

S. I. F. D.

-NEWS-

APR 66



ADY

1.

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

CLASSES 1965/1966

AT HUGH MYDDELTON SCHOOL, Corporation Row, Clerkenwell Green, E.C.1.

1. Monday	Spanish	Beginners	7.00-8.00	Margaret Colato
2. Monday	Spanish	Intermediate	8.00-9.30	Margaret Colato
3. Tuesday	Balkan	Beginners & Intermediate	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

AT CHRISTOPHER HATTON SCHOOL, Laystall Street, Roseberry Ave., E.C.1.

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

In 1966/1967 there will be a class to teach dancers how to teach folk dances. The certificate that will be awarded on satisfactory completion of the Course will be recognised by the G.L.C.: People and Groups interested should apply direct to the Chairman, Mrs Margery Latham.

NEW MEMBERS - who we hope will enjoy dancing with us for a long time to come:-

Angela Bate	Avril Bradley	Groti Haldemann
Ernest Edward	C.Hall	Jean Huw Jones
Margaret Nunn	Gill Sharman	Ron Frankel
C.D.Miller	David Ashworth	

Wanted - an accurate and reliable typist to take on the job of typing stencils for the S.I.F.D. News. Our present typist, Maureen Weight, has been doing this job for quite a long time now and we feel someone else should take over and give her a break. If you are an efficient typist, willing to co-operate with the other members of the staff - Ken Blackwood, Lily Southgate, John Hughes and Stephen Ward, and willing to devote a little of your time and energy to helping us by typing stencils each month, would you please contact the Editor. You need not have your own typewriter. We have one available for your use.

The Editor and Staff.

SECRETARY'S NOTES

Some members of the Committee have felt that we do not do enough to go out and advertise ourselves by giving Shows to the general public - in addition to the demonstrations we give. By this we mean Shows of some 2 to 2½ hours' international folk dancing produced and performed by the S.I.F.D. for the general public, in a similar way to the Royal Albert Hall Show but at more frequent intervals throughout the year and performed more by Society members than outside groups. Harry Whitaker has agreed to take on the job of organising these events, although not necessarily handling the production. If you have any bright ideas on this, Harry, I am sure, would be pleased to hear them.

The Committee have elected Ian Willson to be Social Secretary, to organise social events within the Society - such as Surrey Crest weekends, special dances or parties, etc. Jack Richardson will, of course, still be in charge of the very enjoyable weekends he kindly organises for us at Uplands, or Bisham Abbey, or Swansea Courses, etc. but Ian being on the spot, will be pleased to give Jack any assistance he may require in taking bookings.

As everyone seemed to enjoy the dance held at Porchester Hall last year, one of the first jobs our Social Secretary will be taking on is the organising of another such dance, if Porchester Hall is available in the early summer. We will let you know as soon as we have been able to confirm a booking, so WATCH THIS SPACE.

We hope you have noticed the increase in the amount of publicity since our new Publicity Secretary took over. Thanks to this, the number of new faces at our social dances has certainly increased during the past few weeks. We can attract the potentially new members to come along but it is up to each and every member to help us to keep them. The older members do not always give the newcomers the encouragement and assistance they need, and I would ask all members to please remember that they were strangers on the scene at one time, and to welcome visitors and encourage them to come again.

As Cecil Sharp House is not available for us on the last Sunday of this month, we have decided to book the Dance Centre for every Sunday this month, and also to hold a May Day Dance at The Dance Centre on, appropriately, the 1st May. Mark the date in your diary and come along, to help make this as successful an event as was our Valentine Day Dance.

R. H. Show. The Sub-Committee is now meeting regularly and the foundations are being laid for our Show in November. We hope to be able to draft the first rough programme shortly and to let you know more details next month.

The Committee were asked, and agreed, to lend the Spanish Group £50 towards their expenses for running their "Fiesta" on the 1st April.

Finances, as at 27.1.66 :	Cash in Bank	£361. 2. 7	Deposit a/c
		£455. 0. 0	Current A/c
	Cash in Hand	£31.14. 8	

We have received a payment of £25 off the loan of £75 made to the Balkan Group.

You will be pleased to hear we made £9.15.0d on the Valentine's Day Dance. Thank you for your support.

LILY SOUTHGATE
Hon. Secretary.

THE RUSSIAN INTER

For most English people this conjures up pictures of snow storms, fur hats, troikas buried in drifts, toes and noses dropping off with frostbite as one trudges home, keeping one's eyes skinned for bears. Here in Moscow, with cosy central heating in every building soft squeaky snow outside, and not a bear for hundreds of miles, it means the festival lasting from 25th December to 6th January - not, as one might think the twelve days of Christmas, but the five days on either side of the New Year. It is a festival of music song and dance, and in the folk music line, it offered this year concerts by the Moiseev Group, the Ukrainian Ensemble, 'Berezka' and the Urals choir.

Moiseev and the Ukrainians have been seen in London - indeed two of the Ukrainians' best items, a wedding dance and 'polzunets' may be seen quite often in London, but perhaps members of the SIFD would be interested in some impressions of the other groups.

Berezka was formed some years ago as a girls' group, which specialised in Russian gliding dances and in singing. Recently they have taken on some male dancers and extended their range, so that they produce a more varied programme, at the cost of some of their distinctiveness. Still their most effective dances are the gliding dances, in which their grace and the speed they achieve while maintaining an absolute smooth movement is astonishing. Their costume is usually the traditional long sarafan in many colours, with a high headdress (kokoshnik) or a headscarf. Sometimes they dance in a single unbroken chain, but usually prefer a variety of formation - two lines, four lines, circles of different sizes. In one dance 'Lebedushka' - the Swan - they wore blue sarafans and white blouses with huge sleeves, and at one point, hiding their heads with these sleeves, and making a 'neck' with their arms, and an eye with big black rings on their hands, they turned in to a row of swans on a blue lake. The most effective dance was perhaps that which began and ended with the girls in shaded sarafans - pale to dark blue, yellow to orange, pink to red, - singing a simple spinning song and imitating the spinning movements.

Their men's dances were, as they should be, scarcely more than an opportunity for display of agility and technique, and the same could be said of their two 'scenes', which are so often an excuse for a ballet choreographer manque to indulge his fantasies and push dancing right out of the picture. Berezka's scenes were a market, providing a gay background of stalls and itinerant pedlars with trays of ribbons and painted wooden toys, and 'Farewell Maslennitsa', a scene from the Shrove tide carnival. Here the dominant figure was the Maslennitsa, a huge female guy, usually made of straw, which is danced around during the carnival week, and eventually burnt. Again, the scene merely provided a background and motivated the kaleidoscopic array of costumes.

The merits of the Urals choir are different, and they were perhaps the most interesting group, being most obviously close to a popular tradition. The choir is, first of all, very good as a choir - records are available, though not as widely as one might wish. But while their voices are well blended, the singers retain individual character as people, and react to the songs, which they seem to enjoy. In several items the choir, especially the women, are used for simple chain dances and song dances, by themselves or as a background to livelier dancing by the dancing group. A number of the songs are old favourites, some are new compositions, but some quite recent discoveries - the most impressive, sung by a male solo and a male choir, was written down only last year. There were several groups of chastushki - the basic modern Russian folk song form, consisting of topical, usually comic or satirical quatrains, sung by one or two people to a very simple tune, usually with a very simple, often nonsensical, refrain. The audience revels in these songs, and demands many encores; as the songs are supposed to be spontaneously invented, new versions are produced each time.

The dancing of the group was less polished and less spectacular than that of Berezka or Moiseev. Their men leapt less high, their girls spun less fast, and their formation was less disciplined. But what they lacked in precision they made up for in zest and character. Their distinctive speciality is the quick stamping dancing, typical of central Russia, and in some items the singing and stamping were effectively combined; beginning with a song, the singers would slowly move into slow walking or gliding formation, and the dancers would break into the circle of singers and work up into a quicker and quicker rhythm. Their chief 'scene' used such a combination. It represented the old method of arranging a wedding, still, apparently, followed to some extent in central Russia. At the prospective bride's house, the parents are seated at a decorated table, while groups of friends sing songs appropriate to the occasion. The prospective groom and his parents arrive, greet the assembled company, and the bride is brought out with her friends singing, to be introduced to the groom (for the first time). If the groom is still willing, he takes off his cap and puts it on the table. The parents carry it, on the table cloth, to the bride, and if she too is willing, she turns the cap up side down. General dancing and rejoicing follows, with much stealing of young men's caps by hopeful girls, rival displays by the two fathers, and, of course, demonstrative dances by the new couple. The costume was vaguely turn-of-the-century, with the men in coats, 'Russian' shirts, long jackets and peaked caps.

The Urals choir, like Berezka and the Pyatnitsky choir, uses a folk orchestra of balalaikas, accordians, tambourines, occasionally pipes, and even painted spoons to beat a rhythm. Their musicians are part of the group on the stage and sometimes they join in the dancing. Moiseev and the Ukrainians have on the whole abandoned even this tradition; they use a small orchestra, more suitable perhaps for big concert halls, but taking folk dance one step further towards folk ballet.

One would not wish to decry the extraordinary virtuosity of the Moiseev group, which certainly offers a spectacular and varied entertainment, but it is unfortunate that England, where people care so much about 'the purity of the tradition' has had no opportunity to see some of the other groups, which show something of the tradition still alive here, which is specifically Russian.

ANNE PENNINGTON, Moscow.

Ed. note.

We would appreciate if members and friends would remember, when visiting other lands, that we are always pleased to get articles of this nature especially of such a high standard.

The Editor & Staff.

CONGRATULATIONS!! TO OUR SPANISH GROUP, LOS IBERICOS, on their achievement in winning the Cup at their first attempt in the International folk dance section of this year's Tower Hamlets Festival. Their item was very well presented and we congratulate Margaret Colato and her dancers on this splendid performance.

The Editor & Staff,

(and we feel sure, all the members)

CONGRATULATIONS and best wishes to Sheila Freedman and Joe Cott on their wedding. We wish them both every happiness for the future.

The Society's badges, pin-on, stick-on, and bolt-on are available from Mr. R. Minton, Treasurer and Membership Secretary.

5.

Dear Editor,

I was surprised to see in the Secretary's notes of the March News that there is to be a lower age limit for admission to our Cecil Sharp House dances. My own impression is that the children who have attended in the past have generally been well behaved and have enjoyed the dancing. Could the Secretary, please, through the News, tell us how many complaints she has received and their nature?

Yours sincerely,
JACK RICHARDSON

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Dear Jack,

First let me say that "Secretary's Notes" are the voice of the Committee and not, necessarily, my own opinion. However, in this particular case, the opinion of the Committee was unanimous. We have very good reason for not wishing to admit young people particularly without adults accompanying them, to our Sunday dances.

Regarding toddlers and babies, we have had several verbal complaints from members who feel that adult functions should be strictly for adults, and that children should only be present at functions, such as tea dances, to which they have been specifically invited. In an effort to comply with members' wishes, we therefore decided that no children under a certain age should be admitted to our Sunday evening dances.

However, if this is going to preclude some of our older members from attending altogether, and if some members feel strongly about this, would they please write expressing their views to the Committee and if the majority feel that children should be admitted if accompanied by their parents, the Committee will be only too pleased to review the situation. We do not intend to publish any further correspondence about this in the 'News' but will publish our ultimate decision.

Yours sincerely,

LILLY SOUTHGATE.
Hon. Secretary.

REMEMBER!

Our May Day Dance on the 1st May (Sunday)

Displays of Morris and French dances

Music by the S.I.F.D. maestri.

Master of Ceremonies: Mr. Ian Willson.

COME AND ENJOY YOURSELVES with your friends at the Dance Centre, 12 Floral Street, London, W.C.2. (near Covent Garden Opera House) from 7 p.m. till 10 p.m.
Admission:- Members 4/-, Friends 5/-

HARROW GREEN FOLK DANCE GROUP meet on Wednesdays at 20.00hrs in Oxford House, Mape Street, E.22 (off Bethnal Green Road) Station - Bethnal Green. Admission (non-members) 2/6 - First visit free!

April 6th An evening of folk dancing to the music of Cliff Beck and his Squeeze box.

April 13th Henry Goldstein - Israeli

April 20th Henry Morris - ?

April 27th To be arranged

May 4th Eve Economidou - Greek

To the Editor:

I was interested (and indeed delighted) to read the letter from my friend and fellow 'squeeze-boxer', Clifford Beck, in the February "News". Much of what Clifford says cannot be said too often.

One of the greatest problems which dance groups and societies have to face (and grapple with, if they are to survive) is the wastage of new and potential new members, and I believe, as Clifford does, that more could be done to remedy this wastage. My own experience leads me to believe that much of the remedy is (or should be) in the hands of the M.C.s.

Too often the job of M.C. is not taken seriously by groups. It is given to (or forced upon) any person who is willing or weak-minded enough to help fill a duty roster of names, and this for a job which, by the very nature of things, is the most important in the group. I believe that the presence or lack of good M.C.s can make or destroy a group more than anything else.

Clifford, and other musicians also, will know only too well the M.C. who believes that his job begins and ends with announcing the name of a dance. Having done that he goes off to talk to his friends. He makes little or no effort to persuade people to come on to the floor, or to give them any help they may need if they do. He leaves the musician to decide when to start playing, and when to stop. He makes no effort in advance to compile a programme which will cater for those with experience and those with none. He may even ask the musician to suggest dances! Indeed, he may be guilty of the arch-crime of including dances in his programme which he doesn't know how to do himself, without ensuring that there is someone willing to act for him who does. "M.C.s" of the character I have described do exist in more or less degree, and when they are let loose the damage they do must be enormous. In "international" dance circles the classes, sessions evenings and weekends for teaching dancing must be legion, but has a course, a class or even one small lesson ever been held to teach the principles the practice of the job of M.C.?

There is one small way in which the musician can help beginners. To those would-be dancers who are new to "international" dancing (and often to more experienced people too) the announcement of the name of a dance may convey nothing, but a few bars of the tune played over by the musician before the dancing actually starts can bring recognition, and may make all the difference between coming on to the floor and staying off it.

Yours sincerely,

HARRY DE CAUX

The Society's books are available from most bookshops on request. Anyone experiencing difficulty in obtaining them should contact:

Miss Marjorie Bracey,
15 Holndene Avenue,
North Harrow, Middx.

The Society's records are available from Recorded Sound, 27 Bryanston Street, E.1.

One discount scheme on records and books is operated by Marjorie Bracey, (address above) to whom the receipt for the goods should be forwarded in order to claim the discount. This service is available to affiliated groups, as well as members, who should apply to Marjorie for full details.

7.

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN POLISH?

No - not Kiwi or Cherry Blossom - Middle European. If you have recently been to Poland and admired the spirited and colourful dances of that country, or even if you haven't, here is your chance to join in.

Miss Betty Harvey is teaching Polish dancing at a class that she is running for the S.L.F.D. on Mondays from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. This is an excellent opportunity to brush up your Polish technique, (if you already do dance), or to learn good Polish technique. Miss Harvey is concentrating on those people who have only recently started but dancers with experience will welcome this chance to brush up the rough edges or weak points of their Polish dancing.

If you've a free Monday come and see for yourself. Visitors are very welcome, especially if they join the class.

CHRISTOPHER HATTON SCHOOL, Laystall Street, Roseberry Avenue, E.C.1.
MONDAY EVENINGS - 8.00 - 10.00

See you there then?

Editor and Staff.

WERE YOU THERE?

If not, you missed a wonderful party, organized by Narendra Kotiyen at the Dance Centre on Saturday, the 26th February, following the very successful Balkan Festival. The party was a get-together for the various people who have taken part in the three performances of the Balkan Festival and was also open to anyone else who wished to join in the fun. The party started at 11 p.m. and the hall was packed to capacity, with a colourful sprinkling of costumes from Macedonia, Serbia, Bulgaria and Rumania adding to the scene. The dancing was, naturally, mostly Balkan, but with some modern ballroom thrown in, and the music provided by the Dunav Band, whose versatility continually amazes one. (What other band can switch from an authentic rendering of the Serbian zikinko to an authentic New Orleans' "When the Saints Come Marching In"?). As is often the case when Henry Morris is in charge, there was also a very lively folk-singing session during the evening, led by Henry, and also we were very fortunate to have with us Miss Joy Hyman, who sang for us, as did Paula Gecevic, who now sings with the Dunav Band. Food and drink were plentiful, and the party went with a swing until the early hours of the morning. It was just as well it was Sunday morning, otherwise we might have been invaded with Covent Garden porters, curious to know where this noise of weird esoteric rhythms and shouts was coming from. On the other hand, a new work dance might have been born. It's been done with wine bottles, so why not with a dozen baskets of fruit on one's head.

LILY SOUTHGATE.

AN INVITATION

to a Folk Dance week at

'LIHN'
FILZBACH
GLARUS (Central Switzerland)

The week-long course begins at dinner (p.m.) on Saturday, 6th August, and ends at lunch on Saturday, 13th August.

The cost will be 77 to 112 Swiss Francs (this equals roughly £7 to £10), not including the fare to Switzerland.

The instructors will be Karl Klenk, head of the Swiss Folk Dance Society and instructor to the Zurich Group, and Inge Baer, who besides being the best known folk-fiddler in the country takes a leading part in the practice and teaching of folk dancing in Switzerland.

Last year's school successfully taught a wide range of Swiss dances and, in addition, a few non-Swiss dances, which were taught by visitors. Numbers will be limited, and so will the teaching, thus providing opportunities to experience the delights of the Swiss countryside and hospitality. This will be a holiday as well as work.

Applications to: Karl Klenk,
Holzmatt 15,
CH-8953-Dietikon ZH
Switzerland

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COMING EVENTS

- Now until 23rd April - Antonio and his Spanish Ballet at the Cambridge Theatre.
 - 1st April - Spanish Fiesta, York Hall, Bethnal Green. 7.30 p.m.
 - 1st May - May Day Dance, Dance Centre, 7 to 10 p.m.
 - 4th July - A Hungarian Group
 - 15th July - Andra Mari Basque Dancers
- } These groups, over here for the Eisteddfod, will be appearing at the Chatham Town Hall. Full details later

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SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING

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

PROGRAMME FOR APRIL

		<u>Musician</u>	<u>M.C.</u>
Sunday, 3rd April	Dance Centre	Cliff Beck	Roland Minton
Sunday, 10th April	EASTER		
Sunday, 17th April	Dance Centre	Harry De Caux	Stephen Ward
Sunday, 24th April	Dance Centre	Wilf Horrocks	Wilf Horrocks

THERE WILL BE NO DANCE AT CECIL SHARP HOUSE DURING APRIL, BUT THERE WILL BE A
GRAND MAY DANCE AT THE DANCE CENTRE ON 1st MAY.

WERNER WENDEL FROM GERMANY
WILL BE TEACHING GERMAN DANCES
AT
BOLT COURT EC4
(JUST OFF FLEET STREET)
ON
WEDNESDAY 6TH APRIL 7PM-10PM
MEMBERS 2/-
NON MEMBERS 3/-