

A Life In Motion

by Olivann Hobbie

On August 28, 1999 Woods Hole Community Hall was filled to capacity for a dance performance of *Aqua y Tambor and Noctiluca* featuring three dancers. One dancer was the choreographer and organizer of the program, Eugenie Kuffler, a Woods Hole native now living in Paris. Another dancer was Dunya, a teacher and performer of Sufi dance meditation in New Mexico, New York City, and now Woods Hole where she had grown up as Dianne Hulburt. The third dancer, white-haired and delicately framed, was Klara Koenig. Klara had taught the art of the dance to the other two when they were young girls. It was she who had inspired them to become dancers, as she has inspired thousands of others with a lifelong love of dance and a belief that something beautiful happens when they move to music.

On that August evening, Klara Koenig's many friends knew that this remarkable dancer was ninety years old, but only a few of them knew that she was dancing in spite of a painful broken rib. Throughout her long, generous, rich but sometimes tragic life, Klara Koenig has often

called on this ability, perhaps stronger than ever in her tenth decade, to make the spirit triumph over the limitations of the physical.

Klara Bodnar took her first dance lesson at the age of seven in her native Hungary. She grew up in a comfortable upper-middle-class Jewish family whose life was cultivated and urbane. Her father, a banker in the city of Miskolc northeast of Budapest, played violin and often had friends in to play chamber music. Klara's mother sang and painted. After studying violin for two years Klara switched to the piano, an activity she still enjoys. The music of Robert Schumann or her fellow Hungarian, Bela Bartok, is often open on the piano in her living room. This early and steady exposure to music has given a richness and depth to her choice of music for the countless dances she has choreographed.

Her earliest memories of ballet are of Bruno Petriss, a handsome teacher who taught dance by using a book. "He was Italian and very handsome. Some



Klara Koenig at the Cape Cod Conservatory studio at Beebe Woods, 1980s.
Photo by Holly Smith Pedlosky

girls took the class because they wanted to be near his movie-star beauty. Even though he taught ballet by the book, he also enjoyed doing Isadora Duncan-type movements, using a scarf." Klara recalls that from her first hours in a dance studio, she realized that dance could take many forms.

When Klara was twelve, Anna Pavlova came to Budapest, the cosmopolitan city which now united the two towns, Buda and Pest, on opposite banks of the Danube. Klara's parents took their eager daughter in for the rare opportunity to see the great Russian ballerina. Inspired by the sight of such artistry, Klara began to dance as much as she could. She started having impromptu dance performances in the family's large apartment and began to teach dance steps to classmates at her girls' high school. When she was fourteen, Klara hoped that she could move to the capital to pursue ballet more seriously, and her mother took her to Budapest to meet with the prima ballerina of the Budapest Opera. At that time, ballet dancers had careers with the opera as no separate ballet companies existed in any Hungarian city. The ballerina said that Klara was too young and too thin, that she should wait a few years.

When Klara was sixteen, her parents permitted her to move to Budapest where she lived with friends of the family, finished her *gymnasium* degree, and passionately studied ballet. However, her parents in no way expected that their only daughter would become a dancer. Although they loved music, opera and theater, putting a child on the stage was unheard of for parents from their educational and cultural milieu. And when it was time to go to university, Klara obeyed her father's command: "You are not going to be a dancer!"

Gaining admission to any of Hungary's four universities was difficult at that time for a Jewish girl, but

Klara was accepted at all of them, and chose the prestigious Peter Pazmany University in Budapest where she enrolled to study philosophy and languages. She remembers those crowded days with pleasure. "In the morning at the university I attended courses in French and German language and literature and in Hungarian literature. In the afternoon, I danced. It was a crazy thing to do, but I loved it."

However, Klara was becoming dissatisfied with the set of precise dance postures required in ballet. She sought something that would be freer as well as more suitable for her slender five-foot frame which was too small for the ballet stage. She found what she was looking for in the studio of Rudolph Von Laban. While still taking university classes, Klara performed in open-air theaters and in opera houses with Laban and his dancers.

Laban was a Hungarian who had made his reputation in Germany, where there were more opportunities for dancers. He had created the name Laban ("leg" in Hungarian), adding the "Von" to give himself cachet with the Germans. He is best-known today as the originator of Laban notation, a system for recording choreography. A skilled Laban reader can visualize the details of a dance from Laban notation just as a well-trained classical musician can "hear" a score while looking at pages of black notes.

Klara says that Laban was perhaps the most influential of all of her teachers. "He was a philosopher, a mathematician, a creator. He said that each dancer has a kinetic circle, not only the space she moves in, but also the space she can move. He sought to make people move, however they can... Every class was different and every class was an absolute experience. You never knew what would happen."

Laban taught the art of movement to many dancers. The principle of *contract and release*, one of several innovative approaches to modern dance and the one taken by the pioneer Martha Graham, was a Laban legacy. Klara remembers that Laban was “all fluid and free movement - the spirit of modern dance. Laban opened my eyes to what we can do with the body. And he himself was not really a dancer, just a genius!” Klara compares Laban to the great New York City Ballet dance director George Balanchine who became famous by “doing modern things while leaving on the toe shoes.”

Klara had graduated from the University in philosophy and from the National Academy of Budapest in dance. She was close to completing her doctorate in philosophy when she received a surprise proposal from Zoltan Koenig, a long-time friend of her brother's.

Zoltan had gone to Germany to study engineering because at that time it was easier for a Jewish boy to get into the engineering program at a university in Germany than in Hungary. As Hitler's National Socialist party started its rapid and disastrous rise to power in the late 20s, Zoltan left Germany. He returned to Budapest where, employed by a company making coke-burning stoves, he was earning very little money. A Hungarian friend, an architect, had an excellent job in Moscow and kept writing him to come. In the late 20s Stalin had begun his campaign to industrialize the Soviet Union no matter what the cost, and well-trained foreign experts received good salaries and had good living conditions, at least by Soviet standards. Zoltan decided to go to the Soviet Union.

Knowing that she would be living in the Soviet Union, which at that time did not even have dip-

lomatic relations with Hungary, Klara nevertheless accepted Zoltan's proposal. Within a few days they had an informal wedding with a justice of the peace. When the new bride and groom were sitting down to dinner, the groom's family came in, insisting on a Jewish wedding. Mrs. Koenig, dressed in a simple sweater and skirt, went through her second marriage



Klara Bodnar 1926. Courtesy Klara Koenig.



Richard Spurduto and Chris DeNofrio in *The Firebird* at Falmouth High School, 1992.



Marla Bingham in *The Eternal Valse* at Highfield Theater, June 1983.



Marla Bingham in *The Eternal Valse*.



Joey Doucette in *The Eternal Valse*.

Photos by Holly Smith Pedlosky



Margaret McBride in *Street Music*, 1983. Photo by Holly Smith Pedlosky



Sasha Dmochowski in *Coppelia* at Falmouth High School, 1990. Photo by Holly Smith Pedlosky

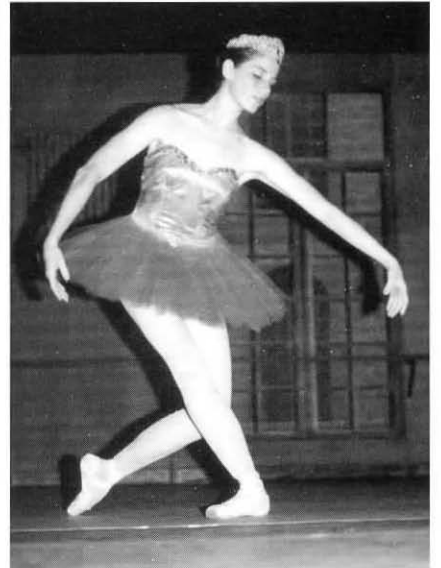


Karl Schleicher and Chrissy Condon in *The Nutcracker*, May 1982.

Photo by Holly Smith Pedlosky



Eugenie Kuffler. Courtesy Kuffler family.



Lynn Elliot. Courtesy Elliot family.

ceremony in one day, this time under a canopy. Within a week, the couple was settled in Moscow.

Living in a country renowned for the ballet, Klara, at the age of 23, found her interest renewed. Although the young couple lived in a one-room apartment with a window missing, they could afford the fifty-cent tickets to the Bolshoi and Kirov Ballets. Inspired by seeing her favorite prima ballerina, the great Galina Ulanova, she decided to take advanced classes in the Russian method of ballet, building on her earlier proficiency.

During these early years in Moscow, Klara thrived on Moscow's culture. Stalin, after all, intended to make the Soviet Union superior in every way. Looking back, Klara commented, "I was so innocent and young, absolutely non-political. I grew up on Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky. In most ways, living in Russia in the early 30s was wonderful."

Nevertheless, life was difficult. She had to stand in line for food, like all Muscovites. In the bread store there were two lines: one to get the loaf, a second to pay for it; the same with cheese, with milk. Meat, of course, was not even available to ordinary people. Women waiting in line with her would spot her superior quality Eastern European clothes and ask her to sell or trade them, right off her back. One day she traded her boots to a woman fed up with her own shoddy Soviet-made ones.

From 1932 to 1936 while she was living in Moscow, Klara also enjoyed writing monthly articles for two Budapest newspapers about the cultural life she was experiencing. *Az Est* (The Evening Gazette) and *Pesti Naplo* (Pest Journal) published the monthly letters she wrote to her father under the headline, "Letters from Moscow." She earned about \$100 for each

article, a princely sum in the 1930s. Klara still has a copy of a "Letter from Moscow" that appeared in the *Pesti Naplo* on 1934 December 25. She wrote about a performance in the new Stanislavsky Theatre of Dumas' "The Lady of the Camellias." She also described a delightful afternoon in the Kulturpark where a 17-year-old Russian girl accompanied by a harmonica was teaching the *Yablochko* (the famous Russian dance in which you kick out your legs) to the holiday crowd. It was still a happy time for many of the Soviet people.

When she became pregnant with her son, Peter, Klara returned home. She had promised her father that his grandchildren would be born in Hungary and she was afraid of the risks if her son should be born as a Soviet citizen. When Peter was four months old, Klara left him with her parents, sensing that it would be dangerous to have him with her in the Soviet Union. She returned to Hungary from Moscow every three months to visit her son, getting visas from the German embassy because the Soviets would not recognize the ones given out by the Hungarian embassy in Budapest.

The world Klara had known in the golden years of her youth was turning ugly. Hitler was intensifying his campaign of hatred against the Jews in Germany. Stalin, with equal insanity, started the purges in 1934. Life was becoming more and more uncertain in the Soviet Union; a friend disappeared into the Stalinist gulag. Klara left the Soviet Union in 1936 and went to Paris where she lived with a friend and taught dance to the children of wealthy Parisians. After a year in Paris she returned to Hungary, living in Budapest and Miskolc.

Zoltan was still in Moscow in 1937, the worst year of the purges, when he was tipped off by his employer to get out. Stalin had begun his attack on

foreigners, even the experts he had lured to build up his country. Zoltan took the first train he could get, fleeing empty-handed and heeding his employer's warning not even to return to the apartment to pick up personal belongings. One Hungarian friend who did not move fast enough was never seen again.

After Klara and Zoltan were reunited in Budapest, the Hungarian friend who had first written Zoltan such persuasive letters from Moscow came to dinner. His sick wife, a Hungarian aristocrat, and their three consumptive daughters had been allowed to leave the Soviet Union while he was in Lubyanka Prison in Moscow. His captors had told him that he could leave to rejoin his family if he would give the names of ten Hungarian engineers who had plotted to kill Kallinin. "Just think," he said affably, "your name, Zoli, was first on my list, and you're here, a free man." Klara and Zoltan were horrified; it was the end of the friendship.

They lived in Budapest until 1940. Klara had started a dance school and was happy teaching, but Zoltan was jobless and in line to be drafted by the army. When his sister, who lived in New York City, managed to get him a visa, Zoltan decided to leave a crumbling Europe. But he could not persuade Klara to leave with him. She recalls the false hopes of that turbulent time: "I thought that my country would be a little island, like Switzerland. I didn't want to emigrate. I had my family and studio in Hungary. I would sit the war out."

When Zoltan sent for her in an urgent cablegram in 1941, Klara changed her mind. In America he had found out about the German concentration camps. Klara fled Hungary with Peter, then seven years old. Although her passport declared her to be Jewish, she traveled through Germany to reach Switzerland. "Nazi officers walked by us on the train, and I was

never afraid. I couldn't do that now," Klara observed. Perhaps she was protected on that stage of her journey by a lingering disbelief that she really had to flee.

Before leaving Budapest, Klara had talked to the father of one of her female students. George Jellinek, Sr. was a wealthy man, for he had opened the first Automat in Hungary - right across from the Opera. It sold only coffee, tea and sandwiches but with its ideal location was an immediate success. His son, George Jr., who loved music more than business, would make his quota of sandwiches for the cafeteria and then dash across the street to attend the performance. George Sr. lent Klara \$1000 for the trip, telling her she could take two years to pay it back, with no interest. He also gave her a considerable quantity of gold jewelry for his son, who had managed to flee Europe and open a cafe in Havana.

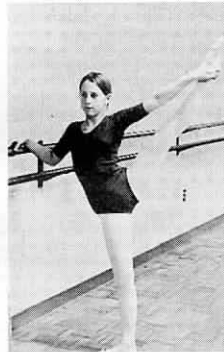
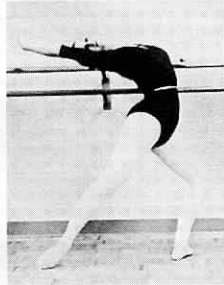
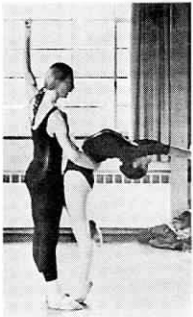
When Klara arrived in New York, she and Zoltan immediately began saving money to pay back the man who had saved Klara and Peter's lives. Zoltan earned only \$20 a week so they had to economize in as many ways as they could. They had no telephone and bought no clothes except for Peter, who felt ashamed of his European-style schoolboy's outfits. For over two years Klara made tapestry handbags for a high-fashion designer, sometimes embroidering 100 a day. She claims that she could make them in her sleep. But in two years she met George Jellinek, Jr. in New York City and repaid the \$1000. George Jr. later became a noted musicologist and was a frequent guest on the Metropolitan Opera Saturday afternoon broadcasts.

Klara used most of the Jellinek money to bribe officials for fake transit visas. Her last fake visa, for Paris, cost her \$40, but she went instead to Lisbon where she and Peter boarded a tiny cruiser to New York.

She remembers spending the entire two-week trip in bed; "the boat was crowded and there was nowhere else to go. I shared my Hungarian salami and my four-story box of chocolates with fellow passengers." Two hours from its destination, the boat was tossed about in a hurricane.

Only after the war did Klara learn that her entire family had been killed at Auschwitz late in 1944, except for one cousin who now lives in New York. She has never wanted to return to Hungary. She prefers to remember it as it was.

KLARA KOENIG



THEATER

DANCE

Until the war was over and she learned the truth, Klara had been living "a temporary life" with her husband and son in New York, believing that after the war they would return as a family to Hungary. When she realized that America was now to be her home, she set up a studio in New York City. When the family moved to Webster, Massachusetts, she established another studio, soon adding a third one in Sturbridge, with satellites in Oxford and Dudley. The Webster studio produced Klara's first star student, Christine Carlson, who danced with Rudolph Nureyev in the film "Last Tango in Paris."

While teaching in Worcester, she also volunteered to do dance therapy at a schizophrenic ward in the Worcester hospital. She never knew what to expect, and, alone in the ward, she had some frightening moments. One of the patients, a woman who had always sat as a rather sullen observer while the others were moving to music, waited for Klara at the door on the day that she had announced she would be going to Puerto Rico for several months. The woman got very close, looked directly in Klara's face and

Early poster advertising Klara's classes in Falmouth (left to right, top to bottom): Chris van Raalte with Nancy Ver Noy; Chris van Raalte with Katherine Ketchum; Nancy Ver Noy; Rebecca, Nancy and Susanna Todd; Bobbie Halstead; Alice Phillips; Bill Sunda at Saint Barnabas Hall, 1974. Courtesy Klara Koenig.

uttered her opinion of Klara's desertion: "Drop Dead!"

The Koenigs began visiting Falmouth and Woods Hole and fell in love with the region. In 1962, after fifteen years in Webster, they moved to Falmouth, although Klara kept her studio in Sturbridge open for two more years. She noted that, "At 54 I was old enough to retire, but when some people in Woods Hole found out that I taught dance, they asked me to give a class." Her first Woods Hole class had 15 pupils. When she saw how they enjoyed dancing and how they started to grow, she decided to continue teaching.

Two summer residents of Woods Hole, Mary Clarke and Ruth Wald, also noticed how children responded to Klara's teaching. In the late 60s they asked her to come to Cambridge once a week to teach "the little ones" at the Buckingham Lower School. One of those little ones was Robin Baxendale who credits those early classes with Klara for her later success. She went on to the Joffre School of Ballet when she was only 13. Mary Clarke remembers how quickly and accurately Klara saw the essence of two of her own young daughters: Kate was "The Princess" and Ann, "a sturdy little workhorse."

In 1969 Klara began using space at Harvard obtained with the help of Professors Ruth and George Wald. Among her students in Cambridge were the grandchildren of Henry Morgenthau, President Roosevelt's Secretary of the Treasury. She taught Ben, Cramer and Sarah at the wonderful house of Henry Morgenthau III, whose yard boasted the oldest tree in Cambridge. She often took Shabbat dinner with

the Morgenthau family on Friday evenings after the dance lessons. She continued her Cambridge classes until 1973.

Since moving to Falmouth, Klara has taught at St. Barnabas Church, the Cape Cod Conservatory studio at Beebe Woods, Falmouth Academy, the Woods Hole Community Hall, and the Mary French Dance Studio in Cataumet.

Out of Klara's Cape Cod years have come many professional dancers. Marla Bingham, a Mashpee Wampanoag, danced

for several years with the Alvin Ailey troupe and now has her own company in Los Angeles. Lynn Elliot danced with a variety of companies in New York and is now teaching in Manhattan; Lynn's daughter, Justina, is a very talented 16-year-old ballerina studying at the School of American Ballet. Randal



Marla Bingham in *The Eternal Valse*.

Photo by Holly Smith Pedlosky



Joey Doucette, Margaret McBride and Bill Hough in *Street-walker* at Highfield Theater in June, 1983.

Photo by Holly Smith Pedlosky

Edwards, among other accomplishments, co-starred in the Broadway play "Biloxi Blues."

Choreographer Dianne Hulburt McPherson, Klara's first Woods Hole student, has gained national recognition as Dunya. Georgianna Holmes danced with Louis Falco, and Sasha Dmochowski is now a featured dancer with the Boston ballet. Klara guided each of these talented young women to achieve in competitive settings, giving them both the training and the inspiration to succeed.

Klara has always been candid with her students and their mothers, quickly and frankly discouraging unrealistic ambitions for those who lack the requisite native gift. She has also always welcomed everyone to share the world of dance, regardless of age or ability. "Dance should be a joy," she says.

One of the challenges that Klara gave her students, herself, and her husband for many, many years was an annual dance program, usually performed in either Falmouth or Woods Hole. Zoltan, as a retired recording engineer, made most of the complicated tapes and logged countless hours as a chauffeur. Woods Hole artists Mary Mavor and Molly Bang contributed their talents to posters and program design. Over the years Klara has presented as many as 100 or more dancers at a time in works as diverse as *Coppelia*, *The Firebird* and *The Bluebird*. Noye's



Eric Edwards as the shaman in *The Eternal Valse*, June 1983 at Highfield Theater.

Photo by Holly Smith Pedlosky

Fludde with music by Benjamin Britten was the first program she presented after she started teaching on the Cape.

The production of *Noye's Fludde* partly explains why Klara is held in such respect and affection by those who have studied with her. The production, complete with a dove, a raven, and waves, was to be held on the lawn of what is now Fisher House, overlooking Little Harbor. But at the dress rehearsal the fog horn of the Coast Guard ship drowned out the music. Klara would not let anything disappoint the young dancers and their families who were looking forward so eagerly to this unique event, but the Church Street location would not work! Everyone rallied around. St. Barnabas agreed to host the performance. The evening went off with only the usual hitches to be expected when over fifty children share a stage with an ark and several dancers dressed up as animals. The house was overflowing, with people outside craning their necks to see through the windows.

As with all her programs, Klara made this one as inclusive as possible. The need for waves soaked up many, many little dancers. As she would frequently do in the future, she called on friends and acquaintances who were non-dancers to participate. Karl Schleicher, a veteran of dozens of Woods Hole Theater productions, played Noye, without having to do even one plié. Lillia Holmes was one of Mrs. Noye's Gossips and Nancy Todd and Hilda Maingay, women who would dance in many subsequent programs, took the other two comedy parts as Gossips. In one of Klara's favorite productions, *The Eternal Valse*, the second act took place in a speakeasy where the illegal imbibers included Fred and Peggy Smith, Molly Hough, and the fabulous dancer Marla Bingham.



Karl Schleicher and Dianne Hulburt rehearsing for *Noye's Fludde*, 1971. Courtesy Klara Koenig.

Like Karl Schleicher and Fred Smith, the ranks of male dancers were drawn from many sources: actors, musicians, fathers of dancing daughters. Younger men, for example Joey Doucette, could go on to dance professionally. But most of the men were brought in as props, helpers, lifters, and stage color. Eric Edwards remembers that sometimes the thrill of dancing with young talented children was offset by the possibility of spraining an ankle or pulling a back. One could easily be carried away by the excitement and pleasure of being on stage in one of these recitals.

Klara's imaginative dance programs are no more, except as memories for those who saw and danced in them. But her teaching continues. She still gives afternoon classes twice a week in Woods Hole and Cataumet. All of us, she feels, can learn the joy of movement. Megan Jones discovered that, "After a pause of fifty years, Klara makes you feel that you can begin again."

One woman wrote in Klara's 80th birthday album, "Through your patience and encouragement, I am finally beginning to feel more like a 'baby elephant' than the King of elephants."



Ellen Knebel and Sasha Dmochowski at the Mary French Studio, Cataumet, 1990. Courtesy Klara Koenig.

Georgiana Holmes

Photos by Holly Smith Pedlosky



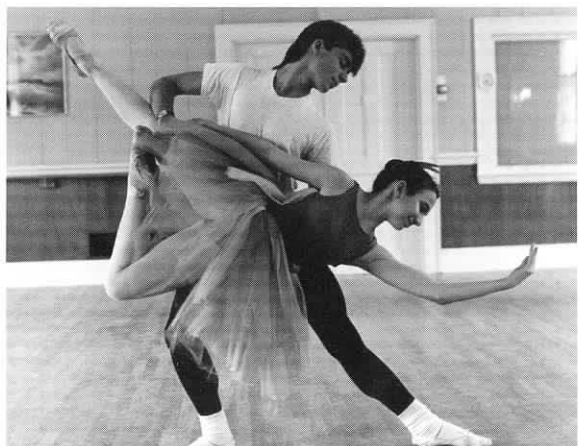
Joey Doucette in a class at the Cape Cod Conservatory at Beebe Woods in the early 1980s.

Photo by Holly Smith Pedlosky



Bill Hough in modern dance class, 1982.

Photos by Holly Smith Pedlosky



Chris DeNofrio and Sasha Dmochowski rehearse for *The Firebird* at Mary French Studio, 1992. Courtesy Klara Koenig.



Joey Doucette in class in the early 1980s.

Photo by Holly Smith Pedlosky



Marla Bingham in rehearsal for *The Firebird*.

Photo by Holly Smith Pedlosky



Cheryl Fraser in class at the Cape Cod Conservatory at Beebe Woods in the mid 1980s.

Photo by Holly Smith Pedlosky



Dove Pedlosky and unidentified child, 1982.

Photo by Holly Smith Pedlosky

Klara skillfully adapts her teaching to people of all ages and all physical conditions. But she continues to feel a special responsibility toward children. She says that "All young children should be exposed to the movement in dance at an early age; they should learn to move to music, to experience the pleasure of moving their bodies, of using space. It is a feeling for movement that you are born with, that we are probably all born with, and that we should nurture."

Children immediately sense that Klara has something special to offer them. Ellen Knebel, who first took dance lessons in 1980 when she was six, vividly recalls her first visit to Klara's class:

"My best friend was taking classes, and I went to the Conservatory with her mom to pick her up. I looked through the window and I saw all of the girls dancing with colored and

beaded hoops and twirling across the floor. I knew that I wanted to do that too. In the front of the class a lady was smiling and moving fluidly across the floor to the music - it was Klara.

"After the class was over, I stood by the door waiting for my best friend. All of the girls were gathered around to get a cookie. This was the human element that Klara brought to each child in the room, a reward for their hard work. Klara saw me and invited me in for a cookie too. I knew then that I had found a friend. When I went home, all I talked about was dance. I knew that it was what I wanted to do; and I knew that I wanted to learn from Klara."

Klara's love of working with young children and of nurturing their innate love of rhythmic movement has not diminished. She very recently rearranged her basement, a long, narrow, sunny room with a south-



Katie Pena and Libby Stackhouse, Mary French Studio, early 1990s.

Photo by Holly Smith Pedlosky



Katie Pena and Sarah Carson. Courtesy Klara Koenig.

ern exposure, so that her youngest students can dance there.

Klara teaches her students much more than dance. One mother wrote, "Your civilizing influence has improved several generations of children."

One of her

recent Falmouth students looked back, when she was a more reflective thirteen, at what she learned as a five-year old. Sarah Swanbeck writes of how her dance lessons led her into "a different world... Klara would always let us run in circles and do leaps across the floor in time to her old record player in the corner. She taught me to be creative by releasing my energy into my dance. Sometimes during class she would stand behind me and point my head toward the mirror, so that I would be standing up straight, and she would tell me to examine myself in the mirror... In the mirror I found that I could do almost anything I wanted with my life... What she taught me has helped me to be more understanding of others, to control my temper and never to give up. She showed me that I could be modest, persistent, and gracious. She set the example herself."

NEA Choreography Fellow Dianne Hulburt McPherson trained at Juilliard, went on to design and direct the modern dance department at Victoria College of the Arts (the Australian equivalent of Juilliard) and has been on the faculty of several colleges, including Barnard and Montclair State, N.J. Dianne says that Klara Koenig remains one of the two or three most remarkable teachers she has known in the course of her rich life in the dance world. Because Klara had early training with such innovators as Laban and Kurt Joss, she was grounded in the revolutionary approach of modern dance, whose aim was nothing less than to make dance an abstract art. Klara has said that for the French and the Italians dance was never more than entertainment; only the Germans saw that dance could be its own art form.

From the beginning of Dianne's training, Klara taught her the essence of modern dance, its creative, innovative spirit.



Dianne Hulburt on the lawn at St. Barnabas, 1960s.

Charles Spooner Photography



Dianne Hulburt. Courtesy Klara Koenig.

Dianne didn't realize until she studied elsewhere how unusual Klara was in being able to combine the aestheticism and "classicism" of modern dance with a constant willingness to improvise and to let students explore their intuitions about movement. Even after having studied with many well-known exponents of modern dance, Dianne says, "Klara teaches one of the best modern classes possible." Thus, though Dianne loved being on stage as a young dancer, most memorable were the classes themselves.

Dianne was also one of the many students whom Klara would take, one or two at a time, to New York. Klara took them to rehearsals at the Joffrey Company, to dance performances, to museums. For the students, of course, it was a fabulous, life-changing experience. But Dianne said that Klara too would return to Falmouth revitalized, trying new ideas in her classes. One of the secrets of Klara's successful classes, as is true of any good teacher, is that teaching always excites her. Though she may start out with an idea, for example, *water*, she never knows where she and the students will take the idea. Even in her tenth decade, she still seeks and elicits spontaneity from her students.

On Klara's 80th birthday, dozens of former students and their families created a memory book of photographs, poems and tributes. Klara treasures the volume. As her 90th birthday approached in December 1998, several of her friends and students wanted a different, equally meaningful way to honor her. For this milestone her friends decided to establish a scholarship named in honor of Klara and in memory of Zoltan, who had died in 1995. Throughout her decades of



Sasha Dmochowski and Klara at Cape Cod Conservatory studio at Beebe Woods, 1989. Photo by John Dmochowski

teaching, Klara has been thrilled to see her best students make careers in dance. The scholarships for promising students to study in New York or some other dance mecca will probably be awarded for the first time in summer 2000. They will help to carry her legacy into the future.

Klara's own legacy for the thousands of students who have learned to love dance has been to teach them a connection between the act and the spirit. When students in a class attempt to leap or to intertwine with others in a pattern, to move in a new way, they do it in response to her call, "You can do it - try! You can find more in yourself." As she teaches them to trust their bodies and their instinct for music and movement, she teaches them to trust themselves. As she models a movement with skill and love, she gives of herself. She teaches them not just to embrace dance without anxiety but to approach life with joy.

A Westerner by birth and education, Olivann Hobbie has lived since July 4, 1976, in Falmouth, where she feels spiritually at home. Mrs. Hobbie has served at Falmouth Academy in various capacities since its founding in 1977. At present she teaches Western Civilization and World Cultures, coordinates the student volunteer program, and chairs the Arts Department. She lives with her husband, John, an ecosystems scientist, on McCallum Drive. Their three sons attended Falmouth schools. Besides hiking and cross-country skiing in Vermont and swimming year-round in Falmouth, she loves playing

the piano in chamber music ensembles with and for family and friends.

Olivann Hobbie's friendship with Klara Koenig began in the summer of 1977 when the two women appeared in a Woods Hole Theater production of Federico Garcia Lorca's *The House of Bernarda Alba*. Mrs. Koenig played the crazed grandmother and Mrs. Hobbie the tyrannical mother. Mrs. Hobbie played Swanhilda's mother in Mrs. Koenig's 1980 Highfield production of *Coppelia*, dancing the polka with her oldest son, Lawrence. Her youngest son, David, appeared in the 1990 *Coppelia*. Some of Mrs. Hobbie's fondest memories are of treks through the snow to the Koenigs' Oyster Pond Road residence, where Klara and Zoltan offered tea laced with rum and fascinating conversation.

Holly Smith Pedlosky graduated from Radcliffe College with an AB and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago with an MFA. She teaches photography at Falmouth Academy, Radcliffe Seminars at Harvard University, and the International Center of Photography in New York City. She lives in Falmouth with her husband, Joe Pedlosky, a physical oceanographer at WHOI. They have two grown daughters, Dove and Anna, both former students of Klara Koenig. Olivann and Holly are still students of Klara's.



Karen Delahunty, Klara and Holly Pedlosky at the Cape Cod Conservatory at Beebe Woods.

Photo by Holly Smith Pedlosky