

JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING.

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Deadline for News Sheet - The fourth day of each month.

EDITORIAL

Two months ago the News Sheet contained an article pertaining to the Albert Hall Festival. It seems that this show is a long way off, and people may be forgiven for thinking that it is unnecessary to do anything about it just yet, time enough to start handing in names and attending rehearsals after the summer holiday period. Yet is it really so far ahead? Even by starting now there can only be some half dozen rehearsals for each chosen nationality. Our show is judged, as the Chairman so rightly suggested, by comparison with the ethnic visiting teams. The Ukrainian team who have just toured England use the following programme every day - 3 hours of exercises, 1 hour of special steps, and a complete rehearsal for the afternoon or evening show. Judging by that standard, we will be in no danger of over-rehearsing. One aim of this leading article is to stress upon members the utmost urgency of members' co-operation.

The second object of this article is to examine some of the difficulties which may arise as a consequence of the show. As the Committee and all thinking members know, large demonstrations can cause some discontent and annoyance to members. A large show can also disrupt the normal running of a programme, a class, or even a dance. What is true here is true in that hot bed of folk dancing, America, and Vyts Beliagus writes in his excellent magazine 'Viltis' "exhibitions tend to breed bickering, feuding, jealousy, rivalry, and snobbery".

Fortunately this danger has been recognised by the producers and they are doing all in their power to prevent unpleasantness because of the show. Members have been told already of the nationality of the dances which we will present, they have been invited to hand in names and particulars. Efforts are being made already to provide for the costume question. Members can be told if necessary when relevant rehearsals will take place for the whole of the coming term, so that private plans may be made accordingly. On the face of things all should go smoothly, but there may still be pitfalls. There is,

1. The member who hands in the name but who is not chosen.
2. The member who never reads the News Sheet and so knows nothing about it.
3. & 4. The person who does not want to dance in the show, and the newcomer.

Firstly, the rejected, the person who is sure he knows the dance thoroughly, who has a costume, and who is willing to attend rehearsals. Presumably the teacher knows the reason for the

rejection, but the reason is rarely given - and even more rarely accepted. Honesty is often painful, and it is often wiser to accept the decision of the teacher without question. Where an explanation is demanded, the teacher owes it to his pupil to state, kindly but plainly, why he has not included a certain person in his team.

Secondly the 'don't know anything about it type'. On the face of it, it might be answered that this person being too lazy to read the News Sheet has no ground for 'griping', but this is not a sufficient answer. The Society has no right to be over-independent. Every member counts, even the lazy ones. Members who do not appear to have heard about the show should be enlightened by fellow members, and a few invitations from the teachers would not come amiss, if a likely dancer does not come forward.

Points three and four are linked together because in this instance their answer could be similar. The person who does not wish to dance, and any newcomers or beginners, should attend the classes anyway. The teacher should allow them to form sets or couples at one end of the room, and providing they accept that the teacher's concern will be for the people who are rehearsing, that his time will be devoted to these, and that the normal rules of politeness are observed, i.e. silence when the teacher calls for it, a lot of fun - as well as dancing - will be enjoyed by everyone. These extra couples or sets must be accepted by the teacher, and possibly a short period of general dancing could be included without encroaching too much on the rehearsal time - it has all been done successfully before. This method seems to be the only way to prevent justifiable annoyance and an alarming drop in the takings.

This article has only skimmed lightly over the demonstration problem, but members are invited to send in comments or suggestions on the subject to the Editor. Despite all the work and worry, the disruption and the annoyance, the Albert Hall show is a worthwhile venture, not only because it helps to keep us on the map, and maybe attracts a few new members, but because it upholds part of our constitution.

'To make known folk dancing of all peoples and to encourage the practice of them.

'To promote the knowledge of folk dancing by means of demonstrations.

'To promote interest, friendship and understanding with other countries.'

June Folk Customs

June 24 is the old summer solstice of Midsummer; the day is longest at this time and it is easily understandable that it would have great significance among primitive people. Almost all Midsummer rites have pagan origins, although the early Christian church tried hard to change this by dedicating the festival to St. John.

The time is mainly occupied with young love, and many are the attempts at divining the name of the future husband, the most common being the baking of various cakes with the accompanying ritual.

Bonfires are lighted in many countries, and in Germany, Poland, France, and many other lands they form the focal point for dancing.

It is light nearly all night in many countries, and without the darkness the spirits lose their power. Now is the time to exorcise the evil, and many customs originally dealt with this. In Germany, brooms - the witches traditional mode of transport - were burnt and carried triumphantly around the bonfire.

In Poland the girls wreath floral garlands which they float down the river, whilst the young men swim after them to recover them. In Portugal the girls must drink at seven streams on this night, and in France the girls must dance around seven or nine bonfires - this is a sure way to ensure an early marriage. In Estonia the young people search the woods for a certain fern-like flower, for the plucking of this on Midsummer's night ensures a husband.

Sandinavia leads the way for celebrations at Midsummer, where with maypoles and bonfires, the singing, dancing and drinking goes on throughout the entire night.

Midsummer is in June, the month noted for roses, love and June brides, yet few of our June brides realise that they are conforming to ancient pagan custom when they fix on that romantic month.

A Traveller in the Balkans 1957.

Pt.5. Galienile - Beautiful, but one night was enough.

The hot sun beat down on me as I approached the village, where I asked the way of two women. One of whom called her son who darted off among the rocks like a mountain goat. I had thought that I was good at uphill work, but it was all I could do to keep up with him, and I was glad when we came to the path and he departed. I set off along the track which zig-zagged among the forbidding

looking rocks, stopping every twenty minutes for breath and to admire the scenery. When I was about half way up I heard the sound of bells and voices, and looking up I saw a caravan slowly descending, men, horses, and pack mules loaded with packages. I tried to converse with them, and with some difficulty they managed to convey the suggestion to me that I await their return journey and borrow one of their horses, but as I had only a few more miles to cover I refused their offer and continued my way on foot. The town of Galienile is all of white stone which is very impressive in such wild and desolate surroundings. Galienile is famous for its wedding celebrations, for before the war many of the men left home and worked abroad in order to save money. The women spent the time during this separation making fine clothes and working splendid embroideries. The men would return in groups and there would be great mass weddings with attendant celebrations and dancing. The custom still persists on a smaller scale, although the town now works on a co-operative system.

As I entered the town there were groups of people dressed in costume. The women with wonderfully embroidered sleeves and jackets, the latter resplendent with gold filigree work and buttons, and with striped aprons covered by another apron of tassesl. On their heads were white head-scarves. The men wore white trousers embroidered with black braid, little jackets, and pill-box hats. The majority of the people however wore their everyday costume which is much plainer and often very dilapidated.

The hotel Dosta turned out to be a large building full of beds; meals being provided at a nearby restaurant which was the social centre, possessing the one radio, with a loudspeaker fixed on the roof. After a meal I sat listening to some Albanian music which played almost non-stop from the radio, and watching the passers by. Near me sat a group of old men playing dice, and at the other side a young lad in rags.

In a room at the back of the Dosta, which was the only wash-room, I improvised a plug and attempted to wash some clothes. Soon a crowd of young children gathered around the window, intrigued at seeing a man wash his 'smalls'. I was greeted with shouts of 'Zena, Zena' (woman, woman), and when I shooed them away they screamed with delight. I made faces at them and they laughed until the tears ran down their cheeks.

It was dark when I entered the restaurant for my meal, and immediately I was conscious of an atmosphere of sadness, loneliness, and decay. The men sat playing cards, talking in hushed voices analysing their slivovitza, and although I wanted to stay longer with them, I felt that I was out of place in this atmosphere and must leave at once. Accordingly I was up and out early next morning stopping on the way only to buy some fruit from a young girl, who

carried the fruit in a huge basket slung from her shoulders. The ropes attached to the box cut into her shoulders, the weight of the basket being far heavier than my rucksack.

After a wait of an hour or so, a bus arrived going as far as Debar; this I caught and squeezed in among the baggage, and frontier police, who sat clutching their rifles. When I alighted at Debar I was accosted by a well armed policeman who fired questions at me; finally I managed to satisfy him as to my peaceful and innocent intentions, and he pushed his way to the front of the queue and bought my bus ticket. I shook hands with him, to his astonishment, and to the amazement of the waiting people who looked at me with curiosity all the way to Olrid.

I returned to Skopje via Bitsla. At Bitsla I parted company with a group of students who had been singing all the way. (They had sung in various languages in an effort to discover my nationality). Bitsla, although still a handsome town, has suffered since the war. The Germans deported many of the populace and as a result the town has decayed.

I caught a modern diesel train to Skopje, making friends on the way with a young student, Ali, whose home was in Struga. We conversed by means of dictionaries, and he was greatly amused at the sight of a group dancing on the station at a town called Tito Veles through which we passed. A few nights later I was dancing this same dance, Makedonsko, with a crowd of youths outside the railway station at Skopje.

At Skopje I installed myself at the Arabska Kuea, (Arab House) where I shared a room with a young Greek commercial traveller, to whom I nodded greetings three times a day - morning, noon, and night.

Pt.6. Skopje again - my friends entertain me.

Ken Ward

The Gourmet

Enchiladas (Mexican)

1 Egg	4 oz. Flour
¼ Milk	¼ lb. grated cheese
¼ teaspoon salt	1 chopped onion

Sauce

1 teaspoon flour	Bacon dripping
1 teaspoon mixed herbs	Tomato juice

Mix egg, milk, flour, and salt into a batter, very lightly cook as

for an underdone pancake. Sprinkle the grated cheese and chopped onion onto each pancake, and roll. Place in a greased dish and cover with sauce. Sprinkle top with the remaining cheese and onion and bake in a moderate oven for 20 mins.

Sauce

Mix flour and dripping and lightly brown. Add herbs, tomato juice and a little onion and mix with a little water to a thin paste. Simmer for 5 mins.

Serve enchiladas hot with the remainder of the sauce.

Notices

Wedding Bells

When a Ukranian decides to request the hand of a girl in marriage, his father appoints two men to intercede with the girl's parents; these are called 'starosti' or matchmakers. The two matchmakers enter the girl's house carrying bread and whisky, after rapping on the door three times with a long cane. If the match meets with all-round approval, the girl presents the two matchmakers with beautifully embroidered towels which they tie across each other's chests. She then presents her betrothed with an intricately worked handkerchief which he ties on his belt. This act of betrothal is considered absolutely binding, to be broken only by death.

The Polish people also employ a matchmaker whose main task is to ascertain whether the boy's suit is likely to be considered favourably. This job-'wywiady'-is rather tricky as no loss of face must be sustained by the suitor. Accordingly the matchmakers, dressed in their best clothes, and with a bottle of vodka sticking out of their pockets, arrive at the door of the girl's house with a fictitious excuse; a loan is requested, or a bed for the night. The father, who is well aware of the real reason for the call, answers according to his inclinations. If the young man is not to be accepted, the loan is courteously refused, if he is to be accepted the matchmakers are asked into the house and the marriage is discussed.

Without the aid of starosti or wywiady, a South African named Jeremy Sloen has proposed marriage to, and been accepted by Committee member Dorothy Weir. Dorothy reports that Jeremy is six feet tall, with blue eyes and fair hair, but is as yet a non-dancer. The date of their wedding is not yet fixed but she will keep us informed. The very warmest congratulations to you both.

Margery Latham is waiting to make up her teams for the Albert Hall Festival. Give her your name and address on a slip of paper, indicating your willingness to dance and rehearse for the show. This should be done as soon as possible please.

Sometimes you may find difficulty in pronouncing the title of a dance. It may help if you remember that the letter 'J' is pronounced 'Y' in all European countries excepting the French and Spanish.

It is pleasing to report that the weekend at Bradwell was a success, due in great part, according to the organiser Ron Ewington, to the work of Mourie Pfeffer both as musician and M.C.

The grass is always greener.

Ken and Irene Fyffe wish to announce that from June 8th their address will be - 16 Lock Chase, Blackheath, S.E.3. Bert's address however remains unaltered.

The Stork Club.

The stork clicked his castanets to the tune of a bouncing boy to Margaret and Peter Colato on June 4th. Heartiest congratulations to you both and a warm welcome to junior.

The English Folk Dance and Song Society.

The E.F.D.S. are organising an International Folk Dance Festival at the Royal Albert Hall, on Monday, July 7th.

The teams taking part come from the following countries: South Africa, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Belgium (Flag waving), England, and possibly Scotland.

English Country Dances

Dr. Hugh Thurston has compiled, from the Cecil Sharp Library, an index of English Country Dances. This index includes all the eighteen editions and additional volumes of Playford's Dancing Master, also many of the collections of Thompson, Walsh, Johnson, Cahusac, Preston, Wright, etc., of the 18th century, and most of Thomas Wilson's publications in the 19th century. In addition the Library has some twenty Ladies' Pocket Books (the earliest for 1768 and the latest 1824), each containing a dozen or so dances of the year. Altogether Dr. Thurston's index covers 125 collections and lists about 1,500 dances.

The E.F.D.S. are contemplating the publication of the above index in stencilled form, but before making any decision they would like to make a rough estimate of the number of possible purchasers. The cost is likely to be not less than 7/6 per index.

Anyone considering acquiring one of these indexes should make contact as soon as possible with Miss Sara Jackson, Librarian, E.F.D.S., Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road., London, N.W.1.

News from the Groups

Iberian Group. (Spanish and Portuguese)

The Iberian Group is now under the auspices of the L.C.C. Evening Institutes, and will meet at St. Mathews School, Old Pye Street (off Victoria Station) on Monday evenings from 7.30-9.30 pm. The Group is still part of the S.I.F.D., and members of the Society are always welcomed.

Hornchurch Folk Dance Group.

This group, which branched off from Harrow Green in order to cater for 'out of town' dancers, meets every Thursday from 7.45 to 10.15 p.m. at Ayloff Primary School, Elm Park. They are a thriving group with an ever-growing membership; their only losses have been Peter Lilly, Paul Bradley, and Dorothy Jones, all of whom have left the group because their employment has taken them to other parts of the country.

Their organiser, Mrs. Ivy Romney, 258 Princess Margaret Road, E. Tilbury, Essex, writes - 'You will be pleased to learn that the group have already entered in one non-competitive festival in Romford run by the E.F.D.S., and we have three demonstrations booked. Our membership is growing fast and we shall soon be shouting for more records'.

Walthamstow Folk Dance Club.

(The White Heather Dancers).

The Club specialises in dances of the British Isles. Anyone wishing to dance English, Scottish, Irish, or Welsh dances should contact the S.I.F.D. Secretary.

Opoczno Group. (Polish dance and song).

The leader of the Group, Zutek, went to Dublin at the end of May to teach a group of Polish students at the University some dances for the Dublin Dance Festival. He reports that they were overjoyed at the chance to dance, and after a weekend of concentrated teaching and learning they were able to put up a very creditable performance. The Opoczno Group were able to loan their costumes to them, for which they were very grateful. On Saturday, June 7th the Group gave a demonstration at the Open Day of the Waterloo Evening Institute, where their classes are held, and they put on a very creditable performance of Polonaise, Krakowiak, Opoczno Suite, and Mazur. It was rather hot, and there was not much room, but the audience were very impressed, as instanced by one overheard remark, 'Coo, no wonder they practice in shorts!'

DEMONSTRATION NOTES

Life hasn't been so hectic this month, as far as demonstrations are concerned. This is fortunate as with the bus strike on we need all our energies to fight our way on or off tubes or to walk to work. We danced at Hampden House School, Great Missenden, on Saturday 10th May. This demonstration came to us from one of the teachers who attended my Bisham Abbey course at Christmas and who has since joined my L.C.C. class. She told me that the girls might be apathetic but that she wanted to start a group as an out of school activity and thought that if they saw the dances it might kindle their interest. We were therefore pleasantly surprised when they all joined in the dances with enthusiasm. Their school is in a lovely large old house with parts of the original dating back to the 14th century, and some interesting Tudor additions. It is open to the public once a year at Whitsun and would be well worth a visit.

Our second demonstration was for the U.N.A. Camberwell branch and entailed lots of planning, with consultations, and letters and endless telephone calls (after eleven at night!). It was in aid of the Baden Powell Scouts Memorial Hostel and the U.N.A. The Mayor of Camberwell was present and joined in the first dance. Other items during the evening were a local English Folk Dance team who gave four dances and an Indonesian student who danced The Candle

Dance. We alternated demonstration dances with simple ones for everyone to join in. The response was good and enthusiasm high even if the standard of dancing left much to be desired!! The sponsors were very happy with the results and sent me a copy of the local paper with the write-up and a photograph of the team with the Mayor.

Helen Hands and Maisie Mason have recently joined the team and I am very happy to welcome them both. My thanks to all the dancers who took part in these demonstrations and to Mourie and Cliff Beck who played for us.

Future Demonstrations:

June 7th.	U.N.A. Wimbledon.	
June 21st.	C. of E. Primary School, Dartford.	} Afternoon
"	Bedford College, Regents Park.	
"	Swedish Church. Evening.	
June 27th.	Swedish team, Hambleden.	

PROGRAMME

Classes and dances at Carlyle School, Hortensia Rd., Chelsea, S.W.10.

Time: 7.30 - 9.30 p.m. Admission: Members 1/6
Non-members 2/-

Music: Wednesday and Fridays - Mme. Barbara Duleba.

Tuesdays Balkan

June 24	Advanced Balkan*	Philip Thornton
July 1	Ordinary Class	Ken Ward
8	Advanced Balkan*	Philip Thornton
15	Ordinary Class	Ken Ward
22	Advanced Balkan*	Philip Thornton

Wednesdays Social Dances and General Dances with instruction periods

June 25	General dance	M.C. Jack Richardson
	Instruction by Ilse and Heinz Striegel (Austrian)	
July 2	General dance	M.C. Richard Beckford
	Instruction by Kostek Siemaszko (Polish)	
9	Social dance	M.C. Jack Richardson
16	General dance	M.C. Robert Symes
	Instruction by Dr. Cyriax (Swedish)	
23	General dance	M.C.
	Instruction by R. Ilmari (Estonian)	

Fridays Advanced Classes*

June 27	English	Thora Jacques
July 4	Austrian	Ilse and Heinz Striegel
11	Swedish	Dr. Cyriax
18	French	Bert Price and Simon Guest
25	End of term party	

*All advanced classes are by invitation only. Applicants for admission should apply to Subject Teachers or Margery Latham.

Sunday dances at Inns of Court Mission, Drury Lane, W.C.2.

Time: 6.30 - 9.30 p.m. Admission 1/6 Non-members 2/-

June 22	M.C. Mourie Pfeffer
July 6	M.C. Simon Guest (Provisional)
13	M.C. Roly Minton (Provisional)
20	M.C. Mourie Pfeffer

Sunday dances at Cecil Sharp House, Regents Park Road, N.W.1.

Time: 6.30 - 9.30 p.m. Admission 2/- Non-members 3/-

June 29 and July 27 M.C.'s to be announced