

DEC 51

SOCIETY
FOR
INTERNATIONAL
FOLK
DANCING



BT

WHAT IS AN AUTHENTIC COSTUME?

A folk costume is not something which sprang up in the night, neither is it necessary one particular style of clothing worn by one particular part of a community, nor is it a period costume. It is a collection of apparel put together over a number of years, often over centuries and springs from the geographical, mental, historical, fashionable and spiritual characteristics of a people.

Many parts of a costume may be traced back to the Middle Ages and beyond. The short coats worn with so many costumes were worn all through the Middle Ages and were continually changing in detail up to the 18th and 19th century. The wide metal decorated belt dates from an even earlier age. Many pieces of clothing were added to the old costume, but often the old pieces were not discarded. Thus we are confronted with two hats or two jackets worn simultaneously. Elements from a particular style were adapted, pre-supposing the original fashionable style of high society. The laced bodices of the women's dresses are adaptations from the corsets of the court lady, but the peasant having no maid, the lacing had to be at the front instead of the back.

Tight knee-breeches were in the fashionable world in the 17th century and were commonly worn by peasants in many countries by the 18th century thus taking close upon 100 years to infiltrate through successfully to the popular peasant taste. The military influence was great in Europe and traces may be found in almost every man's costume. The long coat, the frequent use of red and blue, the long boots, which were probably introduced into Europe by the Turkish invaders and the head-wear.

Superstition takes a hand. Many parts of costume were worn originally to ward off evil. Edges decorated with fur on leather or with strips of red (a protective colour) geometrical patterns in lace and embroidery (protective symbols) metal objects, rings and buttons (the shining objects defeats the evil eye) embroidery patterns, left unfinished or with a deliberate inaccuracy in the design (so that the devil may not be imprisoned in the embroidery) all were important to the credulous peasant.

Costume is usually a mixture of stern common-sense and gay ostentation. The strong trousers of the man, the useful skirt of the woman, the stout-heeled shoes, the footless socks (straw being considered cheaper, stronger and more comfortable than socks) all combining with the ribbons, sequins, beads, laces and embroideries, to make one garment fit for both work and festive occasions. Folk costumes became reasonably static about 100 years ago, and any costume presenting style colour or fabric introduced to the world after that period should be regard with caution.

From the above points you have a reasonable guide to authenticity, and when making a costume from a picture or postcard, bear these points in mind. As English people we have no national right to a folk costume and our European friends have a natural reluctance to seeing us wear their costumes in a casual, sloppy or inaccurate reproduction or manner. We would do well to remember the pride and affection they have for their national costume and watch ourselves to see that we do not offend through lack of knowledge or thoughtlessness.

----oOo----

Irene Weller.

JEAN Mc.CONACHIE from the STRATHSPEY SCHOOL of DANCING writes to say a Mrs. Mac.Nab from Vancouver is coming to this country to give a series of lectures. She intends to teach Solo dances and exhibition dances. Jean will be making arrangements for these lectures and invites any of our members who might be interested to contact her. She thinks perhaps, she will arrange three lectures;- Solos, Hebridian and set dances. Jean's address is;- Mrs. J.Mc.Conachie, 188, Carlton Avenue West, Nth.Wembley, telephone; ARNOLD 5 7893.

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SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING.

Hon.Treas; Mr. B.Price,
70, Meadowcourt,
S.E.3.

Hon.Sec. Miss M.Le Fort.
3,Selwyn Rd;
Upton Manor,E.13.

I am interested in becoming a member of the above Society, will you please send me further particulars.

NAME Mr. Mrs. or Miss.....

Address.

.....

WEEKEND AT CROOKHAM.

A weekend at Crookham has been arranged by Jack Richardson for Dec. 14.15.16th. plenty of Folk Dancing for all. If you have not already booked through Jack and would still like to join the party, please contact the Warden at the Hostel.

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DEMONSTRATIONS.

We have given only two demonstrations this month, but it has required an even greater effort than usual to get teams for them. Can it be reaction after all the effort put into the Albert Hall one?

On Tuesday Nov.13th we went to Bedford College, Regents Park at the request of Mr.Phelan of World University Service (late International Student Service). His contact was made through Mr. Fraser of U.N.S.A. and was the result of Mr.Phelan seeing our display at the Albert Hall. A special request was made for Vava Vadmal, the Swedish Weaving Dance, and so we had to have a team of eight couples. We had two new-comers to the team, Ray Tucker and Larry Howell. The evening was successful, despite the cramped conditions of the rather small stage. I received a very enthusiastic letter of thanks from Mr. Phelan.

The second demonstration for this month was requested by Mrs.Gentry on behalf of the Guides of Islington. It should have taken place in September but the date clashed with the Boy Scouts of Streatham and they had fixed their date a year ago.

It was a Country Dance Party to raise funds for a permanent camp site. These guided and their friends are enthusiastic English Folk Dancers and wanted to learn something of folk dances of other lands. We taught some of our simple dances and hope they will gain a permanent place in their programmes.

Will all members of the demonstration team for DEC.8th please note that there is a rehearsal on SUNDAY DECEMBER 2nd. at 6.0.p.m. SHARP at Inns of Court Mission - before the evening dance. We shall have only half an hour in which to go over several dances, so PLEASE WILL YOU ALL BE ON TIME.

---oOo--- Margory Latham.

From one of our original members, Dr.Stanley Sober, now in New York comes a message of greeting and congratulations on the giant strides the Society has made since he was last dancing with us over 3yrs. ago.

We return his greetings and look forward to the time when he can again dance with us.

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THE COMMITTEE WOULD LIKE TO WISH ALL MEMBERS A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS.

---oOo---

I would like to become a member of the Society for International Folk Dancing,
Please send me particulars.

Name
Address
.....

Please post to;-
Marie J. Le Fort,
3, Selwyn Road,
Upton Manor, E.13.

SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING.
NEWS SHEET.
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DEC;
1951

CARLYLE GIRL'S SCHOOL, HORTENSIA RD. CHELSEA, S.W. - 7.30.p.m. - 9.30.p.m.
WEDNESDAY CLASSES & DANCES.

DEC. 5th. SWEDISH by Dr. Cyriax. Music Mdm. Barbara.
" 12th. POLISH " Tolek " "
" 19th. ESTONIAN " Gladys Noble " "

FRIDAY ADVANCED CLASSES.

DEC. 7th. POLISH " Tolek " "
" 14th. KOLO " Philip Thornton Records.
" 21st. CHRISTMAS PARTY. M.C. Bert Price music Jim Titheradge.

INNS OF COURT MISSION, BROAD COURT, DRURY LANE, W.C. 6.30.p.m. - 9.30.p.m.

SUNDAY 2nd M.C. Jimmy Harding. Music Jim Titheradge.
" 9th " David Rasbash. " " "
" 16th " Ivor Sober. " " "
" 23rd. NO DANCE.

CECIL SHARP HOUSE, 2, REGENTS PARK RD; N.W.11. 6.30.p.m. - 9.30.p.m.

SUNDAY 30th. M.C. Ivor Sober. Music Henry Schuster.

CHENIL STUDIOS, KING'S ROAD, CHELSEA, S.W. - 7.30.p.m.

TUESDAY 4th. KOLO. by Philip Thornton. music Records.

HARROW GREEN FOLK DANCING GROUP, TRUMPINGTON RD. SCHOOL, LEYTON, E. 7.30.p.m. - 10.0.p.m.

WEDNESDAY 5th. NO DANCE.
" 12th. HOPAK & TO TING - Jim Titheradge.
" 19th. GENERAL DANCE.

"The above group would like to thank those members of the I.F.D.S. who supported the dancing at the Battersea Pleasure Gardens. The 16 couples that came were almost evenly divided between ourselves and the Society. It was an enjoyable and successful evening and judging by the size of our audience and volume of applause the other visitors to the gardens enjoyed our dancing as much as we did. Special thanks are due to Jim and Mourie who played for us when I am sure they would much rather have been dancing."

signed H.E. Coultrup. Hon. Sec.
H.G.F.D.G.

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NOTICE.

The caretaker at Carlyle School has brought to our notice that the floor has been badly scratched, we must ask Members not to wear boots or shoes with steel tips or heels for dancing otherwise our bookings will be cancelled.

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Classes and dances at Carlyle School will re-open on JAN. 9th 1952.

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As you will see a party will be held on the last Friday at Chelsea, it is hoped as many will meet as possible bringing friends and the usual surprise packets of food, soft drinks will be supplied. If you have any ideas for the entertainment side, please contact Bert.

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The Committee would like to make an appeal to Members to look out for a hall where we can dance on Sundays, Inns of Court is getting so crowded these days. If you have a knowledge of a suitable place, will you please tell Jim Titheradge, he has taken on the job of Publicity Officer and has offered to include this, with his many other jobs.

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In the last News-sheet the result given for the election was incomplete, Irene Weller was completely forgotten, she did however pole 25 votes.

The Committee would like to thank member Joan Eames for her constructive letter. Here is a member who takes the trouble to write her ideas, it would be a good thing if others would do the same, it does help your committee to know that you want.

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For those who might be interested, Jack Mc. Conachie will be holding a Sunday afternoon party at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, N.W. on December 9th at 3.0.p.m.

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