

SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING

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The collating, stapling, packing and posting of the SIFD NEWS was carried carried out last month by the Working Party (see details inside).

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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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This month's cover is based on a Ukrainian

embroidery design, and is by Lesley Boorer

WOULD ALL MEMBERS WHO CHANGE THEIR ADDRESS PLEASE NOTIFY THE EDITOR, AS WELL AS THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

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MATERIAL FOR PUBLICATION IN THE APRIL ISSUE MUST REACH THE EDITOR BY 15TH MARCH

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

John and Jackie Hughes have moved and now live at:- 9 Hallmead Road, Sutton, Surrey. Tel. No. 644 4873 (ex-directory).

Although we do not see John and Jackie very often, John is still very much involved in helping with the SIFD NEWS by providing the paper, stencils, ink etc., and also printing the cover each month. I personally am very grateful for this help which has been forthcoming for many years now, and hope you will all join me in saying Thank You Very Much, John, and we hope you, Jackie and Mary will be happy in your new home.

L.S.

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WINDMILL HOUSE WEEKEND

There are still places available for the Windmill House Weekend, 21st - 23rd May 1976, being organized by the Selpar group. Windmill House is easily accessible from either North or South, being situated in rural Worcestershire just 10 miles South of Birmingham. We hope to include walking, dance tuition and social dancing on the programme for the weekend. Accommodation will be in singles, doubles and partitioned dormitory type rooms. Booking forms can be obtained from either Alf Garton, 5 Glen Rise, Kings Heath, Birmingham, B B13 OEH, or Rod Perkins, 3 Linnet Close, Bournville, Birmingham, B30 1XB. (s.a.e. please).

MIDLAND MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE

The S.I.F.D. Midlands Branch monthly dances return to Swanshurst School, Brook Lane, Kings Heath from this month. First dance March 6th, 7.30 p.m. Members 40p, Non-members 50p.

ROD PERKINS

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FOR SALE A small, light framed rucksack; blue canvas, leather straps, two outside pockets. Brand new. £3.50. Apply: Lily Southgate (address and telephone number on page 2).

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NOT FOR SALE A son, Thomas Roy, born to Barry and Margaret Shapcott on 8th Februsry. May we say welcome to Thomas Roy and Congratulations to the happy parents. Mother, Father and Son are doing well.

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ERRATUM The correct address for Margery's International Class on Wednesday's is:- St. Alban's School, Baldwin's Gardens, Grays Inn Road, E.C.l.

* * JUMBLE SALE * *

It is never to early to start buying your summer gear or that difficult gift for Uncle Joe, and you might find just what you have been looking for at the Harrow Green Jumble Sale, in aid of the Harrow Green F.D.G. costume and record fund, on

Saturday, 6th March, 1976 2 pm t

UPPER HALL, S.E. BRANCH LIBRARY, ESSEX ROAD, E.1.

(near Angel, Islington)

Bric a Brac, Books, Records, Clothes, Refreshments, etc.

Admission: 3p

On the other hand, this is just the opportunity for getting rid of last summer's gear that no longer fits, or that unwelcome gift from Uncle Joe that doesn't go with the wallpaper. All suitable jumble will be gratefully received. Please contact any member of Harrow Green or:

George Sweetland: 01-701 3785
Frank Flanagan: 01-272 5003

or bring it to the hall between 12 noon and 1.00 pm on 6th March.

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ENGLISH DAY-COURSE AND EVENING DANCE

A reminder about the SIFD Day Course in English Folk Dancing and to inform you that we have been fortunate in obtaining an extension at the hall in order to end the day with an Evening Dance.

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

Date: SATURDAY, 13th MARCH, 1976. Tutor: PETER OAKLEY

Time: Course: 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.; Dance: 7.00 to 10.00 p.m.

Fee: Course: 50p; Dance: 50p (including Ploughman's Supper) (Combined Fee for attendance at both Course and Dance: 75p)

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 techniques. The course is not only for those taking the badge examination. Everyone wishing to learn English folk dances will be welcome. At the evening Social Dance it is planned to have mainly English dances with some general International as well. Tickets available at the door or from Peter Oakley, 24 Arun, East Tilbury, Essex (Tel. E. Tilbury 71345). It would be helpful to know in advance the number of people who hope to attend the Social Dance.

Coffee and tea will be available during the morning and afternoon, but you are asked to bring a packed lunch.

TOWER HAMLETS FESTIVAL, 1976

International Dance Evening

Friday 13th February doesn't sound like a very auspicious day to hold an International Dance evening, and judging by the small number of entries and the sparse (though appreciative) audience, Folk Dance enthusiasts must be a particularly superstitious breed of people!

The evening began with a team of very tiny children dancing the Ribbon Dance and Circassian Circle - and thoroughly enjoying themselves! Other Junior Teams performed programmes of Scottish, Irish and Bulgarian dances, all of a very high standard.

Peter Oakley was the adjudicator, and in his comments he recognized the hard work that had been put in by the dancers, their teachers, and the parents in making the costumes, and hoped that everyone would continue to enjoy dancing for many years to come - folk dancing is an activity for all ages and all members of the community.

Dancers could participate on a competitive or non-competitive basis, and the programme notes made it clear that the emphasis was placed, as always, on enjoyment and active participation. All teams received a reasoned assessment of their performance, with marks awarded for style and technique, content and presentation, and costume.

Amongst the adult teams we saw many well-known faces, to whom the Festival gave a pleasant opportunity to meet socially in friendly competition. Again the standard of dancing was very high, and the programmes visually well thought out, giving those in the audience new to the International Folk Dance scene a varied and lively picture of what it's all about. It is perhaps a shame, with all the expertise in the Society, that the picture couldn't have been made a little more comprehensive. One wonders why other groups didn't take this opportunity to show the dances of their countries. After all, the Society's aims are to promote International Folk Dancing, and the Organizers want an attractive, lively display to bring in the crowds. It would surely be in everybody's interests to share our enjoyment of dancing with others, and at the same time help make the Festival a success.

Admittedly this year information was very late in getting through to Group leaders - it would be interesting to know, in fact, how the event is publicised in order to attract new entrants? There wasn't even a poster outside York Hall to indicate that anything special was going on. It is perhaps significant that, though there were some 6,000 entries in the whole Festival (which devotes whole weeks to Irish, Scottish, ballroom and stage dancing), only 12 of those entries were in the International Dance classes: 8 Junior teams and 4 adult teams.

Results in the Adult section were as follows:

Clan Clinton (Scottish)	79
Balaton Hungarian Dance G	roup 86
British Czechoslovakian Da	
Balalaika Dance Group	91

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It really was that close. The 12-minute programmes enabled teams to show their graceful "Girls' Dances", their energetic "Men's Dances" (the Balaton group, for example, performed a particularly ambitious Recruiting Dance) and some nicely arranged couple or set dances. As has often been said, the groups who are lucky enough to have live musicians find it much easier to bring their performances to life: so much can depend on reactions between the dancers and their musicians (whether it's a lone piper, a solo flamenco guitarist, an accordian ensemble or a full band) which can lift the dancers, and bring out the sheer joy of dancing and convey it to all around. That's where folk dancing began - hopefully with integrity and understanding, that's how it will continue, wherever it is performed.

ELEANOR OAKLEY

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BALKAN DANCE

Ken Ward's Yugoslav Group, ZIVKO FIRFOV, are having a Balkan Dance on

Saturday 20th March, 1976

at

Moorfields School, Bunhill Row, off Old Street, E.C.l.

7 pm to 11 pm

Cost: 75p (which includes food and drink)

N.B. Because of limited space, admission has to be by ticket only - obtainable from any member of the group or by post from Jean Marshall, 35 Thurleston Ave., Morden, Surrey (please send s.a.e.).

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GROUPS AND CLASSES

Some new application forms have been typed for immediate use, prior to having them printed, for Groups wish to Affiliate or Classes wishing to Associate with the Society.

Would you please contact me if you would like one.

FRANK FLANAGAN, 124 Fairbridge Rd., Upper Holloway, N.19 Tel. 01-272 5003

AUTHENT ICITY?

The subject of Les Avery's letter is simply another aspect of our old problem of defining authenticity, which to my mind and, if I understand him correctly, to Mr. Towner's also, is an impossibility.

It must be agreed that there are many older dances that are clearly 'folk' but under what conditions any particular example should be included in that category is a subjective choice. Perhaps Israeli dances should be more properly classed as 'national', but if so, we must treat such 'made-up' dances from other areas such as Kreuz Kënig, Zikiro, etc., in the same manner. It must also be remembered that Israeli dances have been included in the Society instruction books for many years, and it is obviously neither sensible nor proper to change our policy now.

What is new, is the recent rapid increase in the number of dances from Israel, which tends to make those who are not attracted to them to adopt a stronger attitude. While I sympathise with their views, we must be careful not to take up a position which is indefensible as we have no real definition to work to, and above all we must be consistent.

Therefore I suggest that we should approach the question obliquely. By this I mean we should state the provenance of all dances in the appropriate publications of the Society (e.g. Instruction books) so that interested individuals have the information to select dances according to their own standpoint and it would relieve the Society from the implication that all the dances in its repertoire were necessarily traditional. Using hypothetical examples, we could say "Taught by Herr Schmitt (German Folk Dance Federation) at Chelsea, 1952, this version comes from the village of ..., Bavaria", or "Taught by Miss Ruth X (Israel Arts Group) Swansea 1970, Choreography by Chaim Y, Tel Aviv 1960, using movements from the Yemen region". Some of this data would be difficult to obtain, but where known it should be clearly stated. Stephen Ward has I know advocated this course for a long time.

Having solved one problem (even if only to my satisfaction) others become apparent. I have always worked on the assumption that there is somewhere a traditional version of a dance to use as a standard, but if we no longer adopt this as a guide, how do teachers and M.C.s decide which version is 'correct'? Or do we encourage an infinite number of variations finally taking it to the extreme of allowing everyone to 'do their own thing'? It is possible that the afore-mentioned background notes would give us a clue, but as the King of Siam is supposed to have said 'It's all a puzzlement!'.

GEORGE SWEETLAND

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DANCE DIRECTORY

A REMINDER TO EVERYONE to please let Frank Flanagan (address and telephone number on page 6) have details of any and every group or class that you know of, as requested in last month's NEWS. So far, I believe, he has a list of about 3. This will be a very useful document for obvious reasons, but it does need your help to get it off the ground.

TOWARDS A DEFINITION OF FOLK DANCE

There is considerable confusion over what is a folk dance, although many dancers are unaware that there is any confusion at all. On the one hand they have a reasonably good idea what constitutes a folk dance; on the other hand they blindly perform dances which they have been led to believe are folk dances, especially as these dances conform to types which they readily recognise as folk dances. Therefore they are very surprised when they learn that a particular dance is say a mid-19th Century ballroom dance, which is not their idea of what a folk dance should be. Today's Israeli dances bring the problem into sharper focus. Let us therefore study a typical recipe for a folk dance:

Folk dances are the traditional dances of the Country folk that have originated in the past by a process of communal creation and have subsequently been subjected to the moulding processes of generations of dancers. Some recipes allow a definite but long forgotten creator, and in that case emphasis the subsequent moulding process for imparting the 'folk' imprint. Other characteristics may be included, but the above represent the most essential ones.

An examination of the above recipe shows that it contains in effect several distinct statements or definitions. The following are probably the most important for our purposes:-

- 1. Folk dances are traditional dances.
- 2. Folk dances are those dances performed by the Country folk.
- 3. Folk dances have been shaped by generations of dancers.
- 4. Either (a) Folk dances are created by a 'dancing master' long since forgotten.
 - Or (b) Folk dances have originated by a process of communal creation.
- (N.B. Statement 2 presupposes that we are agreed on whom the 'folk' are.)

Although these propositions are presented above as distinct, they are not necessarily independent of each other, but until two or more are shown to be immutably connected, they must be regarded as independent. I stress this point because I believe that it is the tacit assumption that all of the above properties are linked together that has led to the confusion referred to in my opening sentence. Thus for many dancers, statement (2) is sufficient to automatically ensure the truth of the remaining ones. Nevertheless, we can if we wish demand that our dances must conform to all of the above statements in order to qualify as folk dances. Clearly, the more limitations we impose, the fewer dances will qualify, and vice versa. The practicability of testing every dance against the prescribed criteria is another problem, outside the scope of this article.

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At this point, let us consider a particular example and I cannot do better than quote from Hugh Rippon's excellent booklet "Discovering English Folk Dance" (Shire Publications Ltd., 1975, p 51):-

"It was from this village dancing as it survived into the twentieth century that we today obtain much of our current repertoire of traditional dancing. But this village dancing was itself subjected to so many outside influences from different sources that by the time the dance collectors of the 1900s started work they were presented with a sort of pastiche of everything that had gone on throughout the nineteenth century.

"The parts that went to make up this picture can be summarized as follows: the survival of some of the very ancient reels and circle dances; the survival of some of the late eighteenth-century 'country' or longways dances; the survival of many of the new formations of set dances mentioned in; additions of new longways dances composed in Scotland, some of which were adopted in England; the survival of versions of popular Victorian couple dances; and the survival of versions of the quadrilles, lancers and other Victorian set dances."

Hence if we accept as our basic axiom that folk dances are those dances performed by the Country folk, then whether we like it or not, we have to accept that our reportoire will include dances with all sorts of pedigrees. The above example refers to England, but the same sort of picture would apply to our European neighbours.

It should be noted however that we have cheated slightly by restricting our discussion without drawing attention to the fact to what might be termed social folk dances, i.e. dances for men and women (I make no apologies for distinguishing between men and women!). This class of dance forms the greater part of our repertoire. Dances such as the Morris and Sword dances of England (and their counterparts in Europe), the aboriginal dances of Australia and the Red Indian dances of the U.S.A. form another class of dance which does in fact adhere very closely to our original recipe for a folk dance, but this class of dance is virtually ignored by the SIFD.

Finally may I make a plea for other readers to add their views, not only those academically inclined and those with specialized knowledge in particular dance cultures, but also those readers who dance for the sheer joy of it all.

G. D. TOWNER

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CLASSES

The SIFD has only one Associated Class at the moment - the Advanced Israeli cluss 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).

Other groups may obtain the necessary application forms from Frank Flanagan (see page 6).

YACY TACY POLISH DANCE COURSE AND PARTY

SATURDAY MARCH 27th 2 pm - 10 pm

at Moorfields School, Bunhill Row (Nr. Moorgate and Old St. Tube stations)

Dance Course: 2 pm - 5 pm Cost: 25p

There will be recapping of some of the dances taught at previous Polish day courses, plus new dances including basic Kujawiak.

Party: 6.45 pm - 10 pm Cost: 60p (including refreshments)

There will be general International as well as Polish dancing during the evening.

Combined Party/Course:

Cost: 75p

Musicians: John Smith and Caroline Thomas.

A meal will be available between the course and the evening dance at a cost of 40p, but this will only be guaranteed if ordered before the date. Tickets available for the Party/Course or Party only from any member of Yaoy Tacy or from Miss Betty Harvey, 30 Regent Square, London, E3 3HQ. (with s.a.e. please).

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COSTUMES

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All the SIFD costumes are to be moved to a central store at Bolt Court and the time has come to make a complete inventory of all the costumes and accessories currently owned by the Society. Would anyone and everyone who has either a complete costume or part of a costume (be it ever such a tiny part - a belt, a scarf, a brooch, etc.) please return it immediately to either Janet Woolbar or Margery Latham. If you have a costume but, because of transport or other difficulties, cannot get it to Margery at once, please do write or telephone her to give her all the details (her address and telephone number are on page 2). This is very important and very urgent, so please don't put it off till next week (you might be busy then and forget). Search for it now and deliver to Margery as soon as possible.

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LOST AND FOUND

After Christmad as Dunford, one pair of brown ladies' boots were missing, believed to have been taken home by mistake. Left behind were a similar NEW pair of boots, Austrian made, continental size 40.

After the Hawkwood weekend in February some Ordinance Survey maps were found to be missing: 1:50000 Maps, Sheets 162 and 163.

Any information please on either of the above to Roy Clarke, 53 Cedar Park Road, Enfield, Middx.

A DANCE DATE TO LOOK FORWARD TO

Woodvale Folk Dance Group will be holding an International Folk Dance

at Borough Green Village Hall on Saturday 24th April 1976

7.30 pm - 11 pm

Musician: Wilf Horrocks

M.C.: Ernie Nolan

It is also hoped to have a demonstration by the Yacy Tacy Polish Group

Tickets: 50p (available from members or at the door) includes refreshments. There will be a licensed bar.



DANCING AT PHILIPPS HOUSE, DINTON

Philipps House is a National Trust property which is leased by the YWCA; and the Yacy Tacy Group will be holding a dancing weekend there from 19th to 21st November, 1976. The house is set in parkland, 9 miles west of Salisbury, and buses run from Salisbury to Dinton. The weekend will run from Friday evening dinner to Sunday afternoon tea. There will be time for walking and exploring the area, for instruction in Polish dancing and there will be general dancing in the evenings.

Accommodation is mostly in two or three bedded rooms. The cost will be approx. £10 for SIFD members (£11 for non-members) plus VAT, and as accommodation is limited you are advised to book early.

Please send names and £2 deposit to: Margaret Joyner, 39B Addison Road, London W.14 (with any requests for room sharing).



USE OF THE RONEO DUPLICATOR

The Roneo machine of the Society is kept at my office. I like that idea. This, however, does not mean that I agree to do any duplicating that is wanted, by anyone for any purpose. If you want a special item done - I'll do it, but only occasionally. Gladly. Especially if it is connected with publicity.

In one week last year I was asked to do several jobs on this machine, totalling 23 stencils, nearly seven thousand sheets. This was in addition to helping with the printing of the SIFD NEWS (fourteen stencils, 5,000 sheets) a few days later. This included typing out five of the stencils.

Gladly I'll do work required, but when it is possible for you to come and do it yourself, or type your own stencils, please phone me and come and do it.

WILL GREEN

WORKING PARTY

The first meeting of the Working Group was good. Six busy people gathered at 39b Addison Road in Kensington and packed and posted the SIFD NEWS, then put labels on some record cases, and packed and labelled some of the cassettes. It was a pleasant and productive evening. The second meeting will be over by the time you read this, and at the same address.

The third meeting will be at 90 Wells Way, Camberwell, S.E.5. on the last Friday in March - 26th at any time after 6.30 pm. Come when you like, stay as long as you like, there is plenty of work. We'd like one or two more hands, please.

We shall move around to make it possible for more members to become involved at different times. If you have a fairly central address, with space for laying out the work, please offer to accommodate us.

WILL GREEN

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AFFILIATED GROUPS

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).

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.

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.

FOLKESTONE DISTRICT NATIONAL DANCE GROUP meets every Tuesday during term time at the South Kent College of Technology, Shorncliffe Road, Folkestone, from 7.45 to 9 p.m. Details from the Secretary: Mrs. Margaret Warwick, 32 The Crescent, Sandgate, Folkestone. Tel. 38338.

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 Road, 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.

WOODVALE FOLK DANCE GROUP meet every Tuesday Evening at Borough Green Village Hall, Borough Green, near Sevenoaks, Kent, from 7.30 to 10 p.m. All details from the Treasurer: Mrs. Eileen Nolan, 16 Dryland Road, Borough Green, Nr. Sevenoaks, Kent. Tel. 0732-883380.

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

March 7th Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, S.W.1.

21st Trevelyan Hall, St. Anne's Lane, Great Peter Street, S.W.l. run by Merton Folk Dance Group.

April 4th Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, N.W.l.

7 to 10 p.m.

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

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The Committee would like Affiliated Groups to call the attention of their non-SIFD members to the following if you please:

Entrance to dances at SIFD member rates is available to those who are Group members, only if they enter the dance as a party of five or more. Otherwise they do not qualify for this cheaper price.

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THIRD-SUNDAY-IN-THE-MONTH DANCES

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.l., in conjunction with the International Students' Club. Watch the NEWS for further details.

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WHAT'S ON

March 6th HARROW GREEN JUMBLE SALE - See page 4

13th SIFD DAY COURSE IN ENGLISH FOLK DANCING AND SOCIAL DANCE See page 4.

20th ZIVKO FIRFOV BALKAN PARTY - See page 6

26th SIFD WORKING GROUP MEETS - See page 12

27th POLISH HALF-DAY COURSE AND PARTY - See page 10

27th FLAMENCO: MUSICAL HERITAGE FROM EAST AND WEST. Lecture with recordings and demonstration by Teresa Moreno at Horniman Museum, London Road, Forest Hill, S.E.23. 3.30 p.m.

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