



# SIFD NEWS

JULY 1974



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SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING

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This month's cover, showing dancers and musicians  
from Galicia, Spain, is by Caroline Thomas.

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ALL MATERIAL FOR PUBLICATION IN THE NEXT ISSUE  
TO BE WITH THE EDITOR BY 15TH JULY 1974

THE CHAIRMAN WRITES .....

As I wrote last month, we were not the first in the field of international folk dancing, nor the only ones, and we are not the only ones in the field today, but we are possibly the largest organization this side of the Atlantic and as long as we retain our links with National dancers we shall continue to hold a dominance over less favoured groups. These links were first formed in the late 1940s and early 1950s when, through dancing with and being taught by Nationals, we mostly danced in the manner of the country concerned. This gave us a terrific confidence and pride, and an added pleasure in our dancing, and these things made the Society strong and respected by other folk dancers.

So, there we were in 1947, holding a class, originally once a fortnight but now once a week, at Carlyle School, Hortensia Road, Chelsea. The once-a-week class which averaged 50 people every Wednesday was soon to be increased to two classes a week by the addition of a demonstration and advanced class on Fridays. Our membership included some National experts, and I mention John Armstrong (Scottish) and Philip Thornton (Jugoslav) as two of them. Philip Thornton also taught us some English and even some French dances in those early days.

Our first break towards authenticism came, strangely enough, not via dance but via costume, following a demonstration which we had shared with the Estonian Dancing Group. These Estonians were the first of the National Groups we had met and we were truly fascinated by their dances and by their costumes. The men's knee breeches particularly caught my eye and later I asked my sister Irene, who was demonstration secretary at that time, whether we could not dress our men in similar breeches (I was growing distinctly tired of our white cricket flannels). I suggested buying some secondhand sailors' trousers in an Army Surplus Store, cutting them off at the knee, and adapting them. Irene set to work to do this and later, after a Sunday Observer writer reviewing the E.F.D.S. Festival had complained that it was about time the English dancers did something about their costumes I was 'phoned by an E.F.D.S. official asking where we bought our men's breeches!

At this time also we were undergoing some re-thinking in our politics. We had originated at the end of the war, when Stalin was (nearly) everyone's favourite Uncle Joe. We had demonstrated at the Daily Worker Garden Party and similar functions, but after being quite forcibly approached by some of the members at these affairs we began to realize that our insistence on being non-political might (perversely) end up in our having to be anti-Communist, not for ideological reasons but because these members would not tolerate our being non-political but would insist on attempting our conversion. Our elected Chairman of the day, Chris Frooth, who was quite Red, had been followed by Charles Fawkes, who had been proposed for the post mainly because he was inclined, politically, very much to the Right. I mention these matters to give you an insight into our beginnings. Both Chris and his wife Jill were friends of mine, as was Charles Fawkes. Their politics intruded now and again; our Committee Meetings were often very stormy; but we all remained friends and danced amicably together at Cecil Sharp House, and remained a non-political organization.

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So, there we were, a normal bunch of English people united by a love of international folkdancing, eager to learn more and to dance like the nationals whom we were imitating. The Swedish girls who had told me we did not dance our Swedish dances in the Swedish style had very kindly mentioned us to Dr. Cyriax who, at that time, was teaching Swedish folk-dancing to London Swedes at the Swedish Church in Harcourt Street, and Dr. Cyriax had very kindly got in touch with one of our teachers and offered to come and teach us some Swedish dances in a true style. Unfortunately, there was a little snag; Philip Thornton was now teaching us some really exciting Yugoslav dances which a great many of the class could not bear to forgo for the sake of learning some unknown Swedish dances, and, remember, Philip was a very handsome young man, so there was no immediate take-up on the suggestion to cut our Yugoslav dance classes in favour of some Swedish. The poor old Committee were in difficulties in trying to introduce the new to the adherents of the old. (Isn't it amazing how change is resisted for all sorts of reasons and with all sorts of excuses?) This attempted change was given an added impetus when Dr. Cyriax 'phoned me to ask for a decision whether we wanted her to teach or not. I affirmed that we did, and then had to get approval from the Committee. Another late-night sitting, the result of which I am pleased to say that the decision to accept Dr. Cyriax's offer was upheld, and we were able to take advantage of the opportunity to learn Swedish dances in Swedish style.

Shortly after this we increased our number of dance nights to three per week, which allowed us to cater for the Swedish as well as the Yugoslav dancers and even though it cut the numbers at the various classes, it also heralded the beginnings of specialization. The fall in numbers occasioned by spreading the dancers over three nights instead of two strained our financial resources a little since, although our musicians and teachers gave their services free we had to pay the L.C.C. for the hire of the hall, the use of the piano, and of 60 chairs. We saved a little by cutting down on the number of chairs and instituted a drive for new members.

Finances apart, our dancing abilities improved weekly; Philip was going great guns with his Yugoslav and Dr. Cyriax, with her insistence on absolute perfection, straight lines, and everyone in his proper place, brought a new dimension to our feeling for Swedish dances. On top of this, one of our members, Gladys Noble, had joined the London Estonians and was teaching us some Estonian dances while her friend, Marion Hill, often played the piano for us, very nobly, since she preferred to dance. Mourrie Pfeffer, who had been with us from the beginning, often played for us as well. He it was who introduced Chekessia playing his melodion and leading the dance at the same time. Henry Schuster was another accordionist who played regularly at dances and demonstrations, and Stanley and Ivor Sober were two of our leading dancers. Stanley left, quietly, to join the Palestinian insurgents (this being the days before the founding of Israel) but Ivor stayed with us for a few more years until he too went to Israel and has settled there. One of his present friends is Shoshanna Kleine, an Israeli folk teacher who, accompanied by her accordionist, Israel, was later to teach us so many Israeli folk dances and to provide one of the most dynamic finales which we ever staged in our Albert Hall festivals.

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It was about now (1949) that Charles Fawkes and I saw an advertisement publicising a Festival of National Music, Songs, and Dances of countries behind the Iron Curtain organized by the Joint Committee of Women Refugee Organizations; dances and songs to be performed by Estonian, Yugoslav, Lithuanian, Latvian, Hungarian, Polish, Romanian and Czech groups. Well here was Pandora's Box with the lid off and on seeing these dancers we were immediately captivated by the wealth of their costumes, music and dance. I can still remember the beautiful Yugoslav girls, the Lithuanians dancing The Hat Dance and The Flirt, and the Polish music. A fabulous programme, leaving Charles and me breathless but with a determination to meet these dancers and to attempt to bring them into our orbit. The dancers, all refugees, danced their national dances with a verve and vitality which we had yet to capture. We needed to know more of their histories; we needed to learn and to absorb their music; and we needed to learn many little national quirks before we could dance like these nationals. So Charles and I decided to approach the group leaders to ask their permission to attend some of their classes in the hopes that we could one day invite them to come to Carlyle School to teach us.

I think this is enough of this saga for this month - another chapter next month. I will, however, send the Editor an article which was published in the Polish YMCA 25th Anniversary Magazine and which tells of Charles' and my crossing the Polish Border (actually situated in Cadogan Gardens, Chelsea!)

BERT PRICE

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#### FOLKDANCING IN ALBANIA

There is a possibility that next year a seminar on Albanian Folk Dance will take place in Albania. At present, negotiations are being made through a holiday travel agent to organize this. It is expected that it will consist of working with an expert in Albanian Folk Dance, participating with Albanian folk dance and song groups, but with ample time available for making excursions and visiting places of interest in different areas of Albania. Members would be based in the tourist centre of Durres beside the sandy beach. It is difficult at this stage to estimate costs, without knowing how many people would be interested and whether the holiday would be for one, two or three weeks and in which month. However, as a rough indication, it would probably cost about £100 for twelve days, £140 for 23 days, air travel both ways, twin-room, Grade B hotel, all meals.

We appreciate it is early days to start thinking of 1975 holidays but, due to the intricacies of arranging a holiday of this nature, it would help the organizers if anyone who thinks they might be interested would contact our Secretary, Dorothy Bryan, giving an indication of the departure date most suitable to them (bearing in mind that Spring would probably be more pleasant as the summer months could be unbearably hot), and how long they would wish to be away.

Please let us have your names as soon as possible, so that we have an idea whether or not we shall be able to make a party booking.

## SECRETARY'S NOTES

A meeting of the Committee was held on 2nd June. Apologies for absence from Shirley Rogers, Bert Price, Alan McLean.

The Treasurer announced the following financial situation at the half-year:-

Investments	2051.00	
Deposit A/c	305.16	
Current A/c	152.80	
Cash in Hand	33.88	
Social Secretary	60.00	
Editor	10.00	
Swansea A/c	<u>52.35</u>	
	2665.19	2665.19
<u>Deposits</u>		
Uplands	40.00	
Halsway	<u>20.00</u>	<u>60.00</u>
		<u>£2725.19</u>

Membership stands at 326

Future Events: English Course on 21st June to be given by Peter Oakley

Children's Classes: It was reported that both Children's Classes - Pimlico and South West London are a great success.

Teachers' Certificate: A Sub-Committee has been formed to deal with this.

Future Demonstrations: 10th June. Highbury Fields Open-Air Theatre.  
1st July. " " "  
26th June. Mary Ward Settlement.

DOROTHY BRYAN  
Hon. Sec.

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### SELPAR GROUP

The term started with 19 members, most of whom have come regularly, and because of this we are entitled to a longer term than most classes at our centre.

Having enjoyed so many Israeli dances during the year, when it came to our first demonstration we of course produced a programme predominantly Israeli. What to wear? A problem. However, replicas of Jacob and Judith Barkan's costumes were assembled and with the men in different shades of bronze, yellow and orange ("the colours of the field") and the girls in blue and white (national colours) the group looked very bright and happy.

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The programme also included some folk singing, the practice for which entailed a convivial evening at Shirley and Harry Tarks' home. The Townswomen's Guild had their birthday on our big night and literally went to town with a charming buffet, which was much appreciated. We ended the evening by persuading most of the 100 there to join in a couple of simple dances.

Now the term approaches its close and plans are afoot (sorry!) to do other things together, both in members' homes and elsewhere. On 9th July we are visiting Roy and Peggy Haycock and their group at Malvern, where I'm sure we'll have a happy time.

In the not too distant future there may be other groups developing in the region through the joint efforts of the Society and the West Midlands Sports Council - let's hope so. One note for the future - we have been asked to dance at the Central Hall in November as part of a festival of Movement and Dance, and although the allocation of time for each group is short, I'm sure we'll enjoy being part of a larger picture.

This is written in great haste, so we'll give you another bulletin in a few months' time to show you that there is a great interest in this area.

SYBIL CHAPMAN  
20 Pelham Road  
Droitwich,  
Worcestershire.

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#### A LA MODE

All you Balkan fans who trek to the remote villages of Yugoslavia to find old traditional costumes can now save your fare and go instead to South-West London, but you will have to hurry to beat the fashion-hungry dolly birds. I quote from "THE OBSERVER":-

"Peasant dresses abound in the shops this summer and vary from the inexpensive mass-produced Indian to the rarer and vastly more expensive kind from designers like Thea Porter and Bianca Buscaglia. Bianca, who comes from Zagreb in Croatia, specialises in clothes from her native Yugoslavia - both antique and modern. She makes frequent trips to some of the remotest parts of the country, sometimes travelling by donkey to find antique clothes. The villagers can't imagine why she should want old clothes and think she must be mad. So she comes away with richly embroidered wedding dresses, scarves, skirts and blouses. Some of the garments she can sell as they are, but the lace and embroidery on the damaged ones are removed and used on dresses made up from new materials. Yugoslavia is rich in different cultures, so there are plenty of different styles of costume. Some of the embroidery is quite staggeringly beautiful in its richness and delicate workmanship. Not only each region but each village and each family has its own style and custom. If you would like to see Bianca Buscaglia's collection of these marvellous antique dresses, scarves, skirts and blouses, they are at Medina, 10 West Halkin Street, London S.W.1."

LILY SOUTHGATE

## DEMONSTRATION NEWS

On Saturday, 18th May, the team went to Tooting Bec Hospital to entertain the patients in their Social Centre from 5.30 to 7 p.m. The emphasis was on getting the patients to join in rather than to sit and watch, and we were asked to choose simple dances as their power of concentration is limited. Tropanka, Djatchko, Alunelul more or less went well. The great success was German Clap Dance, keeping the same partners to avoid confusion. They all seemed to enjoy themselves and one or two were so enthusiastic that we had a job to get away.

On Wednesday, 22nd May, we transferred the Wednesday class to Highbury Fields and ran an open-air dance as part of the Islington Festival. Last year we gave a series of concerts at the open-air theatre, followed by audience participation, and this was so popular that this year we were asked to do a whole evening. We had a very enthusiastic crowd - lots of children as usual, but some of them very good dancers, some mums and dads with young families, and some youngsters on their own. We gave out leaflets and hope to get some recruits.

On Saturday, 1st June, we were invited to visit the Wandsworth Council for Community Relations at Upper Tooting Methodist Church. This is a combination of several local groups to promote international friendship. The majority of the audience were Asians, very friendly and interested in our costumes. We showed one or two dances from each country and then taught a simple one. They joined in with more enthusiasm than finesse. We had tea and biscuits at nine o'clock, and two of the Indian mums examined our costumes and made notes of the patterns, so that they can copy them for their daughters. They would like to have classes to learn this type of dancing. We left leaflets.

My thanks to Caroline Thomas, Wilf Horrocks and Donald Campbell for playing for us, and all the dancers for sharing the work of these teaching demonstrations, much harder work than just showing dances.

MARGERY LATHAM  
Demonstration Secretary

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## CECIL SHARP HOUSE DEMONSTRATIONS

The Israeli demonstration on 7th July will, as previously announced, continue into the Interval with general Israeli dancing for all, when we shall be dancing those dances taught during the past two or three years by several visiting Israeli teachers. These will include: Niguna Shaleosi, Rov Berahot, Hora Medura, Haroa Haktana, Hine Ma Tov, Debka Rafiach, Zemer Ikarim, Debka Kna'an, Debka Halel, and finish with the correct (sic) version of Kuma Echa.

On 4th August, the well-known dance company, "Nonsuch", have agreed to show us some of their dances from the courts of Western Europe. They perform dances from medieval times up to the 18th century, in full costume, and some of their members have already been to see us to arrange for a small group to perform for us. This will be folkdancing of a totally different kind, and an event you can invite friends and non-dancers to see.

WILL GREEN



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.....

Dear Lily,

I always read with great interest the SIFD NEWS and often should have liked to write some words to the NEWS and thank you for sending it to me. Through the magazine, I feel I am in contact with the Society and with the many members with whom I became very good friends.

In the last issue I read your announcement about our Hungarian Folk Dance Group, the "Wild Roses", where I am choreographer. Only I should like to rectify a little error about the name. It is not White Roses, but Wild Roses (it may be a mistake in my writing or pronunciation). János Kriza was one of the first who published (about 100 years ago) a very rich collection of Hungarian folksongs, ballads, and folktales. The collection has the title, "Wild Roses", and our group was named in memory of this remarkable work.

We are all looking forward to our journey to England and I hope to see again a lot of my friends in Sidmouth as well as at the course at Lady Mabel College.

It is very interesting for me to read your opinions about several Hungarian folkdance groups performing in England; about authenticity and stage choreographies. We too discuss this subject a lot but I can't write well enough in English to express myself correctly. (Perhaps I could do it better by speaking to you). It is the same situation with the subject of your plans to introduce a Teacher's Certificate. We have issued these very seriously for the past twentyfive years, and perhaps I could tell you some useful experiences. I teach a lot on Teachers' Courses and am a member of the Board of Examiners.

With best wishes to you and all my friends in the Society,

Yours sincerely,

MAGDA OSSKO

Koreografus, Budapest 1  
Attila U.41, Hungary

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As previously announced, Magda Ossko's group of dancers will be appearing at the Sidmouth Festival, which finishes on the 9th August. As the main group is booked to leave England on the 11th, this means they will have the whole of the 10th August free, and it may be that we can arrange for them to give a performance somewhere in the London area on the evening of the 10th and possibly a course of instruction in the morning and/or afternoon. We are working on this and will let members know as soon as we have been able to arrange something definite, but as this is a last-minute request on behalf of the Hungarians we are having to do a lot in a short time and haven't yet been able to finalize arrangements. (It may be possible to include a separate announcement in with this month's NEWS).

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In the meantime, as we shall be faced with the problem of accommodating forty Hungarians for one or two nights, it would help if we had a list of people whom we could call on if necessary to provide hospitality. Therefore, if any readers, living within the London area, would be able and willing to accommodate any of these dancers for one, or possibly two, nights, would they please contact Jack Richardson, letting him know how many people they could take, and whether for one or two nights. It may not be necessary to call on you for this help if we can accommodate them somewhere all under one roof, but it would make things easier if we had a register of people able to help if required, so please write to Jack as soon as possible.

Prof. J. Richardson,  
Chemical Engineering Dept.,  
University College,  
Swansea, SA2 8PP

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#### DANCERS FROM GALICIA

Those of you who saw the Galician dances at Sadler's Wells Theatre last month will readily recognize the dancers' and musicians' costumes shown by Caroline Thomas in her drawing for this month's cover.

This is a region of Spain which I know very little about and I was very interested to see this group, on their first visit to England. Galicia is the Celtic region of Spain and, as one would imagine, there is a certain similarity with some Scottish dance steps and the use of the bagpipes. The dances from this region are nothing like the flamenco or Sevillanas which tourists usually mean when they refer to "Spanish dancing", but are nearer to the Portuguese jota or Spanish Basque.

This Company, "Ballet Gallego", presented a programme of mixed dances in a variety of costumes - mostly 18th century. The first three or four dances, Zoqueirino de Chantada, Verbas Garimosas, Chovendo en Compostels, were "folky" and very pleasant to watch, but then they lapsed into the "theatrical" with a tragic ballet and a couple of choreographic fantasies. In the second half, I enjoyed Danza dos Galos, with the men representing cockerels and the women beautifully costumed coquettish hens, and I particularly liked the jotas and fandangos and muineiras in the last item.

The music throughout was very disappointing as it was nearly all canned. I don't know why, because they had some excellent bagpipers and drummers who really brought the show to life and made me want to get up and dance but they were only used for a few of the items. I also liked the very clear announcements between each item which identified each dance and eliminated the struggle to locate and read the programme each time.

All in all, despite some terribly stagey items, I don't think this show deserved the very bad press notices it received.

LILY SOUTHGATE

FRANCES HORROCKS wishes to thank all the people who kindly sent her cards and best wishes during her recent stay in hospital for an operation on her foot. She is getting on very well.

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#### AFFILIATED GROUPS

BARLOW INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCE GROUP meet every Tuesday evening at Wilbraham Road Congregational Church Hall, Chorlton, Manchester, from 7.30 to 10 p.m. Further information from either the Chairman, Alan Williams (061-881 7744) or The Treasurer, Philip E. Lloyd (061-881 3613).

HARROW GREEN FOLK DANCE GROUP meet every Wednesday from 7.30 p.m. at Daneford School, Turin Street, London E.2. First Wednesday in each month Swedish, other Wednesdays, English/International/Norwegian. Details from George Sweetland, 28 Hayes Court, Camberwell New Road, London S.E.5.

KENSINGTON SLAVONIC DANCERS meet every Wednesday and Thursday evenings from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. On Wednesdays they meet at Fox School, Kensington Place, Notting Hill Gate, London W.8., and on Thursdays at Isaac Newton School, Lancaster Road, W.11 (50 yards from Ladbroke Grove Underground). They learn and perform dances from Czechoslovakia and are taught by Mrs. Hedda Jolly-Klingerova, 69b Grange Road, London W5 5BU. Telephone no. 01-567 2346 (preferably during the day rather than the evening).

HAVERING INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCE GROUP meet every Thursday in term time from 8 to 10 p.m. at Harold Wood Primary School, Recreation Avenue, Harold Wood, Essex. All details can be obtained from The Secretary, Mrs. Eve Wildy, 52 Slewins Lane, Hornchurch, Essex.

WOODVALE FOLK DANCE GROUP meet every Tuesday at Borough Green Village Hall, Borough Green, near Wrotham, Kent, from 7.30 to 10 p.m. All details from The Secretary, Mrs. Jean Willson, 55 Lewis Court Drive, Boughton Monchelsea, Nr. Maidstone, Kent.

ISRAELI & INTERNATIONAL DANCING CLASS meet at Hillel House (Basement), 1/2 Endsleigh Street, Euston, W.C.1., every Thursday at 8 p.m. Admission fee 10p. Further information from Maurice Stone, 3 Adelphi Court, 297-299 High Road, East Finchley, N.2.

MERTON PARK INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCE GROUP meet every Wednesday at Rutlish School; Watery Lane, London S.W.20. 7.00/7.30 p.m. Spanish (Beginners); 7.30/9.30 p.m. General International. Details from Charles Steventon, 64 Erridge Road, London S.W.19. Musician: Wilf Horrocks.

(This is not a complete list of all affiliated groups, but only those who have given me information about themselves. ED)

SUNDAY DANCES

		<u>Musicians</u>	<u>M.C.</u>
Sunday, 7th July	Cecil Sharp House	C.S.H. Band	Wilf Horrocks
21st July	Trevelyan Hall	To be arranged	
4th August	Cecil Sharp House	C.S.H. Band	George Sweetland

7 to 10 p.m.

Admission: 30p members, 40p non-members for Cecil Sharp House  
25p members, 30p non-members for Trevelyan Hall

Cecil Sharp House is at 2 Regents Park Rd., N.W.1. (Nearest Underground: Camden Town). Trevelyan Hall is at St. Anne's Lane, Great Peter Street, S.W.1.

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The demonstration at Cecil Sharp House on 7th July will be given by "Ha Ma'agal", the Israeli group taught by Fiona Howarth.

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WHAT'S ON

- July 2nd/7th LLANGOLLEN INTERNATIONAL MUSICAL EISTEDDFOD. Full details from Llangollen International Eisteddfod, Eisteddfod Office, Llangollen, Denbighshire, North Wales.
- 6th YUGOSLAV EVENING. See separate notice enclosed.
- 9th/13th GAJDA FOLK DANCE GROUP from Injevo Village, Eastern Macedonia, Holland Park Court Theatre, Nr. Kensington High Street. No Advance booking. Booking Office opens half an hour before performance. Admission 35p. 7.30 p.m.
- 10th THE CARIBBEAN IN KENSINGTON. Music, folkdancing, poetry presented by the West Indian Students Folk Group and Drama Workshop. West Indian Students Centre, 1 Collingham Gardens, London S.W.5. 7.30 p.m. Free. Enquiries 01-373 6838.
- 15th/4th August ROMANIAN BALLET FOLKLORIQUE. The "Doina" Romanian folk-dance company from Bucharest. Queen Elizabeth Hall, 7.30. (Saturdays & Sundays 3.15 and 7.30. No performances 22nd and 29th July). Tickets 75p to £2.00. Box Office 01-928 3191. (Royal Festival Hall).
- 20th CHILDREN'S DANCE. Millbank School, Erasmus St., S.W.1. 2.30 pm
- 26th/28th DUNFORD WEEKEND. Although this is fully booked, Jack would be pleased to take names for the waiting list. Cost about £7.25. Prof. J. Richardson, Dept. of Chemical Engineering, University College, Swansea SA2 8PP.
- 27th/3rd August TEES-SIDE INTERNATIONAL EISTEDDFOD. Full details from Inter-Tie, 21 Albert Road, Middlesbrough, Teesside.
- 30th THE BALALAIKA DANCE GROUP. Summer Theatre, Bishops Park, Bishops Avenue, London S.W.6. 7.30 p.m.

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ADVANCE NOTICE. The date of the Safari has been fixed for 8th SEPTEMBER. The itinerary will be almost as previously announced.

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