

# S.I.F.D. NEWS

JULY  
1976



Zbójnicki - Highlander's dance

Costumes from Zakopane.

SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING

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Frank Flanagan helped with the printing; and the collating, stapling  
and packing etc. was done last month by Will Green, Alex Beauclerc and  
George Sweetland.

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

Secretary: Edna Foster, 33 Orchard Avenue, Southgate, London, N.14.  
Tel. 01-886 2345.

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

Membership Secretary: Roland Minton, 10 Benyon Court, Balmes Road,  
London, 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 by Dorothy Bryan and  
shows dancers in costumes from Zakopane  
performing a Polish Highland dance, Zbojnicki.

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

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WOULD ALL MEMBERS CHANGING THEIR ADDRESS PLEASE NOTIFY  
THE EDITOR, AS WELL AS THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY.

## NEWS FROM THE MIDLANDS

Selpar demonstrated a number of dances at a Scout Country Fayre at West Heath on 12th June. A selection of Israeli dances was followed later in the day by several dances from Greece and Germany. Also on the programme were English, Scottish and Irish dancers. The young Irish dancers were a pleasure to watch, all the more so since we knew the problems they must be having with the stage. They needed no encouragement to join us in a repeat performance of our final Greek dance.

We have our day of Polish dancing on 19th June at Yardley's School, with Betty Harvey, and are expecting a good turnout. Doubtless you will be hearing about it in due course. On 3rd July we have our normal Saturday Dance at Swanshurst School but will not then have another until September.

Again, in September, we are arranging another Halsway Manor weekend (24th/26th). Those interested in going, please send a deposit of £2 per head and a stamped addressed envelope to me. Then in October we are arranging another afternoon/evening course, which we shall be giving more information about later on.

BOB KIMMINS,  
126, Grove Road,  
Birmingham

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SELPAR (Birmingham Branch of SIFD) meet at Selly Park Centre, Pershore Road, Birmingham, every Tuesday, 7.15 to 9.15 p.m. Enquiries to Rod Perkins, 3 Linnet Close, Bournville, Birmingham, or to Sybil Chapman, 20 Pelham Road, Droitwich, Worcs. (not to Christine Butler as previously announced.)

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### WORKING GROUP

If you received your June issue of SIFD NEWS late, I am sorry, but although the Editor produced it in good time, there were only three of us (George Sweetland, Alex Beauclerc and myself) to do the packing up (no time for stapling), and as time ran out and I was going away for the weekend, I had to leave it and send it off when I came back. It would help if just one member from each class or group could help with the packing up just once or twice a year; that's all we need. If you can help, please let me know.

The next Working Group meeting will be on 30th July at Roland Minton's flat, 10 Benyon Court, Balmes Road, London, N.1., and we have nearly 400 copies of the NEWS to get out, plus other work. No firm offer of a venue has been made for 27th August. Can anyone living in Central London help?

WILL GREEN,  
90 Wells Way,  
London, S.E.5.  
Tel. 01-703 4008

## WHAT IS A FOLK DANCE?

I hope that more members will contribute their views on what they think identifies a dance as a folk dance. It is surely important for the S.I.F.D. to come to a conclusion on this difficult question. Its solution becomes even more pressing now that the Society sets itself up as an examination board, giving medals of competence. One does not want the standard of performance to be that "according to the S.I.F.D." rather than "according to the original". It is essential for any Society that aspires to establish itself as an authority in any particular field to back up that authority with an unimpeachable foundation. For the S.I.F.D. this includes the need to establish what it understands to be a folk dance, and to uphold that standard in all its operations. It is not sufficient merely to emphasize authentic performance. The suggestion by George Sweetland (March) that the "provenance of all dances" should be stated in the S.I.F.D. publications - something which I have urged on the Society in past letters to the NEWS - does not override this necessity to define a folk dance.

I would now like to comment on some of the points raised in answer to my contribution "Towards a Definition of Folk Dance" (March). I have no objection to the inclusion of the 'town folk' in the class 'folk' as appears to be proposed by Peter Oakley (April). In compiling the original recipe, I was in fact inclined to leave out the qualifying 'country' but I was trying to present a typical description, and one cannot escape the fact that the folk is generally identified with the 'country folk'. It was because of my own feelings on this point that I added the rider in brackets, viz. "N.B. Statement 2 presupposes that we are agreed on whom the 'folk' are." However, if I understand Peter Oakley correctly, he disagrees with my definition of "folk dance" but he does not offer an alternative one; I would be interested to hear his opinion on what he considers is the correct definition.

I welcome criticism and discussion, but I take a strong exception to his method of argument in the penultimate paragraph of his letter. It is thoroughly unscientific to argue against the substance of a statement by discrediting the author because of errors he may have made. There are very few, if any, folk books written that do not contain factual errors or misunderstandings. Please, Mr. Oakley, if you disagree with the general picture of the dance scene at the turn of the century as described by Hugh Rippon, please say so and give us the correct picture, but please do not make what appears to be a personal attack on Hugh Rippon.

In reply to Margaret Cullen, I ask her a question, "Would you include Soul Dancing as an example of the new folk dances of Great Britain?" It is danced by the young people of everyday Britain rather than we folk dance revivalists. I suspect that if it had appeared today in, say, Israel and nowhere else, it would have been embraced by us!

G. D. TOWNER,  
41, Water Street,  
Cambridge

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With reference to the article on the previous page, I agree entirely that it is time the S.I.F.D. (i.e. the Committee, the administrators, the teachers, the adjudicators, etc.) took notice of letters such as those from Guy Towner. They seem to have fallen on deaf ears and the S.I.F.D. is setting itself up as an authority without, as Guy Towner says, seeing the necessity of backing up that authority "with an unimpeachable foundation". Where are our researchers 'in the field', our folklorists, our folk historians, our records of the origin of each and every dance we accept into our repertoire? If we are really just a folkdance club, where people meet to hop around to music and enjoy ourselves, then why not accept any dance we happen to find and like, reject those we don't like, and carry on as just another social club; but if we set ourselves up as an authoritative body, an examination board, proclaiming what is and what is not authentic folkdancing, from Portugal to Turkey, from Finland to Sicily, we need to spend a lot more money and time on research, and widen our horizons to include the many eminent folklorists and ethnicologists working in this field and who have never heard of the S.I.F.D.

LILLY SOUTHGATE

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#### JUNE DEMONSTRATION NOTES

We were invited for the fifth annual visit to Eynesford Castle, Kent, on Saturday, 12th June. This affair is to support the Christian Aid Fund and has proved very popular with the local people and attracts friends from all over Kent. We even competed with the local Morris team this year, who were entertaining eleven other Morris teams with dancing and drinking.

We now have a regular group who come each year and vaguely remember the dances; the children dance in the middle and the teenagers do their best to break their ankles by dancing in platform shoes! We do collect a good sum for the charity and they all enjoy it. The team is always wined and dined afterwards, so we have a good time.

This year, after much worry about who would be free to dance, we ended up with a team of six couples and two spare girls. My thanks to them all, and a special thank-you to Wilf Horrocks who played for us and had to work twice as hard to get the sound across, with no amplification, having played all day at the Swedish Course as well.

MARGERY LATHAM

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#### CLASSES

I.L.E.A. classes officially close at the end of June. However, Margery Latham's General International Class will be carrying on into July for the first three Wednesdays - the 7th, 14th and 21st - at MOORFIELDS SCHOOL, BUNHILL ROW, E.C.1., not at Bolt Court, 6 to 9 p.m.

A QUESTION OF SEMANTICS

When we visit Llangollen each year, we often criticize foreign teams for disobeying the rules by performing a suite of dances when the rules clearly state only two contrasting dances, by putting 27 people on the stage when the rules clearly state 25, by starting to dance straight away when the rules clearly state 'Wait for the bell before starting' etc. etc. However, to give you an idea of what the organizers are up against and what linguistic problems they have to cope with, I give below two genuine letters received from prospective teams for this year's festival.

"Dear Mrs. Lloyd-Jones,

I have received your letter dated 14.5.1976 and I thank you very much that you answers my questions for to not to make any misunderstanding i am very peevish on this matter, Please understand me.

We shall be very proud to present our folklor in England. The way expenses are enough much from xxxxxx to England, that is why I have more few questions.

- How much we have to pay with buss for acrossing the channel the mans (for us to go and return)
  - What kind of payment is 36 sterling will you please clear us
  - Can you please write to us which countries teams are enjoying this year festival
  - At the entrance of onglad are we paying any tax or not? As it necessary to get any visa?
  - My English is not enough, do I bring with me any interpreter? Is it necessary? or you can give or find any interpreter there.
- Mrs. Lloyd-Jones please accept my complement and regards."

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"It is very difficult understand that England form for us.

Our grup members are 18 men, they are not married.

The forms whic you have send to us till today, we made our programme and we shall move as your forms programm.

We are planning our trip as your wish and we shall arrive at 5 July to be at Llangollen and we shall return the final of your FESTIVAL which it is 12 July. If your programm is different we shall enjoy with you.

Please answer my questions very urgent.

- Are we accepted positively in your festival? if it is so, please send us the papers which they be helpful for our entrance of ENGLAND.
- Did you get our photos and presentation letters?
- Where is EUSTON and RUABON?

/Contd...

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- Where are you going to meet us? in Llangollen? in London? or are you going to meet us in any other place? and which date?
- For the Amateur groups, after the british frontier are you paying Money for the Buss rent and personnel expenses?

Sincerely Yours

Perhaps those 'rules which clearly state' aren't so clear after all! ED.

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DEMONSTRATIONS AT CECIL SHARP HOUSE

Do we want demonstrations at the Cecil Sharp House monthly dances? Some do, some don't, and the Committee proposes to hold a referendum on the subject. At the Dance on 4th July a form will be handed out for dancers to complete on the spot, but as some people with an interest in this question may not be there, you are being offered the opportunity to voice your opinion by writing to our secretary, Edna Foster, 33 Orchard Avenue, Southgate N.14, to say:-

- (a) I want demonstrations at the Cecil Sharp House Dances.
- or (b) I do not want demonstrations at the Cecil Sharp House Dances.
- or (c) I should like demonstrations occasionally at Cecil Sharp House Dances.

but please do not write to the secretary AND fill in a form at Cecil Sharp House. One or the other. Also, please do not write if you never attend these Dances..... unless you want to explain why you miss these enjoyable evenings among other international folk dancers. That too might be interesting, of course.

WILL GREEN

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Regarding the above-mentioned refere . . . I think it would be a great pity if voting went against these displays. Now that we no longer produce Royal Albert Hall Shows, or indeed Shows of any kind, we have no 'shop window' to display the many lovely costumes we have within the Society, or to display folkdancing of a higher standard than that usually seen at our Social Dances. (I know we give outside demonstrations on a smaller scale but these are usually for a selected audience outside the SIFD and should be considered as a separate issue).

We have some very good dancers, and to see them dance together as a team, in the appropriate costumes, and showing how some of the dances that we do generally should really be done, as well as showing some our lesser-known dances, is surely of interest to our members and to visitors to Cecil Sharp House. I hope, therefore, the Committee will decide to resuscitate these demonstrations.

(Also, if we do continue with them, could someone on the Committee please let me know in advance so that I can announce them in the NEWS).

LILY SOUTHGATE

## NEWS FROM NEWPORT

Our membership is now almost 40, about a third of whom are under 14, the youngest is 7 and the oldest 65. We meet every Monday throughout the year, except for Bank holidays.

Already we have a number of assets, the greatest being our accordionist, who is rapidly learning the repertoire and whom I hope to persuade to come on an SIFD weekend. Other assets, apart from our members, are records, books and tapes, including most of the SIFD ones, a set of Italian costumes, money in the bank, and, we may soon buy our own record player.

Already we have given a number of informal demonstrations but our greatest achievement so far was when we raised £87 for charity by dancing for two hours in our local town square. Not bad for beginners!

A Committee has just been formed to work out a Constitution for the group and to delegate various responsibilities.

Who says the country members don't help themselves!?

Best wishes to all,

SUE CLARK,  
31, East Grove Road,  
Newport, Gwent.

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BILLINGHAM INTERNATIONAL FOLKLORE FESTIVAL will take place this year from 14th to 21st August. Groups from the following countries will be taking part:-

Cuba (National Folklore Ensemble from Havana)  
Czechoslovakia (Folk Ensemble 'Danaj' from Straznice)  
Finland (Folk Ensemble of Oulunsalo)  
Israel (Folk Ensemble of the Municipality of Haifa)  
Mexico (Folk Ensemble of Guadalajara)  
Romania (Folk Ensemble 'Balada' from Bucharest)  
Trinidad & Tobago (Trinidad Folk Performing Company from Port of Spain)  
Tunisia (National Folklore Ensemble from Tunis)  
U.S.A. (American Folk Dancers from Brigham Young University, Utah)  
Yugoslavia (Folk Ensemble 'Tine Rozanc' from Ljubljana)  
Leeward Isles Caribbean Steel Band

England (Folk Dance Groups from Durham District and Stockton District of EFDSS, as well as various Bands and groups of Folk Singers)

Information, booking forms, and programmes from the Festival Director, The Forum, Town Centre, Billingham, Cleveland.



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 Alan Williams, 47 South Drive, Manchester (Tel. 061-881 7744) or 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 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.

GLEN EYRE INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCE GROUP (SOUTHAMPTON) meet every Monday during term time at the Glen Eyre School, Violet Road, Basset, Southampton, from 8 to 10 p.m. Details from Audrey & Charles Dellow, 25 Roman Way, Dibden Purlieu, Southampton. Tel. Eythe 846040.

KENSINGTON SLAVONIC DANCERS meet every Wednesday from 7 to 10 p.m. at Fox School, Kensington Place, Notting Hill Gate, W.8. and every Thursday from 7 to 10 p.m. at Isaac Newton School, Lancaster Road, W.11. Dances from Czechoslovakia taught by Mrs. Hedda Jolly-Klingerova, 69b Grange Road, W.5. Tel. 01-567 2346.

MERTON PARK INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCE GROUP meet every Wednesday in term time at Rutlish School, Watery Lane, S.W.20. 7 to 7.30 p.m. Spanish beginners; 7.30 to 9.30 p.m. General International. Musician: Wilf Horrocks. Details from Charles Steventon, 64 Erridge Road, Merton Park, S.W.19. Tel. 01-542 3831.

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

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ALL MATERIAL FOR PUBLICATION IN THE AUGUST ISSUE MUST REACH THE EDITOR BY 15TH JULY

## BOUND VOLUMES OF SIFD NEWS

The volumes of SIFD NEWS that we have had bound for posterity will be available for members to look at, at Cecil Sharp House on 4th July - not to borrow, just to look at. If you would like to see them, please see Will Green at Cecil Sharp House.

## THE BALALAIKA DANCE GROUP

Although not part of the SIFD, the Balalaika Dance Group have been friends of ours for some years, and this year the group comes of age, having been in existence for 21 years.

It started when the Red Army Song and Dance Ensemble came to London for the first time. Several young people got together and decided that this was what they had always wanted to do. At first, they had no idea of the different styles of regional dancing, except what they had seen at Earls Court - no-one even knew that there is a difference between Russian and Ukrainian dancing! But they made up for that by their enthusiasm, which the group has kept to this day.

From small shows mainly for charities, the group grew, and attracted the interest of new members who made contact with the Great Britain/USSR Association (to whom the group became affiliated) and through this, and later through the Cultural Department of the USSR Embassy, they got in touch with the "Houses of Friendship" in Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Tashkent, Tbilisi and Minsk, who sent them books, records, music and costumes. Over the years they have also had the support of visiting Ensembles from the USSR, who very generously managed to give the group lessons in spite of their very limited time. Last year, for instance, the "Rainbow Group" from Minsk was here, in November the Ensemble of Railway Workers of Erevan in Armenia came for a short visit, and in August several members of the group had the opportunity of seeing the performance of the "Rossiya" Group from Moscow at the Billingham International Festival, and learned from them "A Volga Courting", a comic dance which the group now performs.

The greatest wish of the Balalaika Group is to have a teacher from Russia here for a fortnight again as they did a few years ago, and they have been promised help in this by ILEA, the Embassy of the USSR, and the Ministry of Culture in Moscow.

The performances of the group during the last year were mostly for clubs and provincial theatres. In February they won first prize at the Tower Hamlets International Festival with "Khorovod", taught to them by Usher Khmelnitzky, the choreographer of the Red Army Song and Dance Ensemble. They performed at the Commonwealth Institute in June, and also in Chesham, and on 24th June their publicity secretary, Jenia Graman, gave a lecture "Folk Dances and Costumes of the USSR" at the ICA Gallery in London.

We wish the group continued success in their 22nd year.

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SUNDAY DANCES

July 4th Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, London, N.W.1.  
M.C. Simon Guest.

July 18th British Council Student Centre, 11 Portland Place, London,  
W.1. M.C. - **No information received.**

Aug. 1st Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, London, N.W.1.  
M.C. - **Not decided.**

7 to 10 p.m.

Admission: Cecil Sharp House - 40p for members, 50p non-members  
British Council - 30p for members, 40p non-members

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WHAT'S ON

July 5th RAMON VILLAR'S FLAMENCO PLAYA DANCE COMPANY. Fairfield Hall,  
Croydon. 8 p.m. Tickets 75p to £1.50.

July 5th/ DANCE SENEGAL. National dance group from Senegal. Sadlers  
17th Wells Theatre, London. 7.30 p.m., matinee 2.30 p.m. Saturdays.  
Tickets 60p to £3.50.

July 6th SLOVAK STATE BAND in national costume at Holland Park Court  
Theatre, London, 7.30 p.m. Admission 50p. (pay on entering).

July 6th/ INTERNATIONAL EISTEDDFOD AT LLANGOLLEN, Wales. Folkdance teams  
11th from many different countries. Opening Show this year by the  
Polish National Dance Company from Lublin. Enquiries to  
Llangollen International Eisteddfod Office, Llangollen, Clyvd.

July 7th IVAN STEPANOV AND HIS BALALAIKAS AND DANCERS. Traditional  
Russian singing, dancing and music. Queen Elizabeth Hall,  
London, 7.45 p.m. Tickets 90p to £2.20.

July 7th/ POLISH NATIONAL DANCE COMPANY OF LUBLIN. Holland Park Court  
10th Theatre, London. 7.30 p.m., matinee 2.30 p.m. Saturday.  
Admission 50p (pay on entering).

July 21st MAZOWSZE. Polish Dance Company. Royal Festival Hall, London.  
to Aug 14th 7.30 p.m. matinee 3 p.m. Saturdays. Tickets £1.00 to £3.50.

July 23rd/ ISRAELI DANCE WORKSHOP WEEKEND at Woodlands Park, Cobham,  
25th Surrey, organized by Fiona Howarth, 6 Cromwell Avenue, Bromley,  
Kent. Tel. 01-460 0468.

July 30th SIDMOUTH INTERNATIONAL FOLKLORE FESTIVAL. Enquiries to I.F.F.  
to Aug 6th Sidmouth, 44 Queen Street, Exeter.