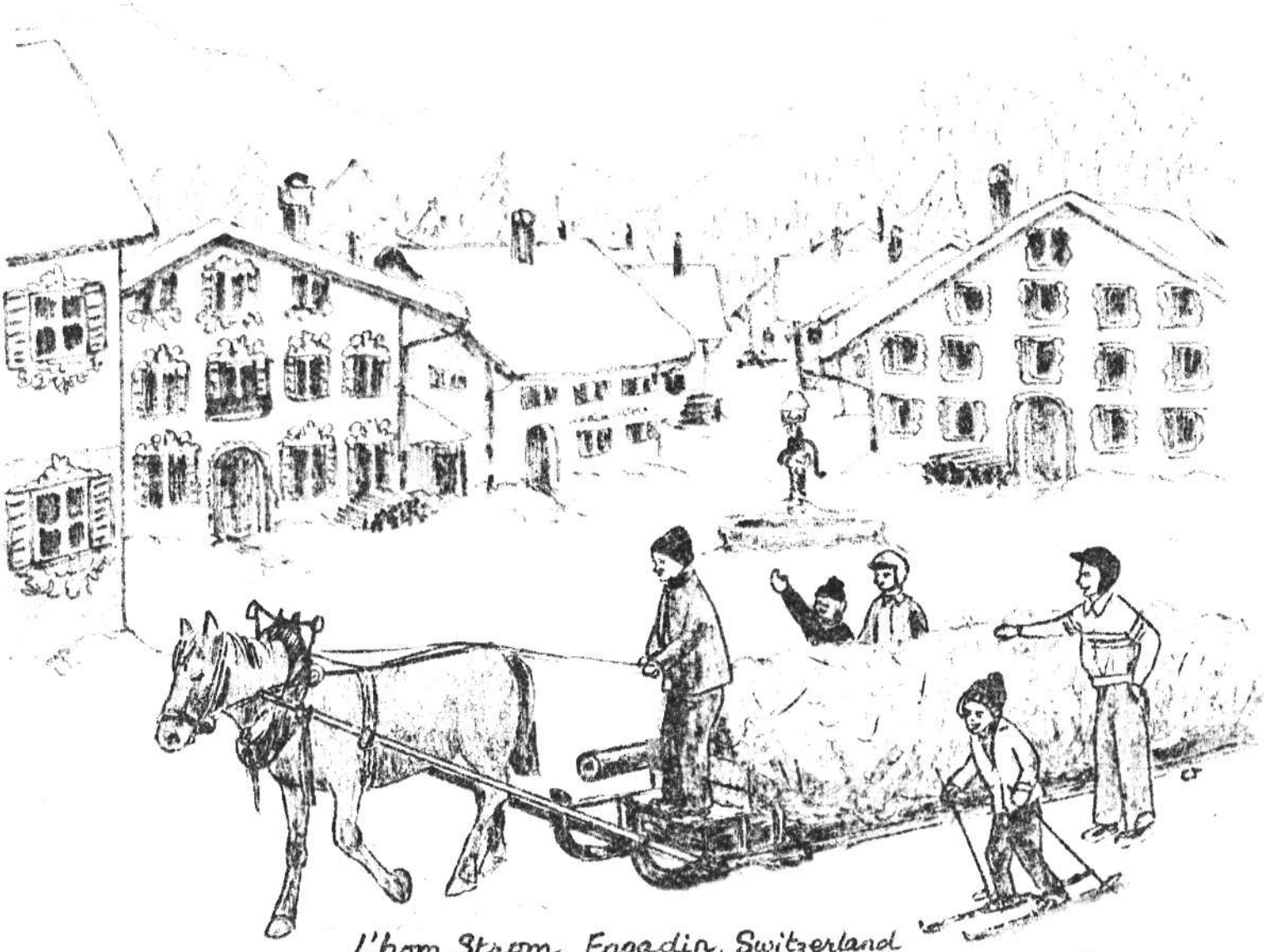
SIFD NEWS

FEBRUARY 1976



L'hom Strom, Engadin, Switzerland

The "straw man", representing Winter, is drawn through the streets to the village square, where it is set up and burnt on February 1st in a pagan ceremony heralding the returning sun.

SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING

Editor: Lily Southgate, 52 Banbury House, Banbury Road, London, E.9. Tel. 01-985 0428 (home); 01-248 1212 Ext. 552 (office).

Typist: Kelsey Blundell, 65 Lonsdale Avenue, London, E.6.

Other helpers last month: Frank Flanagan, Roland Minton, Ingrid Pursall.

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This month's cover is by Caroline Thomas and shows a Swiss pagan custom which takes place on 1st February involving "L'hom strom" or "straw man"; a bundle of straw burnt in the village square.

* ** ** *** **** *** ** ** *

Chairman: Simon Guest, 65 Crescent Road, New Barnet, Herts. Tel. 01-440 4862.

Secretary: Edna Foster, 116d Marlborough Road, Bowes Park, N.22.

Treasurer: Dennis Wood, 12 Alpha Court, Hillside Road, Whyteleafe, Surrey.

Membership Secretary: Roland Minton, 10 Benyon Court, Balmes Road, N.1.

Demonstration Secretary: Margery Latham, 14 Beechwood Avenue, Kew, Richmond, Surrey. Tel. 01-876 7055.

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IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

As I shall be on holiday in February, the March issue of the SIFD NEWS will be prepared and edited by Kelsey Blundell. Therefore, all material to be published in March should be sent to Kelsey (address above) to reach her by 15th February, and not to me.

ED.

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Dear Lily,

Through the SIFD NEWS I should like to thank all those who were concerned in arranging the Silver Badge examinations on Saturday, 17th January, and particularly the judges, for whom it must have been quite a strain to sit keen-eyed and alert during the actual performance of the dances.

I know that my friends and I were very impressed by the general efficiency of the organization, and we felt that everything was done to help us and make us feel at ease. After the judging, the comments of the judges were fair and kind, and could only spur us on to try to set right any faults which were pointed out. We certainly are going to enter for more badges, and hope that many more people will be encouraged to join us in our quest for proficiency.

Thank you, all those who took such trouble on our behalf.

Yours sincerely,

KAY LEIGHTON,
9 Barnes Rise,
Kings Langley, Herts.

* ********** *

WORLD OF ISLAM FESTIVAL

What promises to be an interesting exhibition is to be held at Horniman Museum later this year - 6th April to 6th October 1976. I quote from their programme:

> "MUSIC AND MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS OF ISLAM. This exhibition will show how, with the spread of Islam, music and musical instruments from Arabic, Persian and Turkish centres influenced the mainstream of music in places as far-flung as East and West Africa, Spain and Italy in the Middle Ages, the Balkans, India, Malaysia, Indonesia and even China. The musical instruments will be supported by a full audio-visual display which will bring the music to life and place it in context. The many varieties of folk instruments from Morocco all the way to India and Sumatra, the beautiful instruments of Arab, Persian and Indian classical music, the mosaic inlay, the painting and engraving and superb detail on many of these instruments will demonstrate the superb and intricate craftmanship devoted to the making of musical instruments throughout the Muslim world. There will be a special series of concerts and lectures to accompany this World of Islam Festival Trust Exhibition."

Horniman Museum is at London Road, Forest Hill, London, S.E.23.

L.S.

SILVER BADGE EXAMINATIONS

The Silver Badge examinations held on 17th January went off very smoothly once we had sorted out a difference of opinion with the school caretaker as to which hall we had booked!

The standard of dancing was, I thought, very good, and everyone passed who entered the examinations for dances from Austria, Estonia, Germany and Sweden. We were not able to pass everyone who entered for the French dances or for the Jugoslav, but this is no reflection on the dancers. As we have said before, the emphasis is on style, and the French style and the Balkan style are the two most difficult to achieve. It was also unfortunate that we had only two entrants for the Jugoslav and it is of course very difficult to get the feeling and style of dances meant to be done by a line of closely co-ordinated dancers, with only two people. However, we thank the people who took part for a good effort, both in French and Jugoslav, and hope they will take advantage of the Day Courses and classes to work at the respective steps and try again next time. We also congratulate the members who were successful in gaining their Silver badges, and a special round of applause for the five members who are now proud possessors of a Gold badge.

Total number of badges awarded were:-

12 for Estonian
7 for German
5 for Swedish
4 for Austrian
3 for French

and 5 Gold badges.

You may ask, "Why bother to enter an examination for a badge?". It is not just for personal glory but, I think, helps in a very positive way to achieve the higher standards of dancing which the SIFD has been lacking in recent years, and is a stepping stone towards future teachers of a good standard. The examinations give everyone a standard to aim for, and if the general dancing at our Social dances approached that shown by the participants last Saturday it would be a big step forward towards our aims.

The next examinations for Silver Badges will be held on 3rd July 1976. The countries will be: Austria, England, France, Spain, Jugoslavia and Sweden. Syllabuses will be sent out with the March issue of the NEWS and application forms will have to be in by 1st May.

LILY SOUTHGATE

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Books, records, tapes, cassettes are available
from Frances Horrocks, 112 Kingston Avenue,
North Cheam, Sutton, Surrey. Tel. 01-683 3629.

ADVANCE NOTICE A weekend course in Polish dancing is being arranged for 19th/21st November 1976 at Dinton, near Salisbury. Details next month.

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DAY-COURSE IN AUSTRIAN & GERMAN DANCES

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

Date: SATURDAY, 14th February, 1976.

Time: 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

Tutors: MARGERY LATHAM and BERT PRICE

Fee: 50p

There will be revision of Austrian and German dances required for the Silver Badge examinations, as well as revision of the dances taught to us by Anton Novak and Heinz Striegel. If you have a request for any special dances to be taught, please let Margery Latham know, (address on page 2).

* ** *** ** *

DAY-COURSE IN ENGLISH FOLK DANCES

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

Date: SATURDAY, 13th March, 1976.

Time: 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

Tutor: PETER OAKLEY

Fee: 50p

Dances to be taught are those to be taken for the Silver Badge, plus those taught at the last English Course. The first half-hour will be given over to technical terms and technique. The course is not only for those taking the badge examination. Everyone wishing to learn English folk dances will be welcome.

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At both the above Courses, coffee and tea will be available during the morning and afternoon, but you are asked to bring a packed lunch.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.....

Dear Lily,

In last month's NEWS I read an article by Les Avery, and thoroughly agree with him!

Best wishes,

LUCILE ARMSTRONG,
133 North End Road, N.W.11.

(ED. NOTE: Lucile is the official adjudicator at the International Eisteddfod and an eminent folklorist)

* * * *

Dear Editor,

Since many of the folkdances of today are the ballroom dances of yesterday, Les Avery has perhaps unknowingly hit upon one of the difficulties in deciding just what is a folkdance when he commented on the reaction to his request for a Foxtrot. Today his request is rejected as facetious; tomorrow it may well be on every folkdancer's list of requests!!

The Society often emphasises its authority on the authentic performance of folkdances, but, as noted by Les Avery (and I agree) it has failed to restrict its repertoire to only those dances with a pure folk background. He queries the Israeli dances. In fact, most of the Israeli dances in the SIFD books have known choreographers, and the music for many of them have recognized copyright holders. (Incidentally, I would be interested to know where "The Palestinian Hora" in Book 4 first saw the light of day. Not Israel?.)

Some 25 years ago, I asked the Society in the SIFD NEWS (I believe it was then called the Journal) to define and explain what it understood by the term 'folkdance'. I am still waiting for an answer! However, I must admit that I have reluctantly come to the conclusion over the intervening years that it is virtually impossible to narrow one's repertoire of dances to dances with an authenticated folk pedigree without throwing out most of one's dances. Thus many dances would go straight out because they are of known (and recent) origin. Other dances would go out because they are really ballroom dances. Others would go out for a variety of other reasons. But what of the rest? Do they remain because their origins have been obscured by the passage of time? If then a diligent research worker discovers that one of these folkdances was originally, say, a theatrical dance, is that dance then rejected?

However, having cast these doubts, I must say that I do agree completely with Les Avery that the SIFD members responsible (and that might mean all of us) should "get their ethnics buttoned up" for I think this is a question that has been ducked for far too long. As will be deduced from the above remarks (and previous letters) I am very confused over the whole issue.

/Contd.

Perhaps an authorative statement can be made in the NEWS for the guidance of members. Then perhaps Les Avery and I will know why Israeli dances are acceptable but Zorba's Dance is not. It would be interesting to hear what other members think upon this problem, and in particular whether they think that Israeli dances ought to be thrown out.*

Yours sincerely,

G.D.TOWNER,
41 Water Street,
Cambridge

*ED NOTE: It would appear that the Committee thinks otherwise, as it is ironical that the only class with SIFD Associate membership at the moment is an Israeli Class!

* * * *

Dear Lily,

A Happy New Year to you. What ages it is since we met. I have had goodness knows how many new addresses since then.

I am writing in response to your note in the November NEWS (which awaited my return from holiday) to say that, although I have "moved and emigrated" I have not "lost interest or died". I am still very happy to get the NEWS and read it avidly. I am always glad to see the "old" names still cropping up and admire you all for keeping going. How I wish that I could come over, brush up my rusty dancing (13¼ years of rust!!) and take the Badge examinations. I still hope to get a group going but am stuck on Scottish Country Dancing here at the moment.

Joan and Jack Richardson telephoned me when they were on their way to Queenstown, but it was just too far for us to meet. Now that Pug is in Sydney, maybe I shall see her now and then - it is a bit nearer than London.

I have just started working at the local Intellectually Handicapped Children's Society Pre-School. It's going to be tough as the children are aged 2 to 9 and none of them can speak and most are not mobile. It is right back to basics and one does not get much response from the children either.

Please give my greetings to all those whom I know. (I had a nice letter card from Margery Latham.)

Yours sincerely,

RUTH COTON (nee Sharp),
69 Bourke Street,
Invercargill,
New Zealand

A Cri-de-Coeur from one of our more far-flung members:-

Dear Mrs. F. Horrocks,

I am an overseas member of the Society for International Folk Dancing. Thank you very much for sending me the Books 3 and 4. I am now enclosing a bank draft for £1.75 for the total cost of them. Once the Books 1, 2 and 5 come out, please send to me as soon as possible (by surface mail).

Books and records about the folk dances of other countries are very difficult to find here in Hong Kong. You see, I am a volunteer folk dance teacher, and I want to teach my students mainly European folkdances in the next term, starting on 8th March 1976. So, I am now in extremely hurry to buy those books and records. Would you please help me a little bit? Can you send me some publications lists of the books and catalogues of the records, and subject me some books on dances which are suitable for beginners?

Most young people in Hong Kong are very fond of dancing western folk dances. Unfortunately, books and records about these are nearly impossible to find. Now, I am a member of the S.I.F.D., also a volunteer folk dance teacher here in Hong Kong. So I ought to have the duty to "promote the knowledge and practice of folk dances by means of classes, demonstrations, and other suitable methods. Also to promote interest, friendship and understanding with other countries" - one of the objects of the Society. Would you please give me a hand by teaching me what are the most important duties to do and which is the right way to go, so that I can carry out my duties much more easier? I really need your teaching and help! I, my students, and many young people are waiting for your good news! Thank you very much indeed. Thank you! I look forward to hearing from you. Bye-bye.

Yours faithfully,

LO MAN YUI,
Flat 534, 5/F
Tak Ming House, Wong Tai Sin
Choi Hung Road, Kowloon,
Hong Kong

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THIRD-SUNDAY-IN-THE-MONTH DANCES

On 15th February, the Dance at Trevelyan Hall will be run by the Woodvale Folk Dance Group.

On 21st March, the Dance at Trevelyan Hall will be run by the Morton Folk Dance Group.

There will be no mid-month Dance in April, owing to the Easter Holiday on 18th April.

On 16th May, 20th June and 18th July, the Dances will be held at the British Council, Portland Place, London, W.1., in conjunction with the International Students' Club. Watch the NEWS for further details.

AFFILIATED GROUPS/CLASSES

As the Committee have asked me to monitor Affiliated Groups/Classes, I would be grateful if Leaders, Secretaries or Teachers, would let me know of any change in their address, meeting place, days and times of meeting, etc., to enable me to keep an up-to-date record. Further, should you feel that the SIFD can help your group/class in any way, please let me know and I will put the matter before the Committee for you.

It is also intended to keep a Diary of Events, to prevent a clash of dates. Therefore, if you are organizing dance events, please let me know of them, to prevent duplication where possible and also to be sure of SIFD publicity.

FRANK FLANAGAN,
124 Fairbridge Rd.,
Upper Holloway, N.19.

Tel. 01-272 5003

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DANCE DIRECTORY

The Committee have decided to compile a directory of dance 'outlets', whether affiliated to the SIFD or not. The reason for this is that Society workers are constantly being asked for places to dance near to members' homes, especially when they buy our books and records. The affiliated groups are too limited in number and area always to fill the need, particularly so beyond the environs of London. Therefore, I am seeking the help of members. Would you, if you know of any existing group or class that performs **or** teaches international dances, be so kind as to let me have the following details, or an address where I may obtain them for myself:- Group name; Leader's or Teacher's name; Postal address (e.g. Secretary's); Meeting Place, Day and Time; Type of dancing done.

You can pass this information to me at Social Dances, or give it to Roland Minton at the door, or post or telephone them directly to me.

FRANK FLANAGAN,
(Address and telephone
number above)

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CLASSES

The SIFD has only one Associated Class at the moment - the Advanced Israeli class run by Fiona Howarth every Thursday evening, 7.30 to 9.30 p.m., at Henry Fawcett School, Bowling Green Street (behind Oval Cricket Ground).

CHRISTMAS 1975

As is traditional after Christmas, people you meet ask if you had a good Christmas and I have to admit to the crime of talking non-stop to these people about my Christmas for an hour or so, probably boring them to tears - so much did I have to tell them about Christmas at Dunford this year.

After feeling guilty of rambling on too long about my experiences, I asked them if they too had a good Christmas. The majority reply in a negative way with the usual "We had a quiet time", probably meaning that they spent the majority of their time watching the "box", trying to keep everyone in the family happy as to which programme they each wanted to watch. By a "quiet time" others imply that they spent a very lonely time. Christmas is, I think, the loneliest time of the year for many people.

When we announced, after much thought, to our families that we were going away for Christmas, people generally looked at us as if to say, "How could you not possibly spend a traditional Christmas with your family?". Well, this was the first time we have not spent Christmas with our families and I think everyone benefited by our absence. I certainly don't think we were missed! Christmas 1975 for us was enjoyed and not just endured, and as families we came together afterwards with lots to tell each other.

What a surprise to us, strangers to Dunford, when we arrived to find such a beautiful cosy house with fairylit Christmas trees around the house and in the grounds and a roaring log fire and tea just being 'brewed' or 'mashed' depending on what part of the country you live in. An ideal place to spend a Christmas.

Our memories are many - gorgeous food, carol singing, endless dancing, listening to excellent musicians, folk singing into the early hours, and spectating and occasionally participating in jigsaws, 'scrabbling', and master-mind, and generally enjoying everyone's company, but one thing we both felt on leaving Dunford is that 'people' first and foremost still matter. One needs constant reassurance these days that there are still people around that really care about other people, and this is always uppermost in their minds. Many people lose track of this very basic fact in this very materialistic world in which we live.

Thank you, everyone at Dunford, for a wonderful Christmas and for the fact that I think we all came away feeling that everyone has something to offer such a house-party - even if it is to cause utter chaos in many English dances by being a bit 'vague' and 'casting' in the wrong direction. Many apologies, Peter! At least I know what a 'gypsy' in English dancing is now!

Thank you, Roy, for organizing such a memorable house-party.

BARBARA & ROD PERKINS,
3 Linnet Close,
Bournville, Birmingham.

TO ALL AFFILIATED GROUPS

Our M.C.s are short - even our tall M.C.s are short! Our few devoted M.C.s have been arranging Cecil Sharp House dance evenings on the first Sunday of the month for years. They all enjoy it but feel equally that some fresh blood would be a good thing.

To all affiliated groups then, if you would like to supply an M.C., with a nucleus of dancers to lead or demonstrate any "new" or unusual dances, for a Cecil Sharp House Evening Dance, please get in touch with me as soon as you like and we'll arrange a date. You can book ahead as far as you like. Please remember that:-

1) you must be prepared to arrange a continuous programme of about 40 or so dances.

2) you will have to walk through any unusual dance and these should be fairly short.

3) you can arrange a demonstration by your own dancers during the course of the evening if you wish - about 15 minutes' duration is usual.

4) The Cecil Sharp musicians must be fully acquainted with any unusual music at least two months ahead of the agreed date. (They meet only once a month)

5) The evening is all yours and the acclaim (or the raspberries) will be yours!

Please don't be afraid to have a go, and I'll be glad to help you in any way I can. Ring me on 01-683 3629 at home or 01-686 0611 Ext.202 during office hours. My address is 112 Kingston Avenue, North Cheam, Surrey.

WILF HORROCKS

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CONGRATULATIONS to Ann and Cliff Beck on the birth of their son, Trevor, on 9th January. Mother, baby and father are all doing well, and we send them our best wishes.

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COMMISERATIONS We were very sorry to hear that David Bircher had been injured in a motorcycle accident and is now in hospital. We send him our very best wishes for a speedy recovery.

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TURKISH DANCE CLASSES are held every Thursday from 7 to 9 p.m. at Gateway School, Lisson Grove, N.W.1. (159 'bus). Further details from Hamdi Ataoglu at 133 North End Road, N.W.11. or Tel. 455 7597. All are welcome.

WORKING PARTY The meeting place for the working party to staple, collate, and post the SIFD NEWS on 27th February will be as for January, i.e. Margaret Joyner's flat at 39b Addison Road, London W.14 (off Kensington High Street) from 7 p.m. onwards.

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POLISH DANCE HALF-DAY COURSE AND PARTY

ON SATURDAY, 27TH MARCH, 1976

2 p.m. - 10 p.m.

at MOORFIELDS SCHOOL, BUNHILL ROW, E.C.1. (Near Old Street Station)

YACY TACY will be teaching from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. and having a party from 6.30 to 10 p.m. More details in next month's issue.

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AFFILIATED GROUPS

CANONBALLS FOLK DANCERS meet every Tuesday during term time at Stanburn School, Stanmore, Middx. 7.30 to 10 p.m. (Nearest station Canons Park). Secretary: Miss J.G.S.Goodman, 13 Woodgrange Close, Kenton, Harrow, Middx.

BARNET INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCE CLUB meets every Friday at Hadley Memorial Hall, Hadley Highstone, Barnet, from 8 to 11 p.m. Details from the Secretary: Mrs. Janet Heathfield, 29 Cedar Avenue, East Barnet, Herts. Tel. 01-368 5345.

BARLOW INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCE GROUP meets every Tuesday at Wilbraham Road United Reform Church Hall, Chorlton, Manchester, from 8 to 10 p.m. Further information from the President, Alan Williams, 47 South Drive, Manchester (Tel. 061-881 7744) or the Chairman, Philip Lloyd, 268 Upper Chorlton Road, Manchester (Tel. 061-881 3613).

KENSINGTON SLAVONIC DANCERS meet every Wednesday and Thursday evenings from 7 to 10 p.m. On Wednesdays at Fox School, Kensington Place, Notting Hill Gate, W.8. and on Thursdays at Isaac Newton School, Lancaster Rd., W.11. They learn and perform dances from Czechoslovakia and are taught by Mrs. Hedda Jolly-Klingerova, 69b Grange Road, W.5. Tel: 01-567 2346.

Affiliated groups are once again reminded that if they wish to be listed in the SIFD NEWS, they must let the Editor have details of their meetings etc.

SUNDAY DANCES

February 1st	Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, N.W.1.
February 15th	Trevelyan Hall, St. Anne's Lane, Great Peter Street, S.W.1. Run by Woodvale Folk Dance Group.
March 7th	Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, N.W.1.

7 to 10 p.m.

Admission: 40p members, 50p non-members, for Cecil Sharp House
30p members, 40p non-members, for Trevelyan Hall

At the Cecil Sharp House Dance on 1st February, a demonstration of Polish dances will be given by members of Betty Harvey's group "YACY TACY".

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WHAT'S ON

Feb. 6th/8th	WEEKEND AT HAWKWOOD COLLEGE. Organized by Roy Clarke.
8th	IVAN STEPANOV and his Balalaikas, Dancers and Singers in a programme of Russian songs, dances and music. Royal Albert Hall, London. Tickets 45p to £2.50. 3 p.m.
13th	TOWER HAMLETS FESTIVAL. International Folk Dance evening. Teams wishing to take part are asked to send applications to Mr. Nicholson, Entertainments & Recreation Officer, Cheviot House, 227/233 Commercial Road, E.1. as soon as possible.
14th	AUSTRIAN & GERMAN DAY-COURSE. See page 5.
20th	FOLK FESTIVAL '76, produced by the E.F.D.S.S. at Royal Albert Hall, London. 7.30 p.m. (Guest team: "Les Sortileges" from Montreal) Tickets & further details from Cecil Sharp House.
21st	FOLK FESTIVAL '76 as for Friday, 20th. 10.30 a.m., 2.30 p.m. and 7.30 p.m.
20th/22nd	WEEKEND AT GRANVILLE HOTEL, CLIFTONVILLE. Organized by Harrow Green Folk Dance Group.
28th	ISRAELI WORKSHOP AND PARTY. See separate notice enclosed.

SECOND

HAMA'AGAL ISRAELI DANCE WORKSHOP AND PARTY

SATURDAY 28th FEBRUARY 1976
HENRY FAWCETT SCHOOL
BOWLING GREEN STREET
(near the Oval)

WORKSHOP ___ 60p

10.30am -- 5.00pm.
(break for packed lunch - drinks available)

PARTY ___ 70p

7.00pm -- 10.30pm.
(price includes refreshments)

COMBINED PARTY/WORKSHOP TICKET -- £1.20p

As before the Workshop Sessions will be Intermediate and Advanced levels, run concurrently. The Party will include Balkan and International dances as well as Israeli.

ADMISSION TO BOTH EVENTS IS BY TICKET ONLY

and numbers are strictly limited

TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM: (please send s.a.e.)

Les Wallace
19, Ian Court,
2 Dacres Road,
FOREST HILL
London SE23 2PB

OR

Fiona Howarth,
6 Cromwell Avenue,
BROMLEY Kent,
BR2 9AQ

or from any member of Hama'agal Israeli class

CUT----------CUT

ORDER FORM

Please send the following tickets for Hama'agal DAY OF DANCE
28th February 1976

WORKSHOP ONLY @ 60p..... /
PARTY ONLY @ 70p..... /
/
COMBINED @ £1.20 ..... /
Total enclosed /
£..... /
/

For WORKSOP indicate whether you expect to work with
Intermediate.....
Advanced.....

I was / was not at the 1975 Hama'agal Workshop. (please send sae)
Name.....
Tel:.....
ADDRESS.....

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