

S.I.F.D. NEWS



**JANUARY
1968**

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PRECEDING PUBLICATION.

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BADGES

S.I.F.D. Badges for lapel, scooter, and car, at 3/6, 7/6 and 12/6 respectively, can be obtained from our Membership Secretary, Roland Minton (address above).

RECORDS

S.I.F.D. records are available from Recorded Sound Ltd., 27-31 Bryanston Street, London, W.1.

BOOKS

Our books are published by Pergamon Press and are obtainable, to order, through any bookseller, price 7/6.

Discounts are obtainable on records and books purchased by members for their own use. Full details from Marjorie Bracey (address above).

We are pleased to announce that Margery Latham, Margaret Colato, and Jack Richardson have all accepted our offer of Honorary Membership, and we welcome them to our short list of members who have been given this honour in appreciation of their services to the S.I.F.D.

Unfortunately, attendance at the Friday Social Evenings at Christopher Hatton School has not warranted the continuation of these evenings so, unless there is a drastic change in the numbers attending in December, these Socials will cease at the end of the year.

Kathleen Monroe James will be running a course for people wishing to learn how to teach folk dancing, in the New Year. This is a private course, not an S.I.F.D. class, and anyone interested should apply direct to Kathleen (address on page 2).

On 16th November, some of the students from our Spanish class danced at the inter-national evening organised by Mr. Frascatti of the Italian calss at Christopher Hatton School for all students attending classes at the school that evening. Their dances were very well received.

GRAND NEW YEAR'S EVE DANCE

- at -

THE DANCE CENTRE

8.30 to 12.30

Entrance: 6/-

PLEASE COME IN COSTUME

and bring with you any food and drink
that you care to contribute.

THE BLACKWOOD SAGA

(Another instalment of Ken Blackwood's overland journey to New Zealand).

- 20th We spent the day selling bits and pieces off the boat and arranged the boat sale yet once more. We all went to the Navy but the Seawarden had vanished with the papers. We searched for him, but no luck. I went to bed, but Jack stayed to make a scene.
- 21st The Navy and we went to find the prospective buyer but found he'd gone to sea. We were furious and gave him till the last bus. I caught it but Jack decided to stay. We sold some more bits and I took 600 rp. The priest of the Pentecostal Church fixed my fare to Semarang. I arrived and found I'd till 1 a.m. for a train to Su abaja.
- 22nd Reached Surabaya uneventfully. The train was excellent. The British Consul rang the New Zealand Consul in Djakarta, and they insist that I return, by air at that. I tried the harbour (a long way) and finally got a Timor boat but they wanted the money in advance. Thumbed to Dewarutji (an ex-German steel-hulled, three-masted, square-rigged Indonesian Naval cadet training ship). My benefactor, a Chinese/Indonesian, and a Naval Captain, gave me a meal at his home and took me aboard the Dewarutji. He then, at my request, took me to the police where I shared a cell. I had to ask whether my associates in the cell were prisoners or police. The lock was on the table and the police kept popping in and out - so did the prisoners.
- 23rd Went to the Embassy and gave up. I was flown back to Djakarta. Gave full story to the New Zealand authorities. They'd been keeping track especially as the Indonesians had trebled the bill for Tengkolak and even billed them for the rudder, at 5,000 rp. instead of 500. The money sent from home had not paid the new bill.
- 24th - 30th Hung around Djakarta.
- 31st Left the hotel at 5 a.m. and caught the 7 a.m. plane to Singapore. Reached Singapore O.K. only to find I'd no ticket - they nearly refused to let me in. My tickets had been taken four or five times for checking details and the last time they failed to give me the ticket back. The ticket had been taken so often that I'd lost track, and to board the plane I'd only needed the boarding pass. Big panic. JAL, who I'd flown with and who now found themselves responsible for me, arranged a ticket with Air India to Sydney. I'd no money but I'd been sent a \$14 baggage voucher (American) but no-one would cash it. I reached Singapore at 10 a.m. and left at 9.30 p.m. and spent the intervening hours on the waving gallery at the airport, meal-less.
- 1st Air India was fine and the meals especially - the second helping was excellent. We flew from Perth to Sydney. There y ticket caught up with me - unfortunately my rucksack didn't. It was checked in but no-one put it on the plane. I reached Christchurch to find this lack and also another. The plane to D nedin did not leave until 9.15 a.m. on the 2nd - it was now 3.30 p.m. on the 1st, and the airport closed down for the night. I have relatives in Christchurch and had been looking forward to a good meal and bed, but alas, no message, no relatives, no baggage, and no money.

As I was going to have to doss out, I thought I might as well hitch down the road. Lifts were poor. I slept under a tree with my feet in a newspaper that had contained chips (I had no socks) and partially under a quilted thumb-length jacket. It was b----y cold under that fir tree and I was glad to rise at 6.30, and still there were few lifts. I wore the skin off my feet, the heels off my sandals, but as I'd no socks there were no holes worn in them.

The distance from Christchurch to Dunedin is about 220 miles or so and I left Christchurch at 5.30 p.m. and reached Dunedin at 4 p.m. the next day. During that time I was given a pie, so, provided the scales here are right, I lost 5 lb. in 24 hours.

Finally, I got a 90-mile lift which took me to my door. The house was full of kids. I've been away 12 1/2 years and I find I've nine nieces and nephews. The oldest is 9.

I'm £178 in debt, and the pushbike I left here needs new tyres and tubes. I'll have to get a motorbike.

(Ed. Note: I think this is where we came in!)

KEN BLACKWOOD

T H E E N D

"CIOCIRLIA"

When reviewing the performance of any folk group, either of song or dance, the greatest consideration must be given to its "authenticity". Quotation marks are necessary here as the point in time where folk ceases to be folk is by no means generally agreed; but however true to tradition the presentation may be, unless it is such that it appeals to an audience, which is largely unaware of these traditions, it must be counted a dismal failure. The Romanian National Company "Ciocirlia" were an especially good example of this double standard. Their presentation, production, and generally polished performance were a joy to watch. One item followed another with no embarrassing gaps. The dancers acted as if every step and figure was an expression of the joy of living, The orchestra too was obviously a well-rehearsed and co-ordinated machine. Since the only visit of a Romanian group was about ten years ago, and there appear to be no native teachers resident in London, our knowledge of Romanian folk culture is very limited. Judgment on the authenticity of dance can only be based on guesswork. I will hazard an opinion that the majority of the items by Ciocirlia had a strong foundation in tradition. Costumes for the men were definitely correct, and those for the girls, though somewhat 'tinselly' for those used to Yugoslav and Bulgarian types, may well have been so too. One discordant note was sounded by the light-coloured shoes in one item, but even here it is worth noting that the leather moccasins apparently ceased to be worn in some parts about 60 years ago.

Apart from "Calusari", the famous ritual dance which has much in common with Morris, the following items stayed in my memory. The opening item, with still figures posed in picture frames and the dancers coming to life at night at the sound of a violin, was an interesting idea, giving an opportunity for using differing costumes; a very slow dance for the girls, wearing large floral hats and "granny" boots, featured the making of a skirt; A suite from the Oltenia region, with a sort of Romanian 'shopska' and a presumably choreographed courting dance for two groups of three men and a girl; a collection of dances from one region using an unusual "halting" step, even the girls having their thumbs in the armholes of invisible waistcoats. The orchestra was the least satisfactory to my ears, the overall effect being of a very superior Lyons Corner House band, but it is possible they did actually sound like that. A habit of all producers of altering the order of items is very misleading and I have not quoted any names of dances except those which I already know.

It is a great pity the group could not be seen by more members as I am sure most would have been as entertained as I.

GEORGE SWEETLAND

A FURTHER REMINDER OF TWO FOLKDANCING WEEKENDS:-

19th/21st January BISHAM ABBEY, MARLOW, BUCKS. This is a comfortable converted abbey with an interesting background. It has a good dance floor and is in good walking country. The programme will, as usual, include walking during the day and dancing in the evening. There may be a few places left, so, if you would like to come, please send your booking, with 10/- deposit, as soon as possible to:-

Prof. Jack Richardson,
Dept. of Chemical Engineering,
University College,
SWANSEA, Glam.

The total cost of the weekend will be £2.12.6. It would be appreciated if the balance of the fee were sent before the weekend.

22nd/24th March. HALSWAY MANOR WEEKEND. Details of this house, and how to get there, etc. have been given in the two previous issues, and bookings were asked to be placed before Christmas. However, latecomers should apply to Michael Clark, 14 Weldon Place, Church Crookham, Aldershot, Hants. who may be able to accept some late bookings. I would remind you that one of the attractions of Halsway Manor is that children are welcomed and charges reduced for those under 11. The full cost for the weekend will be £3 (plus 6/- for Friday supper, if required.) I understand that there is a cheap rail fare available for travel after 6.30 p.m. a saving of 25/6d.

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The Dunav Club held its first Record Evening on the 29th November at Gale Machin's flat, and the response was very enthusiastic indeed, so much so that Gale's bedsitting-room was crammed with more than 40 people! The evening was well-organised and started off promptly at 7.30 with music from Greece, followed by music from Romania, Turkey, Yugoslavia, Albania, and finishing up in Bulgaria, thus covering all the Balkan countries. The records and tapes chosen gave a comprehensive example of the differences and similarities of the folk music and ethnic instruments of each of the different regions, and also included some very fine singing. The records and tapes were loaned by members and friends of the Dunav Club, and one of the most interesting and enjoyable contributions was the tape made by Henry Morris on his recent trip to Bulgaria, of three beautiful kaval solos played by old men of the villages.

The audience included members and friends from Ceylon, Yugoslavia, Albania, India, America, and the fact that we all sat thoroughly enjoying this feast of Balkan music for three and a half hours (with a break for coffee and buns) on small cushions on the floor, is a measure of the success of the Dunav's first Record Evening. I look forward to the next one.

L.S.

ROMANIAN DANCES & SHOUTS

The most characteristic and the oldest Romanian dance is Hora. It is a closed circle, with hands joined at the shoulder level. Out of about 2,500 dances there are 1,500 horas, each with its own step and melody. There are horas with a moderate tempo and there are quite fast ones. Horas are divided into many categories according to their origin and according to the occasion on which they are mostly performed. For instance, one of the newest horas originate in 1859 when the two Romanian principalities were united, called "Hora Unirri". The dancers usually sing the words of this hora.

Some dances can be traced historically as far as the 14th century, like Chindia, literally meaning crepuscle, and it was danced in front of a tower at the court of Mircea the Great, at sunset. Some of the dances grew along with the formation of the Romanian nation during the first centuries A.D. when the pagan culture was overcome by Christian elements.

The important thing about the Hora is the style. It was called unmistakably a majestic style. What is true for all the rest of the dances and also true for the hora is the collective rhythm. The Romanians like to dance together, and they really do dance together. It is the oneness of the step, the perfect harmony resulting out of a perfect awareness of each other, that makes the dance enjoyable to everyone and is so pleasing to the spectator's eye (if one can stand aside and watch without joining in).

Another category of Romanian dances is Line Dances, when the dancers are in an open circle, holding hands down or at shoulder level, or holding as one does in the Sarba.

Belt dances, of "Braie", are dances in line or closed circle when the dancers hold each other by the belt either in front or at the back. There are Braie, or (singular) Brau, performed only by men or only by women. The regular Brau for men is started with women joining in, then at a certain moment the women drop out and the men start their unbelievably fast step. One can hardly see their feet, which are reduced to a white vibration by the speed with which they are dancing. The leader at the end of the line shouts the variations every once in a while. The musicians are competing with the dancers, but the race is never lost by the dancers.

After this quite vigorous dance, almost as a joke, a line of women get quickly in line for a Women's Brau, a very light off-the-ground dance, as counterpart of the Brau which has just been performed by the men.

There are also couple dances, many delightful dances, easy ones and more intricate ones with a fast rhythm.

Hora, besides meaning the dance itself, has also another meaning. In the Romanian language, the actual place where the young and old gather on a Sunday afternoon or on a holiday, is also called a Hora. There, after church, the musicians attract the entire village. Hora is the place where the most important event in a young boy's and girl's life takes place. When a young girl and boy are permitted to enter Hora, it is the day when their womanhood and manhood is acknowledged. From then on a girl has the right to be asked in marriage (at the age of 16) and the boy has the right to look for a mate (at the age of 18). A certain Sunday is selected, and usually an Easter Sunday. The girl wears her best costume. Her blouse has been her chief project during the entire winter and the embroidery pattern which she will wear

will be quite distinctly different from any other. They don't call it an Easter parade, but the Easter attire inspires quite a contest among the girls especially in creation of new embroidery patterns. One can hardly see two blouses alike; it would mean lack of imagination and no girl has been accused of this yet.

The girl arrives at the Hora accompanied by her parents, and girl friends. Everybody knows that today is her big day. All the boys take her to dance. It is the custom to give her a gay time. It has nothing to do with her attractiveness or ability to dance; it is the day when she enters the Hora for the first time. She is given special attention, even though she may or may not be a wallflower. For the boy it is an equally important event. His costume is also quite a special one, for it is a special day. The boy arrives with his boy friends and his musicians.

An essential part of Romanian dances is "Strigaturi", i.e. shouts. One of the shouts says: "They who dance without shouts, well deserve crooked mouths". There are variations and there are shouts which are shouted for the sheer fun of the dancers. Everywhere there are some witty types who can improvise verses on the spot, either humorous or romantic.

All folk dancers should try to use some of these shouts, either in English or in Romanian, when dancing Romanian dances. If you learn the Romanian words phonetically, using Italian pronunciation you will not be far off. Shout them in the rhythm of the dance. You might as well shout something articulated instead of shouting "Eeeeeee" or "Youyouyou" or any of the other sounds usually used. The following are some strigaturi in both languages. Use them in any Hora or any Romanian dance not requiring specific shouts to change direction or step.

Frunza verde de cicoare	Green leaf of the chicory
Hai sa facem hora mare!	Bigger hora, bigger be!
Foaie verde busuioc	Verdant leaf of basil sweet
Sa 'nvarzim hora cu foc!	Let our hora rock with heat!
Nu te uita la cojoc	Basil, goldilock, romance
Ci te uita cu nai joc	Dear is she with whom I dance.

Join the Sarba men so gay, We will gladly show the way, If your feet are not of clay.

Pay no attention to my clothes; Rather watch my nimble toes!

Easy does it partner mine; For I dined on soup and wine.

There is danger in her glance; So I'll dance and dance and dance.

Till the sun is in a trance.

The above article is printed by kind permission of "VILTIS" magazine. Those of you who were lucky enough to see the "Ciocirlia" Group on their recent tour of England will now realize what all that shouting was about!

Many of our members who did not see "Ciocirlia" on their tour, went along to Porchester Hall on the 10th December to see a private performance but this was rather disappointing as, unfortunately, the stage at Porchester Hall is much too small to accommodate the vigorous dancing of this large and colourful group, and they only performed three dances. The rest of the programme consisted of orchestral items which, although enjoyable, were not so interesting as the dancing.

To all members of the S.I.F.D.

With the approach of the Christmas and New Year's holidays, I should like to express to all of you my best wishes and much success for the coming year.

From Magda Ossko, Budapest.

(Your member a great many miles from Charing Cross).

S.I.F.D. CLASSES

1967/68

Winter Term: 8th January to 5th April

Spring Term: 22nd April to 28th June

Fees: For one year's classes (three terms) :-

30/-	for 1 class per week
£2	for 2 classes per week
£2.10s.	for 3 classes per week
£3	for 4 classes per week

The classes are as follows:-

At CHRISTOPHER HATTON SCHOOL, Laystall Street, Rosebery Avenue, E.C.1

Monday	7.00 to 8.00	Spanish; beginners	Felisa Victoria
Monday	8.00 to 9.30	Spanish; intermediate & advanced	Felisa Victoria
Monday	6.00 to 8.00	General European; advanced	Margery Latham
Monday	8.00 to 10.00	Polish	Betty Harvey
Thursday	7.00 to 8.00	Flamenco; beginners	Felisa Victoria
Thursday	8.00 to 9.30	Flamenco; intermediate	Felisa Victoria

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

Tuesday	6.30 to 7.30	Balkan; beginners	Ken Ward
Tuesday	7.30 to 9.30	Balkan; intermediate & advanced	Ken Ward
Wednesday	7.00 to 9.00	General European; beginners	Margery Latham

Light refreshments are available at both schools.

Our classes are open to members only, but anyone, whether a member or not, may try a class, which he has not previously been to, once without charge.

In order to enjoy our Sunday dances, and also put on worthwhile demonstrations, it is essential that members learn the dances properly. To do this one must have proper tuition by attending our classes. We hope that all members who are within distance will make the effort to attend at least one weekly class. You will obtain far more enjoyment from your dancing and you will be helping to raise the general standard.

N.B. There is now no Friday class. See note on page 3.

