this year in Valencia, California.

NBS Teacher Training Programme: NBS Teacher Training Programme welcomed an international array of former professional dancers to their programme this year: Carina Coldevin, from Sweden who trained at the NBS before returning home to dance in various companies including musical theatre; Eva Draw, a graduate of the Bolshoi Ballet School, Principal dancer in Russia and in the Ontario Ballet Theatre; Lindsay Fischer, a graduate of the NBS and former principal dancer with the Dutch National and New York City Ballet Companies; Kasumi Hayashi, a graduate of the Beijing Ballet School and a professional dancer in China and Japan; Renana Peleg, from Israel who danced in Switzerland. All will have taken their Cecchetti majors up to Advanced and their Associate exams this Spring before graduating from the programme.

Company News: In May 1995, the National Ballet of Canada did a Triple Ashton Bill. 'Monotones', 'Dream' and 'Month in the Country' were exquisitely danced by several casts. Anthony Dowell had rehearsed all three ballets at every level from corps to ballerinas. It was superbly schooled with wonderful detail. The whole programme was full of Cecchetti lines and subtleties. Their use of épaulement and speed of footwork in 'Dream' and 'Month' were quite breathtaking. In December the Company's new 'Nutcracker', choreographed by James Kudelka, had its World Première. The 104 NBS students, aged 7-19, will always remember the excitement of working directly with the choreographer on a brand new piece. The costumes by Santo Loquasto dazzled the audiences. Early in 1996 we received news that James Kudelka would succeed Reid Anderson as Artistic Director of the NBOC. James Kudelka has made his mark as a choreographer since 1983 and is renowned for his ability to take classical form and give it a modern twist. We eagerly look forward to seeing the direction in which he will lead the Company. We are very happy to have had his permission to enclose this quote from him in this newsletter.

"My Cecchetti background, given to me during my years at the National Ballet School in Toronto, has never left me. The simplicity of its syllabus has combined easily with the different contemporary modes of dance expression which have informed my choreography. When in doubt, I always return to the beauty and simplicity of fifth position, which is indeed the most efficient starting place of all that is beautiful in ballet.

Dancing can be about anything and my use of technique has always been to illuminate human foibles. I am happy to have been enlightened myself by the language of classical ballet as taught to me through lessons of Enrico Cecchetti. I hope he would be happy to see where his lessons have lead us" James Kudelka.

Improvisation Tapes: Two of our very talented musicians, Pat Mearns and Craig Wingrove, have composed a tape for Class Examination improvisations, 28 short pieces, Pre-Primary - Standard 5. We will be experimenting with it and hope to have as much fun with it as I am told Pat and Craig had making it.

Applied Anatomy and Physiology Correspondence Course: Currently there are 30 teachers in Canada and the USA at various stages of the course, working at their own speed and, we are told, enjoying it.

Grades: A committee of examiners was set up to receive input from teachers on how the new Grades are working in Canada. The decisions are presently being finalised.

Administration and Projects: A Canadian Members Handbook has been produced, to try to keep information together and easily up-dated. Projects in mind for the future are CD's and Internet. We have got quite a few interested advisors on Internet, and letters from anyone wishing to offer advice or suggestions will be very welcome. We have a seminar for teachers coming up in Toronto in November on business administration: how to make a studio pay! Another area we are becoming involved in is working with Dance Collection Danse, Archives to find ways of preserving a record of our present, to be of practical use to our members in the future. And, of course the ongoing challenge of making artistic and technical enrichment accessible to all our teachers and students across the whole country.

A big thank you: A big thank you to Mary Goodhew for all the great work she has done in the two years she has been in Canada. We have loved working with her and hope she will visit us as often as possible.

News from Malta

It is now 30 years since teaching of the Cecchetti Method was started in Malta by Tanya Bayona and everyone is delighted that Malta is included in the International Newsletter for the first time. The Princess Poutiatine Academy of Ballet, teaching Russian Ballet, was started 55 years ago and then in 1981 Tanya Bayona joined with Princess Poutiatine to form a new Academy under the name Tanya Bayona Princess Poutiatine Academy of Ballet.

The first Cecchetti Method classical ballet examinations were held in Malta in 1966 and the work has progressed steadily over the last thirty years to reach the current very professional standard, much of which has been due to the inspiration and guidance of Tanya Bayona.

There are now six Ballet Schools in Malta in which the Cecchetti Method is taught, all of which enter students annually for I.S.T.D. Cecchetti examinations ranging from Pre-primary to Advanced, and including qualifying status examinations for teachers.

News from The Cecchetti Society of Great Britain

Videos and music The past year has seen the successful completion of the videos of the Grades Syllabus for children. The first covers Grades I, II and III and the second covers Grades IV and V. The sales of the video of the Elementary Syllabus have been higher than expected and the demand continues. The supplement of additional music for the Grades following the recent revisions is now available, although the original music is still acceptable.

Intermediate Syllabus The Cecchetti Society in London feels that some revisions are required to the Intermediate Syllabus. The main concerns are to strengthen the barre and pointe sections. It is essential that the views of all Cecchetti Societies are taken into account as it is important that any additions and alterations are fully supported world-wide. We hope we now have all your comments and suggestions and can start discussions during the Summer..

Examinations So far this year six Maestro Cecchetti Diplomas have been awarded in Great Britain in addition to all those awarded to candidates from other countries. It is very encouraging to have so many candidates for this examination and to see them performing this beautiful work. It is very encouraging to see that there are more candidates in the pipeline.

Dance competitions, awards and scholarships The Mabel Ryan Awards held in London have now been running for 47 years and it is very encouraging that very successful regional versions of these awards are now being held in the South East, Exeter in the South West and Mansfield in the Midlands. The Cecchetti Scholars classes available to specially selected young dancers have continued in London. With younger children in mind Cecchetti Junior Associate classes for 8 - 11 year olds are to be held in London from September this year. At student level the Cyril Beaumont Scholarship for a student at the Royal Ballet School and the Cecchetti Scholarship, which is open to students studying the Cecchetti Method at other professional schools, both attracted large entries.

The Cecchetti Centre Classes are held regularly on Saturdays at the Cecchetti Centre which is based at the London Studio Centre. Courses are arranged at Easter and in the Summer. These classes and courses provide a valuable opportunity for students and teachers in Great Britain and from overseas to learn and check on major syllabus work and to help them prepare for examinations.

Obituary Many members will be sad to learn of the death in January this year of Eileen Langman. She was a much respected figure in the UK and many teachers from overseas visited her to learn from her. She will be greatly missed.

Professional dancers Two young Cecchetti trained dancers from the Birmingham Royal Ballet, Jessica Clarke and Kevin O'Hare enchanted the audience at the I.S.T.D. Congress in March this year when they presented the Act II pas de deux and mime scene from La fille mal gardee. They brought a touch of the theatre to an excellent day of student classes covering many dance disciplines and were the very essence of all student's aspirations.

I.S.T.D. Imperial Award The Cecchetti Society in Great Britain was honoured by the I.S.T.D. when our Chairman, Mary Jane Duckworth, was presented with the Imperial Gold Medal Award for her outstanding services for the Cecchetti Society and the I.S.T.D. It is interesting to note that when the Award was inaugurated in 1956 the first recipient was Nora Roche, then a member of the Cecchetti Society Committee. Miss Roche was given the award in recognition of her hard work for the Cecchetti Society during a two month tour of South Africa when she examined 1400 candidates as well as teaching. Since then there have been four Awards to members of the Cecchetti Society, Cyril Beaumont (1961), Lucie Saronova (1963), Diana Barker (1975) and Barbara Geoghegan (1992) - and now we have Mary-Jane Duckworth. It has been an exciting year for us.

Abbey Life Cup The Cecchetti Society also received this cup which is awarded to the Faculty of the I.S.T.D. which has the highest percentage growth in examination entries during the year.

Cecchetti Society Day - London 28 July 1996 On this special day in the Cecchetti year we aim to have visitors from abroad as well as many as possible of our members from Great Britain and give them an opportunity to meet talk and observe. A very interesting day has been planned and we are so pleased that Monica Mason has agreed to present her Sleeping Beauty mime lecture with the assistance of Sandra Conley from the Royal Ballet and Giannandrea Poesio.

A Ballet Dynasty This beautiful book by Livia Brillarelli has been available in Great Britain for some months and our thanks must go to Lawrence and Miriam Adams of Dance Collection Danse of Toronto for this excellent publication.

Forward to 1997 We are looking forward to hosting the Cecchetti Photographic exhibition in London, at present it is on an extensive tour of the USA and Canada.

News from Associazione Nazionale Coreutica Enrico Cecchetti in Italy

The last year has been one of many changes for A.N.C.E.C. Sadly, in the autumn of 1995, Brenda Hamlyn decided to retire from her position as President of A.N.C.E.C. It is thanks to Miss Hamlyn that the work of the Cecchetti Society was introduced to Italy, with the founding of the Hamlyn School, nearly 40 years ago. We are very happy that Miss Hamlyn has accepted the position of Honorary President on the unanimous request of the members of A.N.C.E.C. Brenda Hamlyn's place, as President, has been taken by Franco de Vita.

One of the exciting events to have taken place in 1996 was the first International Summer School to be organised by A.N.C.E.C. Held in the spacious studios of 'Let's Dance' in Reggio Emilia, the course proved to be a great success. Teachers and students from Italy, England, Scotland, Ireland, America, South Africa and Belgium participated in the classes held by such distinguished teachers as Alla Osipenko, Richard Glasstone, Victoria Chappell, Patrizia Comini, Ross Alley, Raymond Lukens and Franco De Vita. We are hoping to repeat the course in the summer of 1997.

A.N.C.E.C. continues to provide courses for both teachers and students including: a course on the structure and work of the foot and lower leg, stage make-up and lighting, classical variations and a very special course with Bella Rachinskaya. A teacher at the Vaganova Academy for fourteen years, and at La Scala for six years. Miss Rachinskaya left us overawed by her virtuosity, quality of detail and love for her art. The Masterclass for Advanced students and the teachers session on the first year of study of the Vaganova Method showed, once again, that the similarities both of technique and quality far outweigh the differences in our two methods. We intend to work closely with Bella Rachinskaya in the future.

The classes for the 'Junior' members of A.N.C.E.C., which are held throughout Italy, continue to be increasingly popular involving hundreds of students and children each year. Many of these 'Junior' members will end the scholastic year taking part in the 6th Festival. 'An Evening for Enrico Cecchetti' and the 5th Competition 'Rya Teresa Legnani' to be held at Grassina near Florence. We are happy to announce that two previous winners of the competition, Evelina Ricci and Manuela Mazzel, are now dancing with the Hartford Ballet Company in Connecticut, America.

Future plans for A.N.C.E.C. include our own Newsletter, the first edition of which will go into print in September 1996.

News from the Cecchetti Society of New Zealand

Our very best wishes to all those in Cecchetti Societies throughout the world. Sorry we do not have a contribution for you all to see this year but rest assured we will be included in the next edition.

News from the Cecchetti Society of Southern Africa

The Cecchetti National Development Fund (C.N.D.F.)

The Cecchetti National Development Fund has been instituted by the Council of Management and it is hoped that members and branches will be encouraged to become involved in fund-raising projects. The purpose of the fund is to generate income in order to finance the promotion of the Society via the media and in other ways, and also to provide scholarships for students and teachers. Last but not least, it is hoped to work towards funding a building for a Cecchetti Centre. In only three months this appeal has already won support from our members.

The Cecchetti Dedication Award - 1995

The Council of Management was proud to present this award to Faith de Villiers on 25th February when her family and friends, plus many former pupils, gathered to pay tribute to her.

A loyal supporter of the Cecchetti Method and the Society, which she chaired for 26 years, Faith de Villiers is one of the corner-stones of dance in South Africa, both at amateur and professional level. Born in Johannesburg, she began her Cecchetti training there and was later awarded a bursary to study in London. During her professional career as a dancer, ballet mistress and choreographer, she was responsible for much of the development of professional ballet in the then Transvaal and Natal. It was through her endeavours that the government funded Pact Ballet Company was created in 1963, a company which she directed until 1968.

Faith de Villiers was also responsible for the formation, with Dr. Dorothy Blair, of the Wits University education department's school of art and ballet now the National School of the Arts. Another tremendous achievement.

Now 75 years of age, her energy and vitality undiminished, she is still active as a local and international examiner, coach and adjudicator. In May a full examining tour of Canada is in prospect. The holiday cruise which follows this is more than deserved.

Members on the move

Several members supported the Summer School in Italy last year. It was wonderful to have a large South African contingent of teachers and students there and it is hoped that South Africans will continue to travel and share in the wealth of Cecchetti work around the world. The Rand being as it is at present I somehow have my doubts as to the length of the travel list for the immediate future!!!

Diane van Schoor will teach at the Australian Cecchetti Congress in Adelaide during July and remain in the country to examine all levels, covering all the States. She will also be a guest teacher on the faculty of the Cecchetti Society of USA at their Summer School to be held in California.

Summer School - 1996

The Council of Management will present a Summer School in Johannesburg from 10 - 17 December. The International faculty comprises Mavis Staines, Artistic Director of The National Ballet School, Toronto, Canada and Dennis Nahat, Artistic Director, Cleveland Ballet, Ohio, USA. The proposed Summer School will revolve around free classical theatre classes and will offer tuition in the Tests, Grade and Major Syllabi.

News from Cecchetti Council of America

Here, in the United States, we are experiencing a Cecchetti renaissance. The Cecchetti Council of America, active for 57 years, was once known only to those who taught the method. Now, we see the name Cecchetti everywhere. Each month in one of our dance publications, (*Dance Magazine, Dance Teacher Now, Dance Pages, Dancer*) there is some mention of Cecchetti; the method, the man, the exhibit, the various organisations. We, of course, are enjoying the publicity and appreciate the recognition.

The Cecchetti Council of America consists of fifteen committees that hold exam sessions (Standard through Diploma), workshops, seminars and teacher refreshers throughout the year. It is because of their active support and dedication to quality that the Cecchetti Council of America has been able to continually serve its 550 teacher members. Last year in the United States we examined 3,872 students and 120 teachers.

The Cecchetti Council of America is delighted and proud of the successful collaboration between the CCA and the Cecchetti Society Inc. USA which brought the Historical Cecchetti Photographic Exhibit to the United States. We are grateful for the efforts of Rose Marie Floyd and Sheila Darby who spear-headed this venture and made it happen. The exhibit is still touring the country and should return to Italy in 1997.

Rose Marie Floyd has also been busy working to complete her video which is a tribute to the Cecchetti method. It should be available soon.

The Cecchetti Council of America's International Summer School is thriving and celebrating its 42nd anniversary. Our first seminar, held in 1954 in Detroit, remained there for 11 years before being moved to Michigan State University in Lansing, Michigan. After 25 years at Michigan State University, the Cecchetti Council of America changed the location of the seminar and moved it to the School of Cleveland Ballet in Cleveland, Ohio where it was hosted for three consecutive years. The founder and artistic director, Dennis Nahat, is a former student of CCA examiners Kay Bliss and Enid Ricardeau. Although we enjoyed the association with the Cleveland Ballet and the wonderful facilities, we felt that we were not addressing the needs of our youngest attendees.

In 1995, we found a small college town on Lake Michigan which, so far, has proven ideal. We are finding the atmosphere and facilities of Hope College in Holland, Michigan near perfect. To maintain a connection with the Cleveland Ballet, we invited Lynn and Chris Tabor to be on our faculty. Both are former company members and Lynn Brennan Tabor, a former Cecchetti student, trained with Charter Board member Sylvia Hamer. Also on staff is Kimmary Williams, who holds the Diploma Certificate, is a former member of Twyla Tharp Dance Company, Connecticut Ballet and Halby Dance Theatre and was a student of CCA examiner Pamela Moore and Helen Moore. Character classes are taught by Viktor Yeliohen, on visa from the Ukraine. We enrich our program with modern, jazz, mime and improvisation. In 1995, master classes were given by Tony Randazzo, principal dancer with San Francisco Ballet and the son of CCA examiner Marjorie Randazzo.

The National Executive Board and Board of Examiners are honoured to have Cara Drower join our teaching faculty again this year. In addition to the full syllabi, we look forward to offering classes in creative movement, massage therapy, choreography and homeopathic medicine for injuries. There will also be free style ballet classes and a session on examination tips. The dates for the students' summer school are July 7-20. The dates for the teachers' seminar are July 14-20 with special diploma classes being taught by Cara Drower on July 13 & 14. Both courses culminate with a formal performance, set by our guest faculty and danced by our students.

We are pleased that Jane Gibson will be attending our seminar from England on the Margaret Marsh Scholarship. We also welcome Mary Jane Duckworth who will attend as our liaison from England. We will be sending Marjorie Randazzo to the English seminar on the Sylvia Hamar Scholarship.

News from The Cecchetti Society Inc. USA

This year 1996 marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Cecchetti Society, Inc. U.S.A. And with a moment of reverence, we salute Olga Fricker, and the late Lucille McClure for the birth and life of this vision, and to Shiela Darby, also of the original triumvirate, we "tip our glass" for carrying the dream forwards, as the Society's Administrator after Olga retired. The US birthday party will be celebrated at the International Conference which the USA Society will co-host with the Canadian Cecchetti Society teachers and members of western Canada. It will be an intensive week long seminar at the California Institute of the Arts at Valencia, and will offer an array of Cecchetti illuminaries and international teachers: Richard Glasstone, England; Diane van Schoor, South Africa; Raymond Lukens and Franco de Vita, Italy; Sheila Kennedy, Canada; along with other faculty members from the organisation, and musician, and pianist Ross Alley also England, will set the musical timbre for all the work to be done. Additional attractions that will make this international seminar a most exciting one, will be a symposium presented by Richard Glasstone and Ross Alley to be centered around the music and choreography of the *Sleeping Beauty* (La Belle au Bois Dormant: Tchaikovsky/Petipa). There will also be a class to introduce ballet students to Benesh notation. Classes will also be offered to introduce Contemporary Dance (often referred to as modern dance) to the students at the seminar so that they will be aware of the versatility in the many dance forms so necessary for professional work in companies today.

So much has happened in twenty-five years. From coast to coast, including the US Virgin Islands, the Cecchetti work is being taught and new generations of dancers are being trained. Since the US is so large, the Society is divided into two committees, simply put, it is the Eastern USA and the Western USA Committees and a small Board of Directors to which both committees are responsible. The Western Committee buzzes with activity, with their main offerings and focus on three separate Cecchetti Day-Workshops for teachers and students. Fall '96 started at Huntington Beach with Marnell Himes as hostess, the next was after Christmas with Denise Rinaldi hosting this one in Santa Barbara, and finally just as spring came ushering forth (one never has to worry about spring in California!). Jean Fulton became hostess for the third one held at Roseville. And not to be overlooked were the contributing talents and teaching gifts of Louanne Davies, and Carol Garland, who join forces with the previously listed hostesses. Work was covered for various levels of the Standards, and all levels of the Graded Syllabi, including the Elementary Syllabus from the Majors. The East coast group chooses to do their version of the same a bit different. The choices being Sarasota, Florida for the sun or Hartford, Connecticut for snow! This year the land of snow won out, and a fine three day offering of an intensive Cecchetti Workshop was held at the facilities of the School of the Hartford Ballet. Heading up this workshop group was guest Kirk Peterson, Artistic Director of the Hartford Ballet, offering professional free style classes, and with Cecchetti work was beautifully represented under the watchful eyes of Franco de Vita Raymond Lukens, Betty Seibert and Jacki Anderson. In short, those in the West and California do three separate workshops because they love to drive and those in the East like to get to one place, stay there, and get it all done at one time.....who would mind driving if we constantly had the beautiful weather of California!

The Cecchetti Photographic Exhibit which is touring the United States and Canada, has been seen in some pretty impressive spots: The Dorothy Chandler Pavillion in Los Angeles, The San Francisco Performing Art Library and Museum, The Harid Conservatory at Boca Raton, Florida just to name a few. This commemorative venture was undertaken and co-sponsored by the Cecchetti Society U.S.A. and the Cecchetti Council of America. Also to date the CCA has sponsored the exhibit in such states as Texas, Michigan, Ohio and Washington D.C., and finally but not at all last, the exhibit is presently under the auspices of the Canadian Cecchetti Society where it will be touring across Canada coast to coast and will be presented in all Canada's major cities. Then it again returns to the States to open the fall 1996 season at the Museum of The School of Visual Arts and Dance at Florida State University at Tallahassee, with Richard Glasstone as guest commentator, then on to St. Louis, Missouri. This exhibit is a wonderful reminder, to all of us, that even today the Maestro continues to be a *Renaissance man!*

A surprise tribute was paid last summer to a very deserving lady and devoted disciple of the work of Maestro Cecchetti. Shiela Darby, USA Administrator was honoured at the Cecchetti Society Faculty's Congress in London last summer (1995) as the recipient of the Beaumont, Enrico Cecchetti Medal as a tribute for her devotion to furthering the Cecchetti work in the United States! Shiela moved to Sacramento, California several years ago, and as an interesting aside here was an area where virtually no dance teacher had a clue to what the Cecchetti work was about, let alone the name of Cecchetti. Here lies the point; as Shiela became known to teachers and dance organizations as a fine ballet teacher in this area, she was soon being asked to

lecture and to teach. To many was the surprise that she was a devotee of the Cecchetti work. As a result she has now formed a group with ten teachers who through studying and working with Shiela in preparation for their qualifying degrees are making fine progress; one has her Associate, several are preparing for their Associate at the Elementary or Intermediate level, and some are also studying Anatomy by way of the correspondence course in preparation for their Licentiate Diploma.

With Shiela's duties as USA Administrator, her time has been limited for travelling in order to expand the Cecchetti work here at home, however, she does manage in the time allowed to turn up some fine surprises regardless of all her busy activities. Some good examples: in 1995 she prepared two Final Diploma candidates, one Licentiate, one Associate and one Associate Diploma. All of these candidates were successful. As she looks to retiring as USA Administrator, she looks forward to being free to travel more extensively in the States and to be able to introduce the Cecchetti work into many areas not yet aware of the training benefits of this great system of ballet training. We all at home salute this fine lady and teacher!

The USA 1996 Spring Exam Tour has brought about some pretty astronomical figures of candidates that will be examined. Sheila Kennedy, chairwoman of the Canadian Society, will exam a total of 307 candidates in the East coast of the US. This covers such states as: New York, Connecticut, Ohio, Louisiana, Florida and the Virgin Islands. USA Examiner, Shiela Darby and Audrey King will have their hands full on the West Coast. Four schools in California: Huntington Beach, San Diego, Santa Barbara and Sacramento, have produced 347 students to be examined. We can look at all of this another way. There is a total of 654 candidates being put forth for examination in the method: 227 for Class Exams, 407 for Grade Examination, and finally 30 exams in the Majors. This is pretty impressive regardless of how you look at it!

And as a final note to share in our 1996 news, teachers of the Cecchetti Society Inc., USA are not only movers and producers of the work, but are also choreographers, company directors and many serve as guest teachers about the States. Many have been former professional dancers now retired from the rigors of the professional dance world and are now sharing the gifts and legacy of their past. Richard Sias (Florida) has just recently staged a new full length *Giselle and Swan Lake* for Southern Ballet Theatre with their orchestra in Orlando. Betty Seibert (Connecticut) has just staged a *Pas de Quatre* in Plattsburg, as well as three of her own ballets in Shreveport, LA. Sylvia Palmer, Artistic director of the Black Mountain Dance Theatre, of San Diego, CA, has just presented a workshop for the company celebrating the choreography of Sir Frederick Ashton, with Christopher Newton of the Royal Ballet as guest teacher and lecturer. Finally Heidi Wright of the US Virgin Islands will produce, for the first time in Christiansted an entire evenings' production set around the work, teaching and mystery that lay behind the legend of this man: Maestro Enrico Cecchetti.