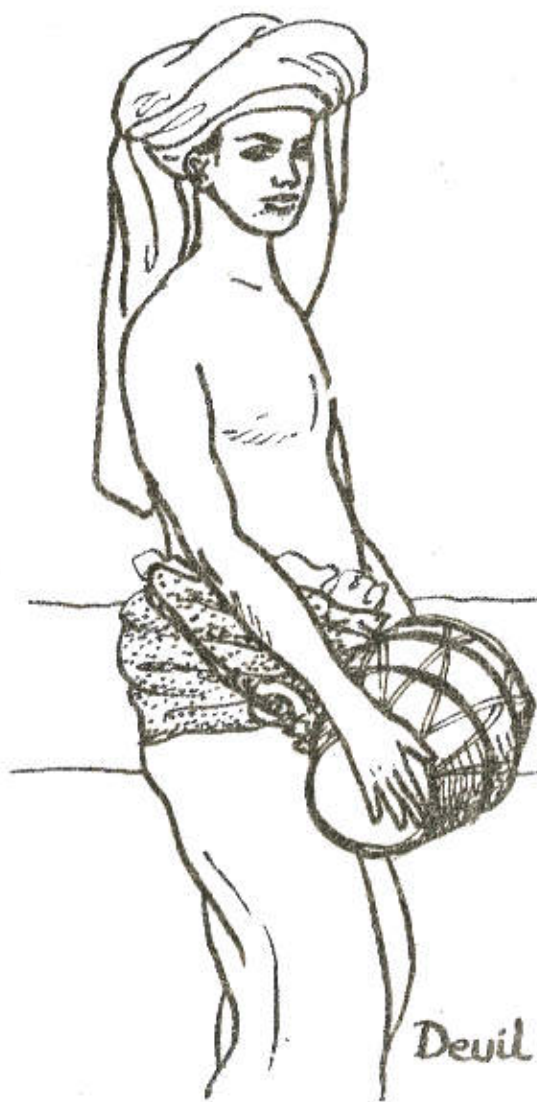


S.I.F.D.

NEWS

JUNE 1968



Devil dancer and drummer from Ceylon

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Editor: Lily Southgate, 52 Banbury House, Banbury Road, London, E.9.
Telephone: Home 01-985-0428. Office: CITY 1212 Ext. 552.

Assistant: Sylvia Fulton, 22 Landseer Road, London, N.19.
Telephone: Home 272-5827. Office: MAN 7800 Ext. 263.

Typist: Barney Salmon.

MATERIAL FOR PUBLICATION TO BE WITH EDITOR BY THE 15TH OF THE MONTH
PRECEDING PUBLICATION.

This month's cover is by Caroline Thomas (See article on page 4).

Officers of the Committee:

Chairman: Bert Price,
22 Sunnydale Road,
London, S.E.12.

Hon. Secretary: Dorothy Bryan,
Flat 1, Braunton Mansions,
28 Rosebery Avenue,
London, E.C.1.

Treasurer: Marjorie Bracey,
30 Cygnet House,
Belsize Road,
London, N.W.6.
328-1592

Membership Secretary:
Roland Minton,
131 Holly Street,
Dalston, E.8.

Demonstration Secretary:
Margery Latham,
14 Beechwood Avenue,
Kew, Richmond, Surrey.
Home: PRO 7055
Work: WHI 9000 Ext.636.

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 7/6d.

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

STATEMENT FROM THE CHAIRMAN

As your Chairman, and founder member of the S.I.F.D., I am rather concerned with the fragmentation of the Society at the present time. Class members rarely mix (class by class), Sunday dancers stay aloof from classes, and I wonder what we can do to change this? In the early days, we ran regular International Classes and improved them by having a National Teacher every two weeks. Philip Thornton for two weeks of Balkan, Dr. Cyriax for two weeks of Swedish, Lucille Armstrong for two weeks of Spanish, Aily Eistrat for two weeks of Estonian, Heinz and Ilse for Austrian, Thora Jacques for English, Marek for Polish, John Ungar for Hungarian, plus occasional Lithuanians, Ukrainians (Peter Dnostrovik), Phillipines (The Tinikling), Janine Mourain for French Vendee, courses by Pierre Panice and Pierre Goron for French Bourrees, and other dances, and so on and so on. Now we have a limited International plus specialist classes in Spanish, Balkan, Polish - full stop. The specialists tend to specialize in their one class (being satisfied in their specialization) and to stay remote from the International Class and the Sunday dances. Is this a good thing? Yes, for the quality of dance and dancing ability which they produce on their specialist class, but No for their contribution to the old idea of an International S.I.F.D. The S.I.F.D. has become somewhat like the old Holy Roman Empire, which is generally said to have been neither Holy, nor Roman, nor an Empire! The Society holds its groups together by the most tenuous of threads yet, in spite of all our doubts and heart-searchings, in spite of our fears that these binding threads may prove fragile, too fragile, we still exist and go on existing content, like a happy family, to go our own way, but to unite when criticised or threatened from outside. However, to strengthen the family, and to provide more people for the Sunday Social Dances, I would like to see more International Classes brought into existence, and I think we should promote an International Class in every L.C.C. Institute in London so that our widespread membership can be offered classes on its doorstep and not only in Clerkenwell.

Our membership is high today, and I feel that now is the time to try to expand, not by our old personal recommendation method, but by going out to the Institutes offering them a class and by trying to get International Folk Dancing on the map in every Borough in London. With drive and a bit of luck it could work, as can be seen by the fact that practically every Institute already has a Scottish Class and 75% have a Spanish Class. If you have any ideas about which Institute in which you would like to see a class provided, please write to me.

As announced in my report, I am happy to tell you that a very old friend, Alan McLean, has started a Hungarian Class in Sloane Avenue. Alan has been several times to Hungary, has studied with Hungarian Groups including Magda's (who was at Swansea last year) and has a wonderful repertoire of Hungarian dances and dance routines, which will enthral all who join his class. Alan, being an old associate, has offered to bring his class under the Society's umbrella and I sincerely hope that this will happen.

I would ask you to write to me if you have any complaints or requests for the betterment of the Society and to remember always that it is your Society and therefore your duty to help run it, if only by a letter in the post. I would ask you also to think of your new Committee next year, (voting will be in October), and to request some new faces on the Committee and in the Chair. I am enjoying being back at the head of the Society, but I do think one year is enough and that you should find another, and a better one than I, to carry on the good work and to take you from strength to strength. I am not deserting you; I will always be an S.I.F.D. man, but I do wish you would provide some new, young, and enthusiastic

Committee members to work with the older ones, who will welcome them to the Committee and give them all the support that they require.

BERT PRICE, Chairman.

HALF-YEARLY GENERAL MEETING

As only 18 members turned up for the meeting due to be held on the 11th May at Christopher Hatton School, we were two short of the required quorum and were therefore unable to hold an official General Meeting. An informal discussion took place instead. From the lack of support, it appears that members are not interested in attending Half-Yearly General Meetings (excluding those who live too far away) and therefore a motion will be put forward at the A.G.M. suggesting that these half-yearly meetings be abolished.

DANCING AT THE COCKPIT, HYDE PARK

As stated last month, we shall be dancing at the Cockpit, Hyde Park, on the 22nd June, 13th July and 3rd August. Unfortunately, we were unable to dance there on the 18th May as planned, owing to the rain. We apologise to those people who turned up in spite of the weather, but wish to point out that this is a fair weather venture only and if it is, or has been, raining heavily and the grass is soaking wet we have to cancel the dancing without notice. Unfortunately there is no alternative accommodation.

DEVIL-DANCERS OF CEYLON

The design on the cover this month shows a masked devil-dancer from southern Ceylon. A wealth of folklore and mystery lies behind the rituals in which these dancers and drummers perform. Characteristic are the wooden hand-carved masks, painted with home-made vegetable dyes and varnished with a mixture of resin and dorana oil. The predominant colours are red, black, yellow, white and sometimes dark green.

There are two main groups of masks - the Raksa, used for demon-exorcism rites, and the Kolam, seen in stylised dance-dramas.

Exorcism ceremonies generally take place at night and in the flickering torch-light the grotesque faces take on a terrifying appearance of reality. In Ceylonese folklore demons are responsible for the infliction of diseases, and the masks represent these evil spirits in their various manifestations. For example, the Riri Yaka, one of the most dreadful and powerful of all, has a large monkey's head, and in his four hands he holds a cock, a parrot, a bloody sword and a severed human head! He specialises in diseases of the blood. Another has three cobras spreading over his head and two large tusks protruding from his mouth.

GUILDFORD INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCERS (One of our affiliated Groups)

During the last few months the Group has been visited by the following M.C.'s and musicians:- Cliff Beck, Alan Corkett, Stephen Ward, Caroline Thomas, and Wilf Horrocks. Harry de Caux has also played for Y.H.A. dances at East Marden and Holmbury St. Mary which have been M.C.'d by John Burrows and John Driver respectively and have had Group support.

Events outside the regular Thursday meetings have included the very successful International Weekend at Halsway Manor, where the teaching of Estonian dances by Margery Latham was a highlight, and a visit to Cecil Sharp House for the April S.I.F.D. Dance. A forthcoming event is a Summer Barbecue in the garden of 'The Volunteer' at Blackheath Village, near Chilworth, Surrey, where a programme of English and International dances will be run by John Driver. Alan Browning will be playing for the English and the Morris demonstration by the Farnborough Men, and Caroline Thomas will be providing the International music. The evening starts at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday, 26th June. All welcome.

Guildford Group normally meets on the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Thursday of the month at St. Nicholas Small Hall, Millmead Terrace, Guildford. Map and further information available from John Driver, 77 Long Gore, Farncombe, Godalming. Telephone: Work - Wormley 2122; Home - Godalming 2259.

WOODVALE FOLK DANCE GROUP (This is the group run by Jean & Ian Willson)

The Committee of Woodvale Folk Dance Group would like to thank all S.I.F.D. members who supported the Inaugural Folk Dance at Borough Green on Saturday, 27th April.

The Dance was considered a success by those who attended, and Wilf, who provided the music, was much appreciated, not only by the dancers but by the local Press! Close on 200 people were present, many of whom were seeing our kind of dancing for the first time, and following the success of this first dance, more are being planned on similar lines.

Costumes, kindly loaned by Harrow Green Folk Dance Group, were worn by Group members. The teenage members gave the Israeli costumes their first public appearance for several years.

The Group now has over thirty active members, of whom half are under 18. The more experienced dancers are currently participating in a number of demonstrations in the district. Money-raising activities have ensured a good flow of funds into the Group, enabling records, electronic apparatus, costume material, etc. to be purchased. The progress made by the Group since its formation in January this year is most encouraging, both to its members and to the Group's Committee.

TRAVELS IN THE BALKANS

I mentioned in last month's issue that nine of the members of our Balkan class are setting off for Yugoslavia in a Ford Transit. They intend to keep a diary on their journey, so I hope to be able to print an account of their adventures on their return. In the meantime, they have given me their proposed itinerary, which is as follows:-

"We travel on Friday night, the 17th May, catching the 1.30 boat from Dover to Ostend, arriving at 5 a.m. on Saturday, the 18th. We hope to reach Salzburg on Saturday night and Zagreb on Sunday night.

Monday and Tuesday - In ZAGREB, visiting Jasna, who you will remember used to dance with our Balkan group, and the village group in MARKUSEVEC, just outside ZAGREB; also collect various items of costume.

On to BELGRADE on Wednesday, arriving at midday. Have a look around, visiting shops in the evening for costumes etc.

On towards SKOPJE on Thursday morning, visiting four villages on the way down - SVETOZAREVO (Serbia), SURLJIG (Serbia), VRANJE (Macedonia) and GNJILANE (Macedonia)- the last just North of Skopje - all supposed to be still productive of costume and un-modernized.

Stay in SKOPJE for two or three days, or as we feel. We intend to visit small villages in the BLACK MOUNTAINS North of Skopje but this area is notoriously bad in roads, so this is only a possibility.

On then through PRIZREN, PEC etc, through RUGOVO GORGE and camp at LAKE PLAV just after RUGOVO GORGE.

Then on to DUBROVNIK. Stay in DUBROVNIK two or three days and then move up the coast, camp, and visit MOSTAR.

Next move to TROGIR, and the CRIKVENICA, and remain there for a couple of days.

Leave for Homeward journey on Friday, 7th June.

We intend to take two cine cameras, several ordinary cameras and a tape recorder."

Ed. Note: It's nice to hear of members following up their interest in folk dancing and music by visiting the country of origin to collect costumes, dances, musical instruments etc. and capturing the atmosphere of the country. In this way we replenish our repertoire and keep the dances alive and interesting. The people in this case are: Jerry and Valerie Wakeman, Ken Ward, Ann Crisp, Sheila Fisher, Chris and John Miller, Ernestine Tyson and David Hedger. We wish them a very successful trip.

Items of InterestOskara Kolberga 15th Anniversary Concert.

Several of the Polish class went, on the 4th May, to the 15th Anniversary Concert given by the Oskara Kolberga Dancers at the Commonwealth Institute. In addition to these dancers were the Iskra Group, the Monuisko Choir, a solo pianist, and solo singer.

The whole thing added up to a very pleasant evening, if a little too lengthy. Particularly interesting was the new suite for choir and dancers called "At The Vistula's Streams". The dances were fairly simple, but fresh and well-performed. They included a Kujawiak for three couples which was particularly attractive, but for some of the over-shoulder lifts in the middle which seemed to destroy the lyrical mood a little. The new costumes for this suite from the Beslind Mountain Region were very successful; bright red jackets for the boys, and blue skirts for the girls, with the open-fronted jacket type blouse peculiar to this area.

Altogether, there was evidence of a lot of hard work having gone into the making of this evening, both by the Kolberga Group and their young sister-group Iskra, the latter having improved enormously in the past few months.

From several of the Polish class.

WANTED!

Ginger Tom Kitten, brother for Jose - by Irene & Harry (Whitaker). (LAB 4965).

FOLK DANCE INSTRUMENTSThe Tsymbaly

The tsymbaly (sometimes spelt cymbaly) is a musical instrument which originated in the 18th century in Carpathian Ukraine, and which is now found throughout Western Ukraine. It consists of a flat piece of wood, which varies in size, on which are laid wire strings in sets of four for each note of the eight-tone scale. There are usually three or four octaves, arranged on the instrument into treble and bass by the placing of two bridges across the wooden frame. Thus the treble strings are held by the right-hand and left-hand bridges at the narrower end of the tsymbaly; while the bass strings pass under the right-hand bridge to be held by the one on the left.

The tsymbaly is played with a small piece of wood held in each hand and shaped at one end with grooves for the fingers and tapered and flattened at the other to strike the four strings of required pitch. The strings are tuned with pegs in the usual ways, and the instrument usually forms part of an orchestra with violin, tambourin and double bass.

THE BALALAIKA DANCE GROUP

The Group was very fortunate in getting two lessons from the Georgian State Dance Company during their two stays in London. As those who have seen them know, Georgian dancing is completely different from the other styles in the USSR, except of course the other Caucasian styles. Girls' and men's steps are entirely divorced from each other, and all of them are far more difficult than they look. In our first lesson, Madam Ramishvili showed us the basic girls' step. This is counted ONE two three, ONE two three, and is done on the whole sole for ONE, and on halfpoints for two and three. The steps must be done completely controlled, quick, but gliding, not running or wobbling, whether forward or backward. The first male dancer meanwhile took the boys through their basic steps and demonstrated that they too must keep the body straight and immobile while the feet do quick intricate shuffling steps.

In our Group we have several members who are especially interested in Georgian dancing, and while the Georgians were at the Albert Hall these members practically lived there. The outcome was that four girls learned "Samaya", the three-girl dance that was inspired by a window in the Cathedral of Mtkheta, the ancient capital of Georgia. It is the embodiment of prayer, the hand movements signifying adoration, scattering of incense etc. Two girls and two boys have learnt "Kartuli", a couple dance widely performed in Georgia.

When the Georgians came back to London last autumn, Madame Ramishvili said, "Now show us what you have practised". Here is what one of our "Georgian Group within the Balalaika Group" writes:- "When the Georgians came we descended upon them like birds of prey, ready to pick their brains for anything they could give us. En masse we went to the Albert Hall one Saturday afternoon. There were a few Georgians lying around in the vacant chairs in the vast auditorium, some asleep, some in that stupor one gets between performances, but most of them looking at us with open and frank interest. As if this were not disconcerting enough, Madame Ramishvili with the leading male dancer, Fredos, sat down in a chair in the middle of the stage behind the footlights and asked us to show what we had been doing. We did "Samaya" first - unfortunately we were so shaky with nerves that this dance, which we had been practising so hard, went all wrong, and we finished miles ahead of the music. Madame Ramishvili sat watching intently, her face not showing the hysteria she must have been feeling, and the watchers clapped politely, which somehow made it worse. But all was not entirely lost as we redeemed ourselves with "Kartuli", performed excellently by two of our dancers. After that everyone breathed more easily and Madame Ramishvili set about teaching and correcting our movements. If the expression "It's not as easy as it looks" were meant for anything, it surely was this. The gliding step of the girls, which looks so easy on the stage, gave us all aching backs and calves within a very short time, and the carriage of the men seemed to us something you are born with - but we were assured that this is not so, and it can be learnt."

I myself think that Lynne, who wrote this, is too modest and underestimates their "Samaya". I was watching, crossing my fingers, and it seemed to me that it was going very well - though of course not anywhere near the Georgian State Dance Company's standard, but nobody in his right mind would expect that anyway, and Madame Ramishvili said very nice things about them before she started the actual lesson. She mentioned also how gratified and happy they all were that "in far-away England" there should be a group of dancers so interested in their

special kind of dancing.

The girls of the Balalaika Group are at present learning the "Girls' Gliding Dance" but again it is much more difficult than it seems - not the actual choreography, but the style. Maybe we will never perform it, certainly not before it has been pronounced good enough by our teachers, but in any case it is very good practice for soft arm-movements and co-ordination between the dancers.

JENIA GRAMAN.

S.I.F.D. CLASSES

Spring Term: 22nd April to 28th June. For class fees for the Spring term only, please consult Margery Latham or Roland Minton (addresses on page 2).

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.

GERMAN VISITORS

The evening at the Dance Centre on the 26th May, when we entertained the group from Germany, was a very successful one. Quite a few people turned up, and Caroline's playing and Stephen's M.C.-ing helped to make the atmosphere very enjoyable. The German group seemed to enjoy themselves and I'm sure they were grateful for the help given them during their day's tour of London by Caroline, Stephen, and Roland. It was a **great** pity that Wilf Horrocks, who organized the visit, could not be present, owing to Frances being unwell, but we send her our best wishes and hope she will soon be well again.

10.

PROGRAMME FOR SUNDAYS

		<u>Musicians</u>	<u>M.C.'s</u>
June 2nd	NO DANCE - WHIT SUNDAY		
9th	Dance Centre	Cliff Beck	Lily Southgate
16th	Dance Centre	Harry de Caux	Peter Oakley
23rd	Dance Centre	Wilf Horrocks	Ian Willson
30th	Dance Centre	Caroline Thomas	Roland Minton
July 7th	Cecil Sharp House	C.S.H. Band	Margery Latham

Time 7 to 10 p.m. Admission 5/- for non-members, 4/- for members.

IF YOU HAVE A COSTUME, OR CAN BORROW ONE, WEAR IT AT THE CECIL SHARP HOUSE DANCES, TO HELP MAKE THE SCENE MORE COLOURFUL.

Cecil Sharp House is at No.2 Regents Park Road, N.W.1 (Nearest Underground Camden Town)

The Dance Centre is at No.12 Floral Street, W.C.2. (Nearest Underground Leicester Square.)

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WHAT'S ON

- June 3rd - 9th The Osipov Balalaika Orchestra, in a programme of music, singing, and dancing from the Soviet Union, at the Royal Albert Hall, 7.30 p.m. Tickets 5/- to 30/-.
- 6th, 7th & 8th Indian Temple Dances, performed by Ritha Devi, at Commonwealth Institute, 8.p.m. Tickets from 7/6 to 21/-d.
- 22nd FOLK DANCING AT THE COCKPIT, HYDE PARK, FROM 4 P.M UNTIL APPROX. 6 P.M. (see page 4)
- 22nd London Area Midsummer Festival - Tower Hill 3 - 5 p.m. and 6.30 - 8.30 p.m. organized by the E.F.D.S.S.
- 26th Summer Barbecue, organized by Guildford International Folk Dancers, 7.30 p.m. at Blackheath Village (details on page 5)
- 29th Folk Dance Festival at Parliament Hill Fields at 3 p.m. and 7.30 p.m. Organized by the E.F.D.S.S. in conjunction with the G.L.C.

In Jugoslavia

Ohrid, Macedonia. International Folk Festival commencing 3rd July and lasting 8 days. Apart from Jugoslavia, there will be dancers from Bulgaria, Turkey, Greece, and possibly Albania and Romania. A remote possibility also of Hungary, Austria and Italy being represented.

Skopje. July 21 - 27 (dates not confirmed). Festival and exhibitions for 'week of Solidarity' commemorating the 1963 earthquake and countries who helped to provide aid. Many folk performances and concerts etc.

Zagreb. July 21 - 28. Smotra Folkloru (folklore festival). Individual and group performances by amateur town and village groups, and the professional groups 'Lado', 'Kolo', and 'Tanec'. Exhibition of folk art and craft.