

THE KITCHENER-WATERLOO ALPINE DANCERS

20 years: 1979 - 1999

In December 1978, Hans Kroisenbrunner, at that time the Cultural Director of the Alpine Club, wrote a letter to the general membership to encourage interested members to come out and join a new folkdance group.

Quite a number of members of varied ages responded and the ALPINE DANCERS were born. The first practice was held in late January 1979. The difficulties of learning new dances were quickly overcome by the enthusiasm of all participants. The first performance of the Alpine Dancers was already held at the annual *Bauernball* in February 1979.

Hans Kroisenbrunner was the choreographer and leader of the group. Practices continued and new folkdances and *schuhplattlers* were learned. One of the many - and one of the first - engagements outside the Alpine Club took place together with Julius Rauchfuss at the Waldhorn Hotel at Wasaga Beach, Ontario to celebrate the Oktoberfest. The Alpine Dancers subsequently performed at various places in Ontario as well the U.S.

In 1983, when he was president of the Alpine Club, Hans Kroisenbrunner brought along the Alpine Dancers to the *Gottscheer Treffen* in New York and challenged the presidents of the other *Gottscheer Clubs* to do the same: a new tradition was started with the various dance groups performing at those annual functions. Quite a close friendship developed among the members of these dance groups, in particular New York and Cleveland.

One of the most memorable expe-

riences that the Alpine Dancers can recall was the European trip in 1992. The planning really started in late 1990 when several groups that had already performed at the Alpine Club asked to host one of our performances at their clubs in Austria and Germany. A lot of detailed planning followed, and with Krista Kreutzer taking

for sightseeing, to Glasing (3rd performance), to Hengstberg for sightseeing in the wine area and visiting with friends, to Graz and the *Gottscheer Gedenkstätte* for sightseeing, to Köflach (4th performance), to Biber to see the Lippizan horse farm, to Klagenfurt (5th performance) and sightseeing and swimming in the



October 23, 1994. Front row (left to right): Stephan Pomper, Beatrix Pomper, Erik Offak, Audrey Kohnke, Mike Uzelac, Craig Feehan, Anita Kump, John Weiler, Linda Gruber, Paul Kroisenbrunner, Linda Kump. Middle row: Roger Caanen, Sandrine Mahler, Carrie Vandenhoff, Krista Kreutzer, Julie Kreutzer, Diane Gartner. Back row: Edda Morscher, Johnny Vogl, Leanne Herner, Dietmar Kubasta, Eve Krynicki, Elli Sigmund, Hans Kroisenbrunner, Anne Kroisenbrunner, Sonja Kroisenbrunner-Biselli, Dietmar Biselli, Frank Schneider, Linda Schneider, Lore Kump, Rudy Schoenhoeffer, Maryan

care of all the bookings, the trip finally materialized, and we took off on July 10, 1992 and returned on July 24. Needless to say, the Alpine Dancers with our president Beatrix Pomper and our choreographer and choir director Sonja Kroisenbrunner-Biselli worked hard to perfect a two-hour program that consisted of not only our traditional folkdancing and *schuhplattlers*, but also required two costume changes, including an authentic native Indian feather head dress. After our arrival in Frankfurt and Munich, our tour took us to Kindberg (1st performance), to Bad Tatzmannsdorf for the second performance, to Vienna

Wörther See, to Döbriach (6th performance) and a tour to the Nockalm, then via the Großglockner to Salzburg for sightseeing; then on to Grainbach (7th performance), to Diedorf (8th performance), and finally to Munich for the return flight. Accommodations and, to large extent, even our meals were provided by our host groups; however, we stayed in youth hostels in Vienna, Graz and Salzburg. The twenty Alpine Dancers were also accompanied by ten members of the Alpine Club and/or parents of some dancers.

The Alpine Dancers continue to perform throughout the year for the