



S.I.F.D.

news - FEBRUARY 1966

1.

Editor: Ken Blackwood, 523 Commercial Road, E.1. Tel. STE 6237, MUS 3644 Ext. 999
Assistant Editors: Lily Southgate and Stephen Ward.

Material to be with the Editor or the Editor's assistants before the 10th February.

Classes 1965/1966

1.	Monday	Spanish	Beginners	7.00-8.00	Margaret Colato
2.	Monday	Spanish	Intermediate	8.00-9.30	Margaret Colato
3.	Tuesday	Balkan	Beginners/Int.	6.30-8.30	Kenneth Ward
4.	Tuesday	Balkan	Advanced	8.30-9.30	Kenneth Ward
5.	Wednesday	International	Intermediate	7.30-9.30	Margery Latham

The above are held at HUGH MYDDLETON SCHOOL, Corporation Row, Clerkenwell Green, E.C.1.

At CHRISTOPHER HUTTON SCHOOL, Leystall Street, Rosebery Avenue, E.C.1.

+	Monday	International	1st Year	6.30-8.30	Margery Latham
6.	Monday	Polish	Beginners	8.00-10.00	
7.	Thursday	Spanish	Advanced	7.00-8.00	Margaret Colato
8.	Thursday	Spanish	Flamenco	8.00-9.30	Margaret Colato

At CENTRAL CLUB, Y.M.C.A., Great Russell Street, W.C.1.

9.	Friday	International	Advanced & Teachers Course	7.30-9.30	Kathleen Munroe James
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+ This class is arranged by the G.L.C.
Light refreshments are available at all centres.

The Society would like to welcome three new members:-

Miss Vera Shaw
Mr. Kenneth Spear
Mr. Christopher Cooper

We hope that they will enjoy their dancing and wish them all the best.

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Mr. Tribe, last month, and Mr. Saxby, page 7, are giving a false impression of what was said about Mr. Beckford and by whom. As the extracts from the past "News" show, Mr. Beckford was requested by the members to supply an explanation of his actions in regard to his position as Membership Secretary as well as concerning the Midsummer Dance. Note from the extracts following there has been no outburst.

Relevant extracts from previous issues:-

July

.... "However, the members (at the General Meeting) expressed their extreme disapproval at the delay on the part of the Membership Secretary in letting the Treasurer have the balance of the class fee payments, to enable him to complete his accounts. Also, dissatisfaction was expressed at the lack of publicity for the Midsummer Festival to be held at Porchester Hall on the 12th. June. Unfortunately, Richard Beckford, Membership Secretary and Organizer of the Festival, was not present at the Meeting to reply to questions on these two points and the Committee were instructed to ask Richard to write a letter of explanation for publication in the "news sheet".

July

"The Midsummer Festival is past. It was a pleasant and entertaining evening but unfortunately it appears, at the moment to be a financial loss. Costs were about £90 and income about £70. More advertising and having the tickets available earlier might have made the account balance. Mr. Beckford is to be commended for the idea of holding the Festival but not for its execution".

August

"About the explanation required by the Half Yearly General Meeting from the Membership Secretary. Richard Beckford wishes to inform all members that he has taken note of the requirements of this meeting as reported to him, and will incorporate this in a written report to members covering the Membership and Class enrolments for the year up to 30th June 1965. For very good reasons it is necessary to give this within the context of the full Report and this will be published in the September "News". He regrets the further delay that this will cause, and asks for the indulgence of members".
(Editor's Note: The above note was approved by Mr. Beckford. Note the promise made and subsequently dishonoured).

September

"We regret we are unable to print Mr. Beckford's "letter of explanation" (that letter which was asked for at the Half Yearly General Meeting) for the very strange reason that we have had a pointblank refusal to our request for the letter. We would like to print out that lack of co-operation was the main reason for the Committee requesting Mr. Beckford's resignation".

October

"We still have no letter of explanation from Richard Beckford".

(Editor's Note: This was the last note inserted about this matter. Mr. Beckford never supplied the letter requested by the members. We gave up as we felt we were flogging a dead horse. The money question was settled later. The Secretary's Notes in the December issue state that the money had been received though too late for the correct inclusion in the accounts.)

This correspondence is now closed, (except to Mr. Beckford).

30 West End Lane, N.W.6.
30th December 1965.

The Editor, S.I.F.D. News.

Dear Sir,

Although my Honorary Membership has, for some obscure reason, been annulled (I don't know what I have done), I wonder if I may have the benefit of your columns to air a few points which may be of interest to your members, especially if we look back on 1965 and look forward to an enjoyable 1966.

For some years, I have considered that Saturday nights in London can be a bit dull. If you like folk dancing, particularly international, all that is available (as far as I am aware) is Irish dancing at one or two small halls around town, or the regular (with emphasis on the 'regular') dances at Cecil Sharp House. Why not an International dance on Saturday nights? After all, Sunday morning follows, and one can recover at leisure!

I do appreciate that this may adversely affect the Sunday Dances at Floral Street - or would it? It is quite possible that a well run Saturday Dance may encourage and foster better attendance on Sunday nights. This would be all to the good, as I believe that we have been fighting a battle to make these dances pay, as I know to my personal cost. (Musicians fees being directly related to the takings).

This brings me to my next subject; during recent months we have had quite a good response from the adverts in "What's On" and every week, during 1965, I have seen two or three new people come along. Wherever possible, I have done my best to make these new people feel at home, as I am sure have many of the longstanding members. But how many of those people do we see now? How many have actually joined the S.I.F.D.? I would venture to suggest that the total is very small - perhaps five or six people.

What amazes me more is that nobody took the trouble to ask them for their names and addresses - so we have no record of where possibly good potential members have gone to and we cannot send them details of functions or just "please come along again letters". One of the elementary rules of business (and I should know) is, having got an interested customer, to do your best to retain him, so that he is contented and orders your goods regularly. Simply substitute: new folk dancer (customer) folk dancing (goods) Sunday and other dances (regularity) and I think the same rules apply. May I suggest that (1) we resume adverts. (if they have been stopped) and (2) that we ask all visitors to sign a visitor's book, with their names and addresses and how they came to hear of us in the first place. What better way of bringing back these "drifters" than a well worded letter inviting them to come along again to our Sunday Dances, or, better still, join us on a folk dance week-end? I think you will all agree that the best way to get to know people is to go on a week-end, where there are country walks and activities other than folk dancing. I have seldom seen people, on a group walk, left on their own. We usually split up into constantly changing splinter (sometimes literally) sub-groups and in this way you can really get to know people. New members can find their feet, not necessarily on the dance floor. A Bisham Abbey week-end is a good example of this.

The next point I would like to raise is this; having attracted the new people, how do we retain them?

New people when first introduced to folk dancing, and particularly international, are shy and self-conscious. I am sure that this is due solely to the fact that they just do not know how to do the dance or even attempt it. Quite recently I was both M.C. and musician at Floral Street, and during the evening I made a point of asking some of the experienced dancers to show two or three of our simple dances. After the dance, several

commented that this should be done more often. By "show" I do not mean teach a dance from first principles, but just run through the main movements, in slow time, so that people unfamiliar with the dance can get an idea and join in. My attitude is that it does not matter how well they perform the dance subsequently - the main fact is that we now have them participating. Once over this hurdle, I think the rest is fairly plain sailing. They rapidly gain confidence - Djatchko, Windmill, Fur Tyr, etc. become "their" dance and they then have the urge to (a) perfect the steps and styles and (b) learn more dances.

I am well aware that classes are held during the week and am not suggesting that Sunday Social dances should become teaching sessions. But to quickly run through two or three dances per evening will benefit not only new people, but members themselves, who may have forgotten or never learnt them. I feel sure that this approach will also swell the rather meagre attendance at some of the mid-week classes.

Perhaps the idea is not particularly new or novel, but I suggest that it is worth a serious try. After all, go to C.H.S. any Saturday night and you will find that nearly every dance is both shown and called, and some of the regular dancers there must surely have been coming since before my time!

To return to the question of a Saturday night dance; if anyone is interested perhaps they would kindly contact me. To start with I suggest that:-

1. They be run, say, on the first and third Saturdays per month.
2. Be independant of S.I.F.D., E.G.F.D.S., E.F.D.S.S.
3. Not held during the months May to September, because of light evenings, holidays etc.
4. That some form of sit-down-and-join-in be incorporated during the evening. Perhaps a short folk dance demonstration by a specialist dance group or 20 minutes of folk songs etc. (This last idea has worked well with the Hendon Folk Music Club.)

I must apologise for the length of this letter, but I do hope that the contents will be of interest and, I hope, stimulate some action to further our mutual interest - international folk dancing.

Yours faithfully,

CLIFFORD H. BECK.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I hope the organisers of Folk Weave will not be discouraged by the criticism as it was a good show in spite of faults. I would like, however, to add one point to those made by Peter. If the programme is changed, then the audience must be told. A large part of those there were people with a real interest in folk dancing. We expect information on the programme to be correct otherwise there is no point in printing it. The Balkan group were the main offenders. Many professional groups from overseas show the same discourtesy.

STEPHEN CARD

5.
COMING EVENTS

5th Feb.

SPANISH FIESTA

by Los Ibericos

At King's Hall, Lower Clapton Road, London E.8. At 7.30 p.m.
Tickets from King's Hall or at door.

8th Feb

Inter-Varsity Club Organised Folk Dance, at Chelsea Town Hall,
from 7.30 to 11.30 p.m. Demonstration of Estonian Dancing.
Tickets: 5/- at door, 4/- in advance from IVC, 117 Queensway W.2.

18th & 19th Feb.

The Annual E.F.D.S. Folk Festival
at The Royal Albert Hall

Performances on Friday evening, 7.30 p.m. Saturday morning 10.30 a.m.
afternoon 2.30 p.m. and evening 7.30 p.m. Guest Yugoslav Team.
Tickets from E.F.D.S. or the R.A.H.

24th Feb.

Bethnal Green Festival of Arts

The Folk Dance section of the Festival will be on the evening
of Thursday, the 24th February, at York Hall, Bethnal Green, E.2.

26th Feb.

Balkan Festival

At King's Hall, Lower Clapton Road, London E.8. At 7.30 p.m.
Tickets from King's Hall or at the door.

During February and March, on Wednesday evenings from 7.00 to 8.30 p.m. there
will be a series of lectures, with musical illustrations, on various kinds
of African Music, at the Africa Centre, 38 King Street, W.C.2.

Admission 2/-

Dear Editor,

Please accept the following information for publication in the News. It is with regret I find it necessary to do this. As the Committee knows, I have voiced an objection to using the News as a means of "kicking at the other chap". I have no alternative as Peter Colato chose to write his criticisms of Folk Weave without ensuring that all his comments were valid. Constructive criticism is valuable to anyone associated with productions, and as we both serve on the Society's Committee it would have been possible to have discussed some of the shortcomings of Folk Weave in a friendly manner at the Committee Meeting following the Show. It is now necessary for me to reveal certain events which I had hoped not to mention, but to bear in mind for any future performance.

Peter may recall that it was the Committee's decision that he should not act as Stage Manager to Folk Weave as he was able to attend only one performance.

The delay in opening Folk Weave was very annoying. The pianist, who according to the report was 'having fits' five minutes before the show was due to start, had actually, without permission, organized the removal of the piano to the opposite side of the stage, thus causing a 'light' panic at the last minute.

Arrangements had been made by personal visits and consultations with the permanent Stage Manager of the Commonwealth Institute, who made various suggestions, including the placing of the piano. The Institute's assistant in charge of the curtains was acting on previously arranged instructions, but was prevented from carrying them out by the frequent off-stage demands of a non-dancing member of a performing group. Added to this, the lighting assistant was hampered in her duties by an obstruction in the tiny wing space provided for personnel needing access to the telephone. The obstruction? None other than Peter himself!

The lighting assistant, also a Committee member, had taken a day off work in order to present the lighting plot and to attend a lighting rehearsal, which is demanded by the Commonwealth Institute management, in order that the operator can be prepared with his equipment. During the performance, the 'Commandant of the Curtains' also demanded different lighting, these commands to be conveyed by telephone to the operator above the back of the auditorium. No wonder he lost the centre piece of the recording deck.

The groups requiring special lighting were consulted long before the day of the performance; their requests were on the lighting plot and the morning rehearsal was as satisfactory as it could be with the limited equipment.

Regarding the engagement of the Piper for the Scottish dancer. Our Scottish member travelled overnight from Scotland, taking a day off work, paying her own expenses, in order to perform for us. A recording was available, but live music was better. Consequently, when our Chairman, after many enquiries, heard of a piper who could help us provided he could leave on time to fulfill a previously made engagement, it was decided that, in spite of the necessity to make a small change in the programme his services would be used. Cost? One guinea, out of which he had his travelling expenses to pay from Hornchurch, Essex! Incidentally, the audience were not paying to watch him, they were paying to watch the dancer. It was a thrill for them when he appeared, for he had not been included in the printed programme. In exactly one year from now will be published the 1967 January edition of the News. Would any enthusiastic would-be critics of the Royal Albert Hall Show 1966, please check their comments before sending them to press.

KATHLEEN MUNROE JAMES.

7.

44 Totterhall Road,
Palmer's Green, N. 13.

21st December 1965.

Dear Editor,

I was glad to read Harry Tribe's letter in the S.I.F.D. News this month, and I endorse all that he says. I, too, would like to thank Richard Beckford for all that he has done for the Society.

I was pleased also that Margery explained what led to the outburst against Richard in the previous issue. I have not heard his side of it, but so often there is a clash of personalities in club committees everywhere, with the result that somebody cannot give of his best. It is nobody's fault.

The Midsummer Festival Dance was a most enjoyable evening, and a friend who came with me - a newcomer to international, but a keen English folk-dancer - was loud in his praises. Although it may not have been a success in every way, it was certainly not a flop, and I hope there will be others to follow.

The Society is big enough in every way, to take these things in its stride, and with the season of goodwill upon us I am sure we would all wish to extend to Richard a hearty welcome to all Society activities.

May I wish him, and every member of the Society, a very Happy and Prosperous New Year.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN SAXBY.

We apologise for all we've left out this month.

The Editor and Staff.

4 Brackendale,
London N.21.

4.1.66.

The Editor,
S.I.F.D. News

Sir,

Those who remember Mr. Anton Novak and his cheerfull and effective teaching of Austrian dances will be sad to hear that I had the following letter from his son in reply to my Christmas card :-

"I am very sorry to tell you that my parents have died last summer. They had an accident with their car. So it's my duty to wish you and your family good luck for the New Year."

(Signed) Harald Novak."

If one or other of the older S.I.F.D. members who knew him would send a few lines to Harald Novak, this might be some comfort to him. The address is: H. Novak, 8016 Graz, Octweinplatz 9/11, Styria, Austria.

HEINZ & ILSE STRIEGAL.

NEWS FROM ABSENT FRIENDS

(In this case Dorothy Sloan)

As time has rather caught up with us this year and as we are unable to write an account of our doings to each of you personally, we hope that this 'annual report' of the Sloan family will be acceptable.

1965 began with a flourish with the arrival of Iain Hunter around noon on New Year's day. He weighed in at 9lb. 3/8 oz. and is now a healthy 26lbs. and still eating.

As soon as Iain was beginning to sit up and take notice we had a most enjoyable but all too brief visit from Gran Weir from New Zealand. The two of them spent many happy hours amusing one another and for a few days Gran was 'Mother' to all five 'children' when Dorothy produced a crop of German Measles on Mother's Day!

During the winter, at a Red Cross benefit, Dorothy won a return air ticket to Rome as a door prize so we took advantage of this windfall and planned a quick tour of Europe combining business with pleasure. Some of the highlights of our trip were: a most interesting week in Portugal enjoying both the sights and the first beaches we had seen since our arrival in Canada; a sunny week touring the Italian Riviera in our Fiat 500 - the largest vehicle one can navigate with any degree of safety on those roads; a medical meeting in Zurich from where we took a day trip to the Bernese Oberland and climbed 7000 feet up the Alps in a chairlift- probably the most thrilling day in our trip; quick tours of Copenhagen, Stockholm and Oslo followed by three delightful days with friends in Arendal in Southern Norway, spent fishing and eating and then eating again; ten days in London visiting friends, theatre going, shopping and revisiting old haunts; Liverpool revisited, followed by a weekend visiting relatives in and around Dumfries; South of the Border again and along the Roman Wall to Newcastle-upon-Tyne; a drive from there to Edinburgh for our final meeting and its accompanying festivities complete with haggis, pipers, and kilts galore.

Our trip home was designed to break us in gently for our return to the world of work and the kitchen sink - Edinburgh to London to Lisbon to Santa Maria in the Azores to Montreal and finally Toronto. In the whole trip we had only one really wet day and a few showers - quite a record for Europe.

Now we have settled in once more after a very blasé reception by the children who appeared to have scarcely noticed our six weeks absence. Gilliam, almost 5, has just begun at nursery school and is very preoccupied with her activities there. Alastair turned three just after our return and his main interest is the cap gun we brought back for him. Iain just eats and sleeps.

And so, to all of you, we send our very best wishes for a happy and prosperous New Year.

DOROTHY.

HARROW GREEN PROGRAMME

Classes and Dances are held on Wednesdays at 8.00p.m. at Oxford House, Mape Street, (off the Bethnal Green Road). Station: Bethnal Green.

Feb 2	Dina Kaufman	Rumania	Feb 23	Heinz & Ilse Striegel	Austria
Feb.9	Philip Thornton	Jugoslavia	Mar 2	Philip Thornton	Jugoslavia
Feb.16	John Hughes	France	Mar 9	Eve Economidou	Greece
	Mar 16	Dr. Cyriax		Sweden.	

9.

BALKAN FESTIVAL.

SATURDAY 26th FEBRUARY 1966.

7.30 p.m.

KING'S HALL, LOWER CLAPTON ROAD, E.5.

Groups participating BALKANSKO ORO, ZIVKO FIRFOV, SFB BULGARIAN, THURROCK, THE DUNAV BAND & ELIZABETH & NADIA LETSKY.

Dances, Songs & Music from SERBIA, CROATIA, MACEDONIA, ALBANIA, BULGARIA, GREECE & RUMANIA.

ENTRANCE FREE.

Followed by a Balkan Party at THE DANCE CENTRE from 11.00 p.m.

Please bring something to eat & drink

PROGRAMME FOR SUNDAYS IN FEBRUARY

<u>At the Dance Centre</u>		<u>Musicians</u>	<u>N.G.</u>
12 Floral Street W.C.L.	6 Feb.	wilf Horrocks - Cliff Beck	Cliff Beck
(2 minutes Covent Gdn Opera	13 Feb.	St Valentine's Dance	
	20 Feb.	Harry de Caux- Bernard Dixon	Ken Blackwood
<u>At CECIL SHARP HOUSE</u>			
2 Regents Park Road, N.W.1.	27th Feb.	The F.D. Band	Margery Latham

SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING

Chairman	Mrs Margery Latham, 14 Beechwood Ave. Kew, Surrey	WHI 9000 Ext. 701 PRO 7055
Secretary	Miss Lily Southgate 52 Banbury House, Banbury Road, E.9.	AMH 0428 CIT 1212 Ext 449
Treasurer & Membership Sec.	Mr. Roland Royston-Kinton 131 Holly Street, E.8.	
Demonstration Secretary	Miss Kathleen Munroe James 14 Oakleigh Drive, Croxley Green Rickmansworth, Herts	Latford 24323

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