

JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING.

<u>Contents.</u>	<u>Page.</u>
Editorial	1
Woman's Spanish Costume	2
Overseas Column	3
Letters	5
Just a thought	6
Notices	7
Special Dates	10

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, Drakefield Road, Upper Tooting,
S.W.17.
Demonstration Secretary - Mrs. Margery Latham, 381, St. John Street,
E.C.1.
Editor - Mrs. Irene Fyffe, 16, Lock Chase, Blackheath, S.E.3.

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

Editorial

A few weeks ago I was asked by a newspaper reporter at the Polish class, just why I was interested in Polish dancing more than in any other, and I realised that it was not an easy question to answer. Just why, how, and at what point does one specialise?

In the beginning one joins the S.I.F.D. and becomes acquainted with the dances of many nationalities. One is delighted with the movement and the music, with the novelty and with the fresh companions. One is intrigued by the names of the dances, and feels that one will never remember all that there is to know.

After a length of time spent in general dancing one begins unconsciously to discriminate. Certain dances become favourite, and the M.C.s and musicians at Social dances are besieged with 'request items' from hitherto contented dancer. Instead of standing up for every dance, one begins to sit out certain dances and to 'book' others regularly, often with a special partner. Although one does not realise it, one is now on the way to becoming a 'specialist' dancer.

Then on the programme one sees that a group is running which deals exclusively with one particular country, and - bingo - that is the class one joins; not questioning the motives, simply 'I like that kind of dancing best.'

With the joining of a specialist group, interest in the S.I.F.D. seems to wane, and to a spectator, the specialist has lost interest in the Society. This is not the case. The S.I.F.D. is still the mother group, but the specialist now has as immense call upon his leisure time. Specialisation means research into the customs, habits, history, costume, and geography as well as just dance. Many try to learn the language, to visit the country of one's choice, and all try to understand the people and to make allowances for their un-English like characteristics - no easy task for an insular countryman.

Specialisation, or rather the reason for it, has many explanations, but no one can really say why this or that country is chosen before all others, nor why a dancer has a special aptitude for the steps and dances of that country. Suffice it to say that the urge is there, and that it is the natural outcome of the Society, helping to fulfil an article in the constitution the magnitude of which would be too great without the specialist groups. To promote and encourage research into and study of the origin, development and traditional practice of all Folk Dances, also to promote interest, friendship and understanding with other countries.

Woman's Spanish Costume - Andalusia

Many people have asked me at one time or another how to make an Andalusian costume, how much material is needed and how much it costs. There are many ways to make this type of costume, but the basic type of dress worn by most of my group is outlined below:-

1. Choosing colour and material.

First of all, bright colours are a must - reds, greens and blues are very typical, either with white coin-spots, with braiding, or with both. These are usually cottons, starched as stiffly as possible over lots of white petticoats. It is well worth spending that little bit extra on material and getting a good glazed cotton, as this will come through a lot of rough handling in buses, trains etc., with the minimum of creasing; it will also save time in washing, ironing and starching.

Care should be taken both with materials and braiding to see that they are colour-fast. (Two of my white dresses, which were trimmed with red in the past, are now orange and dark red owing to the colour coming out of the trimming.)

2. Amount of material

Cut in this way, the circle method, 16 yards of the basic material is needed plus at least 60 yards of lace or trimming. The latter will often cost more than the actual material, so be warned and pay a visit for all your costume wants to Petticoat Lane or some such market where wholesale shops will sell trimming very reasonably -(e.g. I have had 40 yards of white lace for 10/- the lot, and various amounts at 3d. to 6d. per yard.) The same shop sold me the zip-fastener, cottons and waist petershaj at equally reasonable rates.

2. Making the dress.

(a) Cut out and finish top, (a plain fitted bodice to hip length, with V-neck back and front and long zip-fastener up centre back) without sleeves - at least for the present. See that it is lined throughout and has a petersham waistband inside - both the lining and the band help to take the strain of the heavy skirt.

(v) Cut out a circular skirt as the basis to your frills: this takes 4 yards, but remember that it starts at the hips and not at the waist.

(c) Frills are cut in small circles from the remaining materials; (approx. 11 yds.) The material is folded to make 4 thicknesses. Circles have a 9" radius, with a hole in centre approx. 4" across. With half circles from the edges (i) join one of the two pairs of straight edges together, thus forming the same shape as a whole circle cut across one radius, e.g. (ii). Work out how many circles your dress will need in each frill, (this pattern allows 4 actual frills) as this varies with your hip measurement - there are 28 full circles in all and the proportion should be about 4 for top frill,

6 for 2nd frill,
8 " 3rd "
10 " 4th " .

Join the circles straight edge to straight edge, so forming one large circle which is the frill.

(d) Sew on lace or trimming before attaching to skirt, for easier sewing.

Dresses in our demonstration team are 'ballerina' length, but can be longer. Some of us prefer a fringed neckline rather than the more traditional scarf and sleeves for reasons of easy and quick changing.

I am always willing to help with dresses or to advise.

Margaret Colato.

Overseas Column.

Dance New of the Pacific Northwest.

It is some time since the ancient typewriter has been set to work to produce a newsletter to London. It is not to be inferred that we have been negligent in our dancing -far from it-, many feet on this Coast have been keeping time to the music of many nations.

Perhaps the most interesting event to take place recently was the Scandinavian Midsummer. On the weekend of June 20/21st, several cars set off from Vancouver, B.C., taking members of the Swedish Dance Club (Lekstugan) and the newly formed Vancouver Folk Dancers to spend midsummer in the United States.

Our friends of "Skandia" - an active dance group in Seattle - have developed a small farm "Skandia Gaard" near Tacoma, Washington. It is in excellent location, high on a hill overlooking the blue waters of the inlet, with the glacier-covered cone of a 13,000 ft. extinct volcano, Mount Rainier, dominating the mainland. Cabins have been erected and furnished in the style of the "old country" (whichever the old country might be), and a platform constructed by willing hands on which the evening dance was to take place. A small encampment was formed in the corner of a field and after a steak supper (during which the field was nearly set on fire) the general dance commenced, to the tape-recorded music of the October Skandia Ball - polkas, schottisches, waltzes and hambo after hambo with a dash of kolos, Zillertale Landler, Irish jigs, etc. Everyone went to bed that night with a 'Hambo limp'. The following afternoon the midsummer pole, decorated with its usual greenery and flowers,

was taken in procession to the lower field and erected; to become the centre of a song-dance. The circle broke spontaneously and snaked up to the waiting crowd grouped around the platform with their picnic lunches spread around them. The visiting groups were introduced and "our friends from the North" (we wished we had brought our Eskimo costumes) were invited to join in a Gammal Waltz to the music of the orchestra. As Lekstugan were expected back in Vancouver that same evening to rehearse for the midsummer festival to take place the following week-end, a demonstration was then given, by "Skandia", of Otto Man Engel, Oxdans and Vingaker, performed with humour and grace. We sped back along the highways, over the border and into Vancouver to polish our own offering for midsummer, when "Skandia" would make a return visit. Four hundred miles for a weekend of dancing may seem a long way, but it seemed well worth it to us.

Swedish Park, in which the Vancouver Festival took place, is on the North Shore, backed by mountains and bordered by a creek. "Skandia" were camped in one corner of the park by Saturday afternoon, and with the Finns and Danes, provided the dancing for that programme. On Sunday afternoon, with the Scandinavian families grouped around the open-air stage with their picnic lunches, "Lekstugan" opened the programme by coming through the park with their rakes and scythes to perform the Harvest Dance on the stage, followed by Gotelands Quadrille - with its drunken sailor step (very like the hornpipe) and final, saving figure of "going to church", and Gentry Waltz which has a 'whispereng' figure similar to that in Vastgotta. The "Skandia" orchestra played several folk tunes in a swinging style which made us feel very sorry that we were not supposed to be dancing to such lively music. The Danes gave a very colorful demonstration and there were various singers and violin players to round out the programme. Later, the crowd gathered in the circular dance hall which soon became hot and cramped. The "Skandia" orchestra were persuaded to lead some dancing on the stage where, to our pleasure, we were able to join with them in dances known to both our groups - Family Waltz, To Tur, Mayim Mayim- and a number of dances new to us. One violinist a German, was able to play Kreutz Konig, but we found "Skandia" did not know the dance. All too soon, our Seattle friends had to leave to make the journey across the border, down the Washington highways to their homes.

Our small groups - called "Vancouver Folk Dancers" for the purpose of the trip (a name which we feel we could improve - perhaps the "Basement Ballerinas" would solve the issue) has grown to twenty members. We are to lose a very keen, S.I.F.D. member, Ian Grant, at the end of July, when he takes his family to Prince Rupert some miles north. Happily, Ian has quite a collection of records and a tape recorded by Mourie 2 yrs. ago which we have now duplicated on

tape for our own use. Perhaps a 1,400 mile trip would be too much for a weekend, but we hope to see Ian and his family at some time in the future.

On June 15th the Queen will visit Vancouver. On her itinerary she will visit the Empire Stadium where all the children will greet her with a typical "Hi". The national groups have been asked to attend in costume with their own musicians, and to perform simple dances in their allocated positions. Patricia Paice, Beryl and Len Sawyer will be among the loyal subjects - ironically, disguised as Swedes. (Here we go with a hambo again.)

During August, among other events, a picnic is planned for all the ethnic groups belonging to the Canadian Folk Society in Vancouver. The Swedish group are to be hosts and each group has been asked to come in costume, and bring their musicians. It may be a wonderful opportunity for our own newly formed group to make some useful contacts and we are looking forward to this function.

This seemingly, exhausts our dance news,

Yours till we hambo again,

Vancouver Folk Dancers.

LETTERS.

Quantocks,

St. James's Ave., Ewell.
Telephone 2977.

*

Dear Madam,

At the Llangollen International Eisteddford last month I made a short colour film about the Eisteddford (with the permission of the authorities there of course). I have covered some of the prize-winning dances in full, again with the permission of the authorities and of the dancers), and it has occurred to me that your Society might be interested in buying copies either of the whole film or of single dances. The film is 16mm. and was shot in Ektachrome which has given us very lovely colour.

If you would like to see any of the films, I should be very glad to show them to you at any time.

Yours sincerely,
Hazel Swift.

* See 'Notices'

Dear Editor,

Having read you appealing appeal for articles to help you fill the S.I.F.D. Bulletin I began to set down lots of little thoughts. Do you think they'll be any use to you, one a month or when you are short of fillups?

If you decide to use them, I think I'd like to use a pseudonym. of some kind. The one I once used seems good enough, just 'ME'. I'm hardly the person to be voicing my opinions on some of these things, but if it helps at all I do want to remain anonymous though.

As I am writing, may I say that the bulletin is one of the few monthly postal deliveries to which I really look forward (after the cheques have been opened!) and I always enjoy it. Except the details of dress, 'cause I'm male, and the recipes, 'cause I'm a vegetarian.

Best wishes,
Yours sincerely

Since I am in possession of the name and address of the writer, and since all the 'thoughts' he has sent me are harmless, amusing, and without malice, I can see no reason why I should not accede to the plea that he remain anonymous.

Thank you 'ME', I have enjoyed reading your thoughts, and I know that the members will do so too.

Ed.

Just a thought.

TIME TO PAY SUBS, they say.

This year I'm thinking that, in order to help the S.I.D.F. financially, perhaps I won't pay my subscription. I'm a dead loss you know. And if you are a regular dancer, so are you. Financially I mean, so far as you are concerned.

You see my 15/- sub just can't pay.

Since Auhust last year I've been to about 32 Sunday Dances at Drury Lane, for which I have paid 6d less then the non-member. So I've saved 16/- and the Society has lost 16/-. Plus a 1/- each on about 9 C.S.H. dances. 25/- all told. Besides which I've had a regular bulletin (except that fraudulent double number last autumn). The bulletin must have cost the Society at least 6/- inc. post. So the S.I.F.D. has lost 31/- on me.

And shall I get a rebate if I join a class this winter.....?

That's enough to make any respectable Hon. Treas. start a non-membership campaign.

Actually I like societies that exist for my benefit. I'm all for 'em. Especially when it's a cash profit. But I've a sort of feeling the S.I.F.D. needs the money. So shall I refuse to renew? And join a rival society to make it go broke?

All the same there is something nice about getting something for nothing, something you don't have to pay for. I didn't realise one got so much for one's money. Perhaps after all I will rejoin.

'ME'

NOTICES.

It has been arranged that the Annual General Meeting shall be held on Friday, Oct. 23rd, 1939, at 7.p.m. at Hugh Myddleton School. All members are urged to be present on this occasion, when the results of the voting for the officers of the Society are announced.

MEMBERSHIP SUSSRIPTIONS.

Members are reminded that we have now entered a new financial year, and that all subscriptions should have been renewed. This particularly applies to those nominated for office upon the Committee, for the name of an unpaid-up member will not be considered.

INNS OF COURT, DRURY LANE.

The Committee regret any inconvenience which may have been felt by members over the sudden closure of the Drury Lane Hall during August. This was due to a snap decision by the hall authorities, and one which was entirely out of their control.

All S.I.F.D. and Harrow Green members who were KNOWN normally to attend these dances were notified, but it is felt that some people must have been overlooked, and the Committee apologises most sincerely to those.

INNS OF COURT, STOP PRESS.

The Drury Lane hall may eventually be closed to us permanently if, as is suggested, the Television Studios rent it. Members are advised to watch the NEWS SHEET carefully for any further announcements.

FILMS.

The communication in the 'Letter' column by Miss Hazel Swift has been considered by the Committee, but the lack of a projector or suitable facilities make it impossible for the Society to make use of this most interesting offer. Some members, however, may have access to the necessary equipment, and will wish to go into the matter more fully. It is for this reason that the letter is included in the News Sheet, and interested members are asked to contact Miss Swift directly.

COUNTRY (FOLK) COUSINS.

Recently we learnt that Kenneth Grahame was just a "crazy mixed-up children's writer", who took refuge from the trouble of everyday life in the dream-world of Toad and Mole, Rat and Weasels. How sad that he never realised his dreams; there is nothing quite like a "Surrey Crest" week-end to straighten out the most mixed-up person. Unfortunately we cannot persuade the Big Four to hold summit conferences in costume at Godstone, but we can try to forget the world's problems by going to this rural get-together organised by the S.I.F.D. Everyone will be made welcome, that is, provided he or she has booked in time to secure a place amongst those "country cousins". Provided too that we can keep our M.C. from dabbling in gunpowder, there will be the usual after-the-bonfire dance, and, we hope, 'live' as well as 'pop' music!

Intending "rustics" please consult 'Mine Host' - Simon Guest. The cost? A few shillings to a few pounds, depending on the length of your stay here (and maybe in the "Hare and Hounds") - and too whether the bonfire gets out of hand! All types of dancers and their popular dances are catered for, from the Balkan Cak Cak to the Latin-American Cha-Cha-Cha- and these can (with others) be danced all night - and sometimes are!

You must be interested by now and so, to save you re-reading the above I will repeat -

"SURREY CREST" WEEK-END - North Park Lane, Godstone, Surrey.

30-31 October - 1 November, 1959.

Richard Beckford.

IBERIAN GROUP

The classes of the Iberian Group are as follows -

Hugh Myddleton School.

Monday 7.3-9.30 p.m. Beginners, Advanced, and Rehearsal Period.

Christopher Hatton School.

Thursday 7.30-9.30 p.m. 1 hr. Intermediate.
1 hr. Flamenco.

Commencing from September 10, 1959.

The Georgian State Dance Company of the U.S.S.R.

The above company will be visiting this country and will be appearing at the Royal Albert Hall from Wednesday, Nov.9th, until Wednesday, Nov.25th, 1959. They are dancing nightly, (including Sundays) at 7.30 p.m. Mr. George Orloff, the instructor at our own Russo-Ukraine class gives them the highest recommendation; he states they they are probably the best Russian dance group in existence, and strongly urges anyone interested to pay them a visit. Tickets may be obtained from the Royal Albert Hall. Members of the Russo-Ukraine Group wishing to see this not-to-be-missed show should consult George Orloff who will be making a block booking. Obviously there is great value in being one of George's party, as he will be able to stress points which might otherwise be missed, and generally add his comments whenever they seem to him to be applicable.

Demonstration Practices.

This year we are holding Demonstration practices during the Friday evening meetings. There will be the usual Specialised instruction preceded or followed by the demonstration practice. Dancers already in the team are asked to attend these practices, and new people with a good sound training in the basic demonstration dances will be trained up to the required standard. We are especially short of men as usual. We have several girls who have reached the standard and who could be used if ever we have partners for them. Musicians are always welcome at classes and it helps the dancers and the musicians if they can practice together.

We want to make this a really progressive year in the Society as a whole, and not least for the Demonstration side. Good demonstrations are our chief advertisement, and do help to bring in new members. Will you all please rally round and do your best to help this year.

mMargery Latham.

SPECIAL DATES.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

Friday, October 23rd, 1959, at Hugh Myddleton School.

ROYAL ALBERT HALL FESTIVAL.

December 9th. ***** December 9th. ***** December 9th.

PROGRAMME.

Inns of Court, Drury Lane.

Oct. 4th.	M.C.
Oct. 11th.	M.C.
Oct. 18th.	M.C.

Cecil Sharp House, Regents Park Road.

Oct. 25th.	M.C.
------------	------

Classes at Hugh Myddleton School.

Monday	Spanish.
Tuesday.	Balkan or Russo-Ukraine.
Wednesday.	General International.
Thursday.	Orchestral Evening.
Friday.	Advanced Class.

Christopher Hatton School.

Monday	Spanish.
--------	----------

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Now - if not before.

BARCELONA BULL FIGHT.

The Editor regrets any inaccuracies in the article last month under the above title, and wishes to explain that the account was a remembrance of some six years standing, and that her memory may have been at fault on occasions.