

NEWS SHEET

August 1959

Journal of the Society for International Folk Dancing.

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Editor:- Mrs. Irene Fyffe, 16 Lock Chase, Blackheath, S. E. 3.

Chairman:- Bert Price Esq., 70 Meadowcourt, Blackheath, S. E. 3.

Secretary:- Miss Marie Le Fort, 3 Selwyn Road, Upton Manor, E. 13.

Treasurer:- Richard Beckford Esq., 66 Drakesfield Road, Upper
Tooting, S. W. 17.

Demonstration Secretary:- Mrs. Margery Latham, 361 St. John St., E. C. 1.

Membership Applications:- Ken Ward Esq., 4 Robertson Street, S. W. 8.

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

EDITORIAL

By now all members will have received a copy of the recommendations presented by the Advisory Committee for the future policy of the S.I.F.D. It must be obvious to all members that a great deal of work and thought, to say nothing of time, has gone into this report, and a vote of thanks is sent to those members - Marie Le Fort, Edward Brine, Simon Guest, Jack Richardson, who have worked so hard on our behalf. A General Meeting will be called in order that these recommendations may be discussed and voted upon, and it is hoped that members will be as unselfish with their time as have been those of the Advisory Committee. By this I mean that members will be present at the General Meeting in full strength.

Much of the subject matter is plain common sense and should require little discussion, but there are some items upon which it may be necessary to spend some time, and with this possibility in view it is important that members speak only when they are sure that they have something to say which is of vital interest or value, and to make the remarks as brief as possible.

Since this report deals with the future policy of the Society, there will doubtless be some who feel strongly upon certain matters, and I would suggest that those people really examine their motives before speaking. The essential question which should be asked of oneself is - 'Does my objection to, or support of, a certain proposal have the good of the Society only at heart, or am I really supporting a state of affairs which I personally find more pleasant?' This is a most difficult question to answer but it is essential for the future of the S.I.F.D. that it is asked, and answered, honestly.

When deciding future policy, perhaps the most important thing to keep in mind is the fact that it is impossible to go back. One can only go on. Neither can one stand still. Thus those gay, care-free days of 1946 and thereabouts can never be recaptured. Equally those adventurous 'branching-out' days for the first few years of Carlyle School are gone, and regular members will agree that they had gone even whilst we still hung on to Carlyle during the latter years. The constitution of the S.I.F.D. states specifically that the Society shall 'make Folk Dances known, and encourage the practice of them', and that it shall 'promote knowledge and practice of Folk Dances by means of classes, demonstrations, and other suitable methods'. This gives us no alternative but to enlarge; it gives us no alternative but to split into smaller groups, and, let's face it, it destroys almost entirely our earlier formation.

Our task is to go forward, taking with us the best of the old - its keenness, its friendliness, its aims, and its ideals - and to resolutely put behind us all that is impossible to take with us. It has been proved that general classes will not satisfy the vast majority of the members. After a period of general classes, a dancer discovers which type of dancing has most attraction for him, and if he

cannot specialise he has nothing to sink his teeth into, and starved of his chosen diet he will drift away.

The future policy must ensure that all specialist groups and classes are aware of the mother body, the S.I.F.D., and be willing to work and give its final allegiance to that body. To achieve this there must be a closer link-up, teachers and group leaders must do whatever lies in their power to strengthen the tie. Specialist groups and classes are fortunate - if they only knew it - in having this mother body. Personal experience in a group which broke away from the S.I.F.D. has taught me a lot in that direction. There is a lot more in running a group than appears on the surface, and whilst some groups appear to be able to do it successfully, others founder when they achieve their independence. Added to the leaders efforts, the rest of the Society must lend a hand. Ideally a member of each class or group should be a committee member, and it is up to all members to see that they elect and vote wisely at the next election, supporting if possible a member of the group to which each one belongs.

More support should be given to the social dances, since these are occasions when all may meet, but the number of these per month must be very carefully considered, since extra social dances will probably mean the curtailing of some specialist class.

In addition to the points which I have mentioned, there is much, much more to be considered when one talks of future policy; I hope all members will be considering very seriously during the weeks before the general meeting just how they can most usefully help and be of service to the S.I.F.D. I hope they will all turn up at the meeting, clear in mind as to ideas, values, motions, and intentions, and also determined to keep words at the minimum.

GENERAL MEETING ON FUTURE POLICY.

September 3rd, Bolt Court, 7.30 p.m. sharp.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all members a very happy summer holiday coupled with the request that all going abroad may collect at least one post-card of a folk dance or folk costume, perhaps some folk-music or a record, and anecdote for the News Sheet, or even a small article on their travels.

Perhaps in the September News Sheet we can collate a list of where everyone has been? So far I know of Larry, Frances and family to Brittany, Dick Beckford, George Sweetland and Ken Ward to Yugoslavia, Dick again to Llangollen, Ylva to Sweden.

In Sweden at Malmo Ylva purchased 10 complete and authentic folk costumes for the Society wardrobe and more are to follow. All who have seen these costumes are thrilled with them and future Swedish teams will perform with added verve and confidence. While Ylva was away the Secretary drew my attention to Mrs. Killin, a Swedish member, but a hurried letter to Ylva that she call on her was not fruitful since the address could not be traced. Well, Mrs. Killin, I trust that we do have your correct address, that you receive the News Sheet regularly and would like to ask for news from Sweden. Perhaps whoever collects the remaining costumes can meet you? The address we have is at La Lund which I am assuming is Lund?

There will be no Cecil Sharp House Dance in August, but since classes will not begin till September 28th I have arranged for regular Friday Social classes to begin on September 4th at Hugh Myddelton School, time 7.30. All will be welcome, both members and friends.

Membership fees are now due and I appeal to all to support the Society by joining early and enrolling a friend.

Classes being on September 28th. Attendance is covered by a fee of 10/- per term for one evening a week or 12/6 per term for 2 or more evenings a week, or 2/- per evening for guests. Members not wishing to pay the term fee can also pay 2/- per evening. Remember, however, that for 12/6 you can go to Mondays: Spanish; Tuesdays: Russian or Balkan, Wednesdays: International, Thursdays: Orchestral evening, and Fridays: Advanced Class; so for 12/6 the world is your oyster.

As you know, the Albert Hall Festival will be held on Wednesday, December 9th, evening only, and I hope to see everyone dance there. To do this I'll need to make a list of names of all who are prepared to support the Festival, so if you cannot come to the Friday classes in September please send me your name in the post.

One other date for your diary is Thursday, September 3rd at Bolt Court, when the report of the Ways and Means Committee will be discussed. This was postponed from its original date subsequent to certain members objecting to the fact that 21 days notice had not been given in writing. I had to reluctantly postpone till September since the holiday month of August is most unsuitable for meetings.

I ask you all now to enjoy your holidays and return in strength confident of a happy year ahead.

FIRST CATCH YOUR BEAR

Most people think of a mediaeval dance as being very ancient, but there are proofs in Europe of dancing at a much earlier age. Some 20,000 years ago towards the end of the Ice Age men discovered how to combat the cold and live in caves, and in due course cave art was born. Everyone knows the pictures of animals at Lasceaux and Altamira but few know that there are also representations of human beings. While the animals are perfectly depicted, the humans are mere caricatures, but some of them show men dancing and in one case playing what appears to be a reed pipe. Some are disguised as animals and the best and most famous is The Sorcerer at Les Trois Freres. He wears a reindeer skin complete with horns and tail and a mask which may be the skull over his face. He is painted by the side of a "pulpit" in the deepest recesses of the cave and the purpose of the drawings was most probably sympathetic magic - if you want to achieve a certain object you act yourself doing it and bringing it to a successful conclusion. To catch an animal you must first pretend to do so. Ritual has always been danced among primitive people; the spoken word comes later. The Sorcerer appears to be imitating the pawing movements of the reindeer and leaping in the air.

Visible evidence of dancing is supplied by a dramatic scene in another cave. In the middle of an arena the body of a cave bear had been modelled in clay, an actual skull fastened to the neck. The hunters danced in a circle round the image until, no doubt at a given word, they simultaneously plunged their spears into it. It is still there, though the skull has dropped off and lies in front. All round, the soft earth of the cave is covered with the imprints of dancing feet; strangely, they danced on their heels instead of their toes. To this day there is a dance in the district performed on the heels. What was the object of all this? Bears were not eaten. Was it an obstreperous animal, refusing to be ejected from a prized cave? They were formidable opponents, standing 12' on their hind legs, and armed only with wooden spears and torches men would need to fight them at close quarters. Or were they magic animals? The bear has always been associated with magic and is still used as the badge of many places, Berne, Berlin and Russia, to name only three. But it was at this time and against this background that dancing had its origin.

MONICA BOYACK.

DEMONSTRATION NOTES

Again my apologies for the delay in writing the Demonstration Notes - pressure of work seems to mount instead of lessening, but one always hopes! We had a small team at the Y.M.C.A., Great Russell Street, on April 25th, for the British Association of Physical Training. This was a very interesting display of physical activities, from teams of little boys doing acrobatics like little clock-work figures, to professional acrobats making the impossible seem commonplace,

and with Olympic candidates doing astounding things on the parallel bars as good measure. Our dances made a colourful splash and were very enthusiastically received.

We visited the London Group of Holiday Fellowship at Golders Green on Saturday, June 6th, and had the rather disconcerting experience of having hardly any applause for the demonstrations, but quite an enthusiastic response to audience participation. They did applaud Oxdans of course. There were a number of young members in this group, and we scattered leaflets.

The Society's teams, German, Spanish, Russian, Balkan, French and Swedish, took part in the L.C.C. Festival of Dance and Movement at the City Temple on June 27th. The programme also included Scottish dancing, Highland, Country and Hebredean, Medau and Margaret Morris Movement, and two items of ballet. The programme was very successfully opened by an overture from our Folk Orchestra. These items, all rehearsed at the classes held under the Central London Institute, made it a very pleasant evening's entertainment. Many V.I.P.'s from the L.C.C. were present, and all of them said how much they had enjoyed it. We hope it will also advertise our classes for next year and give us the extra members we need.

We had a demonstration for the Windsor Midsummer Fair on the same date, June 27th. This was a return visit. Mourie Pfeffer took over for me and members of Harrow Green very gallantly came to my rescue and danced for us, as all our members, who were not on holiday, were needed for the City Temple demonstration. I had a most enthusiastic letter from the organisers saying how much they had enjoyed the dancing. Thank you, Harrow Green and Mourie.

Last on my list for this month was a demonstration for the Kent Co-operative Society at Cliftonville. This came to us from a member of the Tonbridge Wells branch of the E.F.D.S.S. We were asked for Swedish, but our Chairman thought it would be a good opportunity to hire a coach, taking as many people as we could and having a good day's outing. We took Spanish, French and Swedish. It wasn't a very well organised affair and the amplification was decidedly poor. We could hear the musicians, but the side audience couldn't. Our musicians, two fiddlers for French and Swedish, and two guitarists for Spanish, stood on the platform of a bus with a mike in front of them! It was a wonderful day, with the sun blazing down from a cloudless sky. Dancing French dances on grass in the heavy woollen Vendee costumes was very hot work. The Spanish team padded their programme to give us a few minutes extra to change into Swedish; a difficult change, as there are so many pins in the French apron and shawl arrangements!

It all went very well, and as soon as we had finished we flocked to the beach, where those who had brought bathing costumes managed to cool off, despite the low tide and the abundance of jelly-fish. Our

homeward journey was marred by the coach breaking down after we had been on our way for only an hour. The coach filled with fumes and we all tumbled out thinking it was on fire. After some time, while the engine cooled, it was decided that we had "blown a gasket" and we had to telephone the nearest garage. The mechanic who came out tinkered for an hour and a half and still couldn't "cure" it, although he made it possible for us to reach the garage, where, after yet another hour, we were "put right". We had spent the first hour and a half sitting on the grass verge by the roadside being entertained by our musicians: guitar duets with hand-clapping accompaniment and violin solos. The more energetic members played ball in the nettles. We were 3 miles from the nearest pub, and our Chairman and other male members of the team were reduced to drinking water from the garage tap! We arrived back at Charin Cross at 11.30 and there was a scramble to catch last buses and trains. Quite a day.

My thanks to all the dancers who took part in these demonstrations and to the musicians who played for us, and my congratulations to all those who danced for the first time in the teams at City Temple. They all did very well indeed.

MARGERY LATHAM

Future Demonstrations

Tuesday, August 4th: Newington Green, N.1., 7.30 p.m.
Saturday, October 10th: London C.H.A. Club, Porchester Hall.

THE GOURMET.

Ogorki Zapiekane. (Polish)

1½ doz. small cucumbers	Pinch of salt
2 knobs butter (each about the size of a large walnut)	1 oz. bread crumbs
2 oz. flour	1 teaspoon chopped dried mint
½ pt. milk	1 oz. grated cheese

Make the sauce by melting butter in a small pan and slowly stirring in the flour and salt. Add the milk until the mixture thickens.

Peel the cucumbers and steam or boil until tender. Place in a greased casserole dish and cover with the sauce. Sprinkle with the cheese, mint, and bread crumbs and bake in a moderate oven until brown.

The dish may be served as an hors d'oeuvre or as a supper time snack for a strong stomach.

KOLOS WITHOUT TEARS

by Kennovic Quad

Kalamatianos - Greece

This dance, as I pointed out in my previous article, is in 7/8 time - seven beats in a moderate tempo counted as follows:-

Count 123 - 12 - 12 , 123 - 12 - 12
Long - short - short, long - short - short

Basically there are two main sequences of footwork which we will call A and B.

A is a "doubles over" step on the spot.

B is a progressing variation of A.

All join hands, taking with your L hand and giving with your R hand. The elbows are bent and the joined hands held about shoulder level. The dancers should be quite close together and unless otherwise stated the dancers face inwards in the circle formed by them.

Sequence A

Step with the R.F. to the R.	Count 123)	
Place L.F. across R.F. putting weight onto it.	Count 12)	7 beats
Step back onto R.F.	Count 12)	
Step with the L.F. to the L.	Count 123)	
Place R.F. across L.F. putting weight onto it.	Count 12)	7 beats
Step back onto L.F.	Count 12)	

Sequence B (Line of dance, l.o.d., is to the R.)

Turning back to l.o.d. step backwards onto R.F.	Count 123)	
Step backwards onto L.F.	Count 12)	7 beats
Step backwards onto R.F.	Count 12)	
Turning body to face l.o.d. step across R.F. with L.F.	Count 123)	
Turning back to l.o.d. step backwards onto R.F.	Count 12)	7 beats
Step backwards onto L.F.	Count 12)	

Repeat Sequences A & B & A & B etc. as often as desired.

Variation No.1

In sequence B, a turn may be made in 7/8 time commencing with the R.F. (stepping R.L.R., L.R.L.) and then rejoining hands to continue with sequence A,

There are many gramophone records available from the Greek catalogue at "His Masters Voice" shop in Oxford Street. One of my favourites - a record with a strong rhythmic beat and Greek flavour - is No. , but listen to several and take your pick.

NOTICES

New Term Enrolment.

The new term begins on Monday, September 28th, and enrolment dates are as follows:-

Old Members - Monday, September 14th.
New Members - Monday, September 21st.

When enrolling, the question may well be asked, 'Why should I join the S. I. F. D. as well as pay my L. C. C. subscription? I only want to dance, so why pay out any more money?'

The answer to this is that by joining the S. I. F. D. you are giving your support to the folk dance movement. You are supporting a non-political, non-sectarian, non-profit making concern (and they are rare), which exists to further your interests, and to give you the dancing you require.

Also, by joining the S. I. F. D. you qualify for participation in S. I. F. D. demonstrations, you receive a monthly News Sheet, and you are entitled to enjoy the benefits of Society dances at reduced cost.

More important, however, it also makes you one with a body of good repute; it makes you one with those others who are striving to keep a good standard in folk dancing, who dance because they feel they must; it gives you a place in the folk dance world - in fact you feel you belong.

SUNDAY DANCES

Inns of Court, Drury Lane.

August 2	No Dance
9	M.C. Richard Beckford
16	M.C. Ken Ward
23	M.C. Simon Guest
30	M.C. John Hughes

Cecil Sharp House

August 30 No Dance

Please note: The correct address of Christopher Hatton School is
Rosebery Avenue, Holborn, W.C.1.

Hugh Myddleton School - Social Classes.

Friday, September 4
11
18
25