

SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING

News Sheet

April, 1952

PROGRAMME

Classes at Carlyle Girls' School, Hortensia Road, Chelsea, S.W.10. Time 7.30-9.30

Wednesdays - General classes

Members 1/-
Guests 1/6

April 2 General Revision Class
9 General Dance
29 Balkan Class
30 Swedish Class

Fridays - Advanced classes

(BY INVITATION ONLY)
Members 1/-

April 4 Polish Class
May 2 Finnish Class

Inns of Court Mission Hall, Broad Court, Drury Lane, W.C.1. Time 6.30-9.30

Members 1/- : Guests 1/6

April 6 General Dance M.C.- Michael Clark Music by Mourrie Pfeffer
20 General Dance M.C.- David Rasbash Music by Mourrie Pfeffer

Cecil Sharp House, 2, Regents Park Road, N.W.1. Time 6.30-9.30

Members 2/- : Guests 3/-

April 27 General Dance M.C.- Ivor Sober Music by The Henshooters Band

Harrow Green Folk Dancers - Trumpington Road School, Leyton. Wednesdays 7.00-10.00
(No.685 Trolley Bus from Leyton Underground)

April 2 Swedish Class & General Dancing Instruction by Ruth Sharp
9 Estonian " " " " " " Ruth Sharp
16 Russian " " " " " " Margaret Harris
23 Kolo " " " " " " Ruth Sharp
30 Italian " " " " " " Ruth Sharp

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

April 26 A General Dance will be held to celebrate the winning at the Stratford Festival of the Dancing Times Trophy. Time 6.30-10.30

ON THURSDAY 28 FEBRUARY we were asked to give the demonstration for the World Universities Service, previously postponed owing to the King's Funeral. We had a full evening's dancing, for apart from two 15-minute displays by a Siamese team we provided the whole programme. To add to the variety and to assist in showing different styles and character in the varying countries' dances, we changed costume for Swedish, Russian and Jugoslav dances. I was very pleased with the Yugoslav team, which in Philip Thornton's absence was so well and nobly led by Marie Butterworth. I would like also to welcome two new members to the team, Richard Mattson and John Brown, both of whom danced very well indeed in this their first big demonstration.

ON MARCH 1st Jim Titheridge arranged a repeat Demonstration for the Camping Club of Great Britain & Ireland. He taught and trained a team of their own members to perform six of the more simple dances, which was followed by our own Demonstration. Unfortunately, Jim was at the last minute unable to come, and we performed with a team of 3 couples who were lost in the large size of the New Horticultural Hall. This was, I regret, a disappointing evening.

ON MARCH 8th we were invited to show and teach some of our dances to pupils of the Barclay School for Partially Sighted Girls at Sunninghill, Berks. In spite of a misunderstanding with our musician, who missed the bus and had an hour to wait for the next one, we had a very successful evening, which was greatly appreciated. The girls, from "tinies" to "teenagers", were eager to learn and proved very apt pupils, having already had considerable practice in dancing as part of their training in overcoming the handicap of bad sight. There were too many to dance in comfort all at one time, so we taught them in two phases, but their eagerness to "be in" caused a lot of "gate-crashing" for the second phase. The school authorities have a very small financial allowance to allocate for this type of activity, and I am very proud to mention that our team and Mourrie waived their expenses as a token of good will to the work of this school. I consider this an evening very well spent, and am pleased to say that the school's dancing instructor has joined the Society.

Apart from these demonstrations, we were also entered for two competitions in March, one at Bethnal Green and one at Stratford, and oh dear, the work they have entailed!

The first, for the Bethnal Green & East London Festival of Arts, originally organised for the 25th February, was postponed to March 6 after a lot of shilly-shallying on the part of the organisers. March 6 is a Thursday when most of my male members have lectures or ATC meetings, a circumstance which meant changing the team, introducing new members, extra rehearsals and, for me, sleepless nights. (Counting sheep may induce sleep, but counting men doesn't, believe me). After days spent re-arranging things on the telephone, I could only produce a team of 6 couples, and could only arrange one rehearsal at which all could be present, this after a Wednesday class. All might still have been well, but I regret to say that one of the musicians had a mental blackout and "lost" the tune at the beginning immediately after the introductory chord. The violist, who was brought in at the last moment to add weight to the accordeon, could not start till after the accordeon since he had to follow the accordeon's key and the melody of which he was not certain on his own. He played rhythm and we danced by counting the bars to ourselves until the accordeon picked up the air. We finished well to a bad start, and gained 75 marks out of 100, which in the circumstances I feel very creditable.

I have kept the best news to the last. Our Yugo Slav team, so well led and trained by Philip Thornton, redeemed our reputation by dancing very well indeed and gaining second place in the competition. Congratulations to Philip and to every member of the Kolo team.

AT THE STRATFORD & EAST LONDON MUSIC FESTIVAL, misfortune once again dogged our heels. What with exams., illness and three weddings, I was a man short until the day before the competition, when I finally found Gordon Stacey to dance in the Ostagota team. (He stood up to this ordeal very well and has my thanks and congratulations). Then since one of the girls did not arrive in time, I had to ask Maureen Rasbash, who had come only to watch, if she would dance with the team to save me from cancelling our entry. Maureen agreed and saved us from this disappointment. The music was to be violin only, and I am afraid that Willie's nerves upset him, for he played Fjallness Polska at double speed, and although the team did their best it was impossible to mime or to dance the proper steps — there just wasn't the time.

Our second team, dancing Ostagota, were luckier, since Dr. Cyriax accompanied the violist on the piano, and this team, although less experienced than the first team, scored the higher marks, 81/100 as compared with 80/100 for the Fjallness team. Unfortunately I had to cancel the Yugoslav entry since 3 of the team of 6 could not appear, this being a great disappointment as I felt they could gain top marks.

However, the picture is not entirely grey — there is one consolation. The Stratford Trophy is at least in the family, as it were, for the winners were the Harrow Green Folk Dancers. Our heartiest congratulations to Harrow Green, and we hope next time to give you a better run for your money.

MARJORY LATHAM.

SCOTTISH GROUP

We are very pleased to announce that the Scottish Group formed by Conrad Leser and Cathy Ramsey is now firmly established and have recently performed three important demonstrations which have gained them some very favourable publicity in the Glasgow newspapers. The Society helped by assistance with costumes, which was greatly appreciated, and we hope in the next News Sheet to publish an article from Glasgow to advise all members of their progress and also of their headquarters, in order that any one arriving in Glasgow may know of the address of friends and fellow members.

B.P.

GENERAL MEETING

A General Meeting will be held at CARLYLE GIRLS' SCHOOL on WEDNESDAY 21 MAY. Will any member who has a motion to be placed on the Agenda, please submit same in writing to the Secretary before May 7.

SUMMER TERM PROGRAMME

For the Summer term we are introducing some new dances to the Society. It has always been our aim to make the Society truly International in its repertoire by including additional countries as and when we become ready and could contact experienced National Folk Dancers to teach us. I am very glad to announce that we are now able to include Finnish and Lithuanian dances in the Summer Programme as well as Scottish Country Dancing, and feel sure that all members will welcome the addition. The Balkan Dances taught by Phillip Thornton will be held at Carlyle School on alternate Tuesdays throughout the term, beginning on April 29. An additional Tuesday, April 9, has also been secured.

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There are many difficulties experienced in formulating a programme, since the number of classes that could be arranged is far greater than the number of evenings available.

Luckily, however, we have reached the stage when, having some 16 or 18 dances of both Estonia and Sweden in our repertoire, we can now consolidate on Wednesdays those dances that have been taught on Fridays only as well as the whole programme of Estonian and Swedish dances that have been taught over the last 2 or 3 years.

Phillip Thornton has been experimenting with Tuesday evening Balkan dances at the Chenil Studio for many months, and has, as is well known, the nucleus of an excellent Balkan group. Chenil Studio is of course too small for a serious class of more than about 4 or 5 couples; further, Balkan dances need a continuity of regular evenings in a large hall if they are to be learnt and danced well by a larger group, and we are therefore beginning the summer term with regular fortnightly Balkan classes at Carlyle School on Tuesday evenings.

A course of Spanish Dancing is still being considered, but is in abeyance until a suitable instructor can be discovered.

The printed programme will be available with the next News Sheet, and members who are not already invited to the Friday Classes or to the Balkan classes and wish to join are asked to submit their names to a committee member for consideration.

B.P.

YOUTH HOSTEL WEEK-ENDS

Ron Garland and Penny are organising a Youth Hostel Week-End for the first week-end in May, at CROCKHAM HILL. There will be a dance in the village hall and a very good week-end is ensured. Will all members wishing to be included please submit their names to Ron or Penny or make their own booking with the warden.

Although it is a great loss to the Society, we are glad to announce that Jim Titheridge has accepted the wardenship of the High Roding Youth Hostel, since Jim has been looking forward to full Wardenship at a Hostel for a long while.

We feel sure that with Jim in charge, High Roding is going to be the most popular Hostel near London, and we ask all YHA members to visit Jim as often as possible. There will certainly be a good atmosphere at High Roding, and good dancing, and we hope that some of the members will organise a week-end party there very soon. We wish Jim the very best of luck, and have assured him of the support of us all and also of many visits from old friends. Jim, on his part, as soon as he is settled in, hopes to visit London every Monday, and possibly to arrange a beginners' class on alternate Mondays.

WE ARE VERY GLAD TO ANNOUNCE that, as most members already know, MARIE LEFORT has made a very successful recovery from her illness, and is now back in the fold once more. She wishes to thank members for their many kind enquiries and to say that she really is fit and well and will be taking you in hand in the Scottish Country Dancing classes that are included in the Summer programme.

Mr J Richardson

16, Broadgate House

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