SIFD MEWS



SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING

Editor: Lily Southgate, 31 Barbrook House, Chatham Place, London, E.9.

Tel: Home Ol 985 0428; Office Ol 248 1212, Ext. 552.

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

Les Avery helped with the printing last month, and the collating and packing etc. was done by members who were at the Harrington House weekend.

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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, 16 Barnfield Close, Old Coulsdon, 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.

This month's cover is by Caroline Thomas.

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Books, records 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 WHO CHANGE THEIR ADDRESS PLEASE LET THE EDITOR KNOW, AS WELL AS THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY.

SECRETARY'S NOTES

There was no Committee Meeting in December as the normal Committee time was given to the Annual General Meeting on 5th December. In all, 32 members were present, and apologies for absence were received from 14. I hope you all received the reports etc. circulated before the meeting. We are sorry the accounts have not so far been published. The Treasurer was abroad just before the meeting, but the accounts were agreed by the auditors and presented at the meeting. They will be published and circulated early in the New Year, together with the Treasurer's report.

There were no nominations for the Committee, and as all the previous members were willing to continue, the Committee remains the same. We take this as a vote of confidence (!) but one or two people would like a rest, so perhaps we could have some new faces for next year.

Both motions on the Agenda were carried and will be reported in detail in the Minutes, which we hope to issue within a month or two. Several people outside the Committee have kindly offered to help us define "What is a Branch?".

Under Any Other Business, we discussed the Edinburgh Summer School. Arrangements are going ahead and further announcements will appear in the SIFD NEWS.

The Music Sub-Committee are going ahead with plans for production of two 7" records containing 12 popular circle dances, together with instructions.

I can't really believe that by the time you read these notes another Christmas will have come and gone, but I wish you all a very happy and successful year in 1977.

EDNA FOSTER



JACY TACY POLISH GROUP

GRAND JUMBLE SALE

SATURDAY. 29TH JANUARY AT 2.30 p.m.

Clothes, bric-a-brac, books, records. Fashion Corner (nearly-new clothes).

Refreshments

Entrance fee: 3p.

If any members have any Jumble, please contact Betty Harvey (Ol 980 9650), Dorothy Bryan (Ol 837 2438), or any members of the Polish Group.

Please come early and be sure of your Holiday Gear and the best of the bargains. See you all there.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Lily and all SIFD members.

A happy New Year to you all, with plenty of dancing.

Four of our group (Newport International Folk Dancers) have just returned from Roy Clarke's most successful weekend at Bourton-on-the-Water. The best yet in all respects. I should like to thank Roy and all his helpers for the parts they played; the teaching, and individual help, was very worthwhile, and I for one have already introduced a great deal of that which I learned.

Here in Newport we're up to cur eyes as usual, dancing for charity and for ourselves, having house-warming folk parties and, of course, Christmas ones. Recently we joined the Welsh Keep Fit Association and a number of other "activity" groups in raising funds for the Welsh Kidney Research Foundation. This we did by a sponsored walk to Ebbw Vale, dancing en route and rattling tins. Combined results: £920!

Our members are looking forward to joining the Bristol group for a day-course in January and another in April. With any luck, we shall be holding one here in Newport in the spring or early summer, with Sybil Chapman teaching Hungarian.

Best wishes.

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

Dear Lily,

Let me congratulate yet another new group. It wears still baby booties, but My Goodness, it "walks" already, despite not being one year old yet! RAINMAKERS, you are a super group. I was astonished to see in what short a time you could achieve such a lot, and such fine standard too. When my group, the Cambridge University International Group, were invited to spend an evening with you we all enjoyed ourselves very much. Your members are lovely people whom it was very nice to meet; and all ages too. Well Done, to bring along the youngsters, and it was interesting to see some "old timers" from the SIFD emerge from their hidings and helping to get RAINMAKERS going.

It is not easy to start a new group, but to persevere is well worth the while and to see the setbacks, shortage of people, disappointments, turn into the success one worked for. All of us who know Jill Bransby and who now know the RAINMAKERS wigh them every success, happiness, and loads of good dancers and enjoyable dancing for evermore.

> KATHI TRIBE, 198 Gilbert Road, Cambridge

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR (Contd.....)

Dear Miss Southgate,

Our thanks to Kathi Tribe and some of her Cambridge dancers who kindly came to our Club on 12th November for a special evening together. We really enjoyed an opportunity to look at the lovely costumes the group wore. Some were authentic but many Kathi had made laboriously and beautifully herself. I hope they, in turn, noticed our ethnic gardening shirts, winter boots, boleros and other paraphernalia donned to make the occasion a special one! It certainly was special. We were entertained by watching some lively demonstrations and by learning one or two new dances from Kathi. We also wore out a lot of shoe leather dancing our old favourites.

Very many thanks, Kathi, for a splendid evening. We hope you will come again.

JILL BRANSBY,
59 Baldock Road,
Letchworth, Herts.

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ARMENIAN DANCES

The Hillel Dance Group has arranged for the Armenian folk dance teacher, Tom Bozigian, to come to London to give a series of workshops at the beginning of February. He will be teaching Armenian dances at Hillel House, 1-2 Endsleigh Street, London, W.C.l., on Tuesday, 1st February, and Wednesday, 2nd February. If anybody would be interested in attending, would they please contact Maurice Stone, at Flat 6, 92 Holden Road, London, N.12.

This is a unique opportunity for international folk dancers in London as Tom Bozigian's visits to Europe are infrequent and in the past he has tended to avoid Eritain because of the lack of funds available to pay for his expenses. Because of the interest already expressed by various groups, space will have to be limited. However, any members of the S.I.F.D. will be welcome. Admission: On Tuesday, SIFD members £1, non-members £1.25; Wednesday, 70p everyone. Refreshments included.

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DEMONSTRATIONS AT CECIL SHARP HOUSE

My stint as organizer of demonstrations at the Cecil Sharp House Sunday Dances is already promising some good displays. I start in January and the first group will be a Lithuanian one, who will dance before the interval and teach a dance after. For February, there will be Josef Baracsi's Hungarian Group, and later in the Spring the Hillel House Israeli team and then a Scandinavian team. I am still open to offers and shall try to keep the standard high, mixing our own groups with visiting groups in various months - approximately two months in three.

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

HOLIDAY IN JUGOSLAVIA 1976 - PART III Lake Prespa, and a stay at Injevo Village

Lake Prespa is situated at the Southernmost tip of Jugoslavia and is shared with Albania and Greece. It is a beautiful location, quite different from Lake Ohrid, which is, in a way, more grand. Prespa is perhaps more lush and the mountains are not so dominant. It has a feeling of remoteness; apart from a few small villages, there are only a few hotels at Otesevo.

It was here that we arrived early one morning with the Injevo group. It was a beautiful, very hot day, with intense white light. The audience, seated around tables on the hotel terrace, contained a high proportion of American Macedonians from the States, who were on holiday and visiting relatives and friends.

After a really good breakfast, we took our place at the front, armed with tape recorder and cameras, and watched the now familiar 'Injevo' item - very well danced. Afterwards a local 'chalgi' type band played for dancing and everyone joined in. (A chalgi group consists traditionally of violins or clarinet - not both - and stringed instruments such as an 'ud' or lute, a djumbush (a type of banjo), kanon (a kind of cimbalum), and sometimes now various kinds of mandolines or tamburas. A ceramic drum completes the group.

Some of the leaders set a very complex pattern of steps, in such dances as Berance and Kalamatianos. We also danced Pajduška and several Makedonskos. Several Serbian dances, popular in Macedonia, such as Devojačko kolo and žikino, were included.

This part of Jugoslavia is steeped in history, and is thought by many scholars to be the cradle of such wellknown dances as Kalamatianos and Syrtos, both of which could have originated in this area many generations ago. The pleated skirt also came from the Albanian tribe, the Toska, hence the dance 'Toska'. The Tosks and Ghegs provide the majority of the several million Jugoslav Albanians, or as they are called 'Shquiptars'. The dances of this area are some of the most complicated in Macedonia and are a blend of Slav, Greek, Albanian and Vlah (nomadic Romanian) steps. The music also has complex rhythms, not as in Bulgaria but more subtle and elastic; the music also has a florid style.

We had an enormous lunch with the usual mountains of bread and quite a lot of beer, which was followed by a singing session. The quality of the village ainging is impressive, even though it is now harmonized in a kind of Western manner. The old style also, however, still persists. We went out into the sun and danced again for an hour or so and then made our way down to the lake to swim. Only the men swam; the girls sat in the shade and watched. The beach is rather rocky, and I cut myself on the lake bottom - only some long surface scratches but there was quite a lot of blood and everyone rushed towards me thinking I was near to death!

Early in the evening, St. Illia's Eve, we made our way home, but branching off the road and making towards the town of Krusevo, the centre of the uprising celebrations. The group were to give a performance at a town which Chris insisted on calling 'Krivo gache' (crooked trousers) which always raised a laugh. When we got there, there was no audience; they had gone to Krusevo, so we continued on our way, Simo deciding to have a meal out. After trying a succession of restaurants, all of whom either had bread but no meat or meat but no bread, and as both are considered essential, we didn't. In the end, we ate at the hotel in the town of Shtip, one of the nicest in Macedonia, and in a small town at that. Everyone was very tired, so we went to bed as soon as we arrived back at the village. Chris and I stayed with Milan, one of the six bagpipers in the village. He has a nice new house which stands next to his former house, which will belong to his son when he gets married. Washing facilities are at the pump in the yard, now operated by an electric pump, and one's ablutions are watched by a captive audience of chickens, neighbours, and the essential dog. The other 'offices' are located in the yard, concealed by bushes, and very dangerous at night on two accounts; there is no light and there is a deep drop, and the dogs are ferocious during the night, so one has to raise a member of the family to quieten the dogs before setting forth!

Next day, Milan took us to a neighbouring village which was celebrating its Saint's day, in this case St. Illia. We called on all of Milan's friends and, as is customary, drank and ate something at each house (!). Eventually we set out for the village field to watch the wrestling contests, a tradition left by the Turks. There were several hundred men and boys sitting around the wrestling place, and some gypsy musicians were playing. Anyone can take part (I declined!), and the contenders were matched. There are some rules but it seemed to me to be a 'no holds barred' kind of contest, quite rough and a little bloody. The highlight of the contests followed the defeat of the huge Champion from Shtip, and the winner did a lap of honour collecting money in his hat. Otherwise, there are no prizes. Dancing then commenced, and the women who had now arrived joined in, but only the younger ones. Nothing special, just Makedonskos and Eleno Momes, all very casual, with people pushing through to meet friends. Late in the afternoon, we left for Injevo, passing many women in costume along the roadside. As we got near to the centre of the village we heard the bagpipe, and the dancing was well under way. The married women do not dance, but stand in groups chatting. Most of the dances are very fast, and perhaps it is for this reason that all the younger people still dance, and dance so well. It wasn't long before we joined in. To dance at the same tempo and for the same length of time at home would reduce one to pulp, but in the village one finds a great stimulus. The most popular dance at present, 'Ciganchitsa' is very fast, and we have started to dance it at our class on Tuesdays. Injevo and its neighbouring villages come within the ethnic area known as 'Sop', a region shared by Eastern Macedonia and Serbia, and Western Bulgaria (Pirin). The dances are characterized by fast tempi, small energetic steps and vibrations. In Injevo the accordion is also used for indoor social occasions, but never for dancing in the village centre.

When it was dark, we went to Illija's house. It was his Saint's day and open house. The rooms were filled with tables and benches, and we sat with friends from the group, and everyone sang, ate and drank. Homemade rakija (distilled) was served to each person, not in small glasses but small 'Pepsicola' bottles which were replenished. Chris and I got rather drunk and our rendering of 'Sto mi omilelo nane' raised a laugh! We adjourned outside for more dancing before going to bed.

KEN WARD

Next: Skopje and reflections.

BERT PRICE PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION

We have received 18 applications from members wishing to take their Silver Badge examination on 12th February 1977, for the following countries' dances:-

England - 7; Estonia - 8; Germany - 10; Israel - 16; Poland - 4; Spain - 1.

The examination will be held at Hugh Myddelton School, as before. Three countries will be judged in the morning (Spain, Israel and England) and three in the afternoon (Poland, Estonia and Germany).

Successful applicants will be awarded a certificate and a Silver Badge. Where a certificate and Silver Badge have already been awarded in previous examinations, and a further passmark is achieved for another country, the name of that country will be added to the certificate. Members will be judged on style, technique (execution of steps, etc.) and knowledge of the dances (sequences, positions, etc.), with emphasis on style.

Separate letters of confirmation and details of arrangements will be sent to each applicant.

As at the previous examinations, the administrators would like only those who are in some way involved in the examination (competitors, partners, musicians, adjudicators etc.) to attend, as an audience of people not involved tends to cause lack of concentration and a certain amount of disturbance. If any members would like to offer their services as partners for those dances which they know, would they please contact Margery Latham. These people will, of course, not be judged but help those who wish to take the examination but haven't a partner.

The next Silver Badge examination after February will take place on 16th July 1977. Applications will have to be in by 1st June, and the countries involved will be: Portugal, Denmark, Norway, Croatia and the Basque country.

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SUNDAY CLASS

The next session will be on Sunday, 9th January 1977, 5 to 6.45 p.m. at Cecil Sharp House. This class is intended for younger dancers who wish to further their knowledge of folk dancing, and to encourage the learning of notation and teaching techniques for the future. At present, membership of the class is by invitation only.

PETER OAKLEY (Tutor)

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Barnet International Folk Dance Group have asked me to announce that their guest teacher on 21st January will be George Sweetland. ED.

HARROW GREEN FOLK DANCE GROUP - SILVER JUBILETE

On 19th February 1977, Harrow Green will be celebrating their 25th Anniversary. According to the modern calendar, it will be 25 years plus 7 weeks, but as die-hard traditionalists, Harrow Green work to the pre-Gregorian calculations, and therefore the date chosen has, despite rumours, nothing to do with difficulties in obtaining a hall earlier (!). They sincerely hope that many of their old members will be able to come and extend a cordial invitation to all S.I.F.D. friends to join them.

The Dance will be held at Daneford School, Gosset Street, London, E.2.

Because of I.L.E.A. regulations, admission must be by programme, but to avoid the difficulty of producing these too early, vouchers (tickets) exchangeable for programmes at the door, will be sold in advance. These will be 75p for adults, 40p for children under 14. The price includes refreshments and a glass of punch: soft drinks and home brew will also be available. At present, two musicians - Wilf Horrocks and Harry de Caux - have indicated that they will be willing to play but it is hoped that others will be able to attend. There will also be a rota of first-class M.C.s.

Tickets are obtainable from the Secretary of the group, Alex Beauclerc, 28 Hayes Court, Camberwell New Road, London, S.E.5., or from Harrow Green members. Hurry! Hurry! Numbers are limited, and first-come, first-served.



CHARITY "DEMOS"

From time to time, Harrow Green, sometimes together with the S.I.F.D., take part in small informal shows for charitable organizations, old people's homes, clubs for the handicapped and crippled, etc. These events give great pleasure to the audience and I need hardly say that it is very worthwhile. We would like more people to take part and we are therefore drawing up a list of those who would be prepared to assist on these occasions. The dances chosen are usually very simple, and a high standard of performance is not required; the chief qualification being a willingness to please. Even if you have only recently joined the folkdance community and are perhaps only a "Sunday dancer", and not a member of any group, your help would be welcome. Names to the Secretary of Harrow Green, address as above.

GEORGE SWEETLAND



CONGRATULATIONS and best wishes to John and Angela Savill who announced the birth of a baby girl, Joanna Elizabeth, on 17th November 1976.

CONGRATULATIONS to Doreen Pearce and Ray Jones, who have announced their engagement. We wish them every happiness.

FOLK DANCING IN BRITTANY

The article by George Sweetland in the October issue of the NEWS has encouraged me to write something about dancing in Brittany. I was lucky enough to spend four months in North Brittany this summer and was determined to learn something of the dances. I eventually found the local Breton dance group after much difficulty, due to lack of information, wrong information about the place and time, and the extremely obscure meeting-place behind a large and partially-ruined barracks! The night I finally arrived on the right day and at the right time, they had live music, including the biniou and bombard, to which George Sweetland referred in his article. This caused some difficulty in conversing in my not too fluent French! However, they were a friendly and welcoming group of all ages with a large proportion of young people and about equal men and women. Their session for the year was nearing an end and they were no longer being taught dances, but just dancing, and some very good dancers were among them. A friend I made there helped me sort out the names of the dances I had learned, so that I could obtain records of the music, and I was lucky enough to get some good recordings on tape too.

The part of Brittany where we were living was in Basse-Bretagne, the Western part, and the dances there are nearly all line dances, with a few couple dances, for example Gavotte, Larides and Rides, and Jabadao, whereas the dances of Haute-Bretagne in the East are mostly figure and couple dances; Avant-deux, Quadrille, etc. From the few Breton dances I already knew, I had not realized the vigour with which they are danced and the strength of the arm movements. The up and down swinging movements are usually done holding little fingers, and there are dances where small circular or forward movements are made with the arms before lowering them. When you see a line dance, the dancers have a strong up and down movement of the whole body, keeping a forceful rhythm going. The steps are small, especially for the girls (les cavalières). Higher jumps are performed by the men, and some of the dancers show considerable technique in elaborating the quick hopping and jumping steps.

Today, along with the revival of nationalism in Brittany, there is a revival of folk dancing, and I was told that over the last five years there has been a continual growth of interest, especially among young people. Whereas before the dances were kept alive by groups who performed, there are now many groups who dance just for pleasure. Another feature of life in the summer is the Fest-Noz (night dancing). These take place in many towns and villages and are advertized in the local papers. They begin at about 10 pm and continue into the small hours. We went to some very interesting ones one at a small port with dancing on the quay on a glorious summer evening; another in a large Salle des Sports in a village. Here we reckoned there were about 400 people present - not tourists, local people from nearby towns and villages, many in family groups, and about 200 dancing at any one time. My husband joined the small group with tape recorders near the platform and I danced. It was a hot night and before long the walls were running with water, likewise the dancers! The long lines wound round the room and in and out of each other, and the same dances were repeated many times to music by different groups.

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Another form of music is provided by singers and is called Kan ha Diskan. The first time we heard this, it was a complete surprise. The group that had been playing disappeared and two elderly men who looked like local farmers came up to the microphone, put their arms round each other's shoulders, and began to sing, beginning slowly as is the case with the groups also, and gradually working up to the dance rhythm. After that, they kept a great crowd of dancers going for about ten minutes. The first singer commences a phrase, and the other joins in, and they finish together; then the second singer continues and the first joins in, and so on. Afterwards, these singers were leading the dancing. We heard this type of singing many times, usually with two singers but sometimes with three.

So, if you visit Brittany, look out for a Fest Noz and the chances are that you will have an interesting and energetic evening.

MARGARET CULLEN

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VISIT OF A GERMAN NATIONAL TEACHER

Early next year, Herr Hans-Jorg Brenner, who is Foreign Correspondent of the Deutschen Gesellschaft fur Volkstanz, will be paying a short visit to this country, and while he is here he has offered to teach some German dances, including some in the SIFD repertoire. The Folk Companions of Marlwood and Patchway are therefore organizing a Day Course at which Herr Brenner will be teaching, followed by a Social Dance in the evening. Details are as follows:-

Date:

2nd April, 1977

Place:

Marlwood School, Alveston, Bristol (not far from the

M4/M5 interchange at Almondsbury).

Teacher:

Herr Hans-Jorg Brenner.

Musician: Heinz Scholze.

Course fee:

50p 11.00 a.m. to 12.30 p.m., 2.30 to 5 p.m.

Dance:

40p 7 to 10 p.m.

Combined Ticket: 80p

All SIFD members are cordially invited. Further information from Peter Sumner, 72 Ashgrove, Gillingstool, Thornbury, Bristol, BS12 1BJ. Tel. (0454) 414365.

SIFD ASSOCIATED CLASSES

INTERNATIONAL

Every Tuesday at Charlton Manor Junior School, Hornfair Road, Charlton, S.E.7. 7.30 to 9.30 p.m. Tutor: Peter Oakley.

Every Wednesday at St. Albans School, Baldwin's Gardens, Grays Inn Road, E.C.1. Tutor: Margery Latham.

Every Thursday at Stainbeck Hall, Stainbeck Lane (off Scott Hall Road)
Leeds, from 8 to 10 p.m. Class run by Ian and Jean Willson.

ISRAELI

Every Wednesday at Kidbrooke School, Corelli Road, S.E.3, from 7.30 to 9.30 p.m. Tutor: Gaye Saunte.

Every Thursday at Henry Fawcett School, Bowling Green Street, Oval, London, (Advanced), 7.30 to 9.30 p.m. Tutor: Fiona Howarth.

JUGOSLAV

Every Tuesday at Hugh Myddelton School, Corporation Row, Clerkenwell Green, E.C.1. Beginners 6.30 to 8.30 p.m. Advanced 8.30 to 9.30 p.m. Tutor: Ken Ward. NEW MEMBERS ARE ASKED TO SEE KEN WARD BEFORE ENROLLING FOR THE ADVANCED CLASS.

POLISH

Every Monday at Christopher Hatton School, Laystall Street, Rosebery Ave., E.C.1. Beginners 7 to 8 p.m. General & Advanced 8 to 10 p.m. Tutor: Betty Harvey.

HUNGARIAN & ROMANIAN

Every Friday at Pimlico School, Lupus Street, S.W.1. 6.30 to 9.30 p.m.
Tutor: Alan McLean. Beginners are asked to come at 6.30. N.B. Alan
McLean's Thursday Romanian class has had to be discontinued, owing to lack
of support. The Friday class will continue and will now be for both
Romanian and Hungarian dances.



MATERIAL FOR PUBLICATION IN
THE FEBRUARY ISSUE MUST
REACH THE EDITOR BY 15TH JANUARY.



SUNDAY DANCES

January 9th Cecil Sharp House, Regent's Park Road, N.W.1.
M.C.s Joan and Simon Guest.

February 6th Cecil Sharp House, Regent's Park Road, N.W.1.
M.C. Charles Steventon.

7 to 10 p.m. Admission: 50p members, 75p non-members.

On 9th January, at the Cecil Sharp House Dance, there will be a demonstration of dances from Lithuania.

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WHAT'S ON

Jan. 1st IVAN STEPANOV & HIS BALALAIKAS & DANCERS. Traditional Russian songs, music and dancing. Queen Elizabeth Hall, London. 3 pm. Tickets 90p to €2.50.

Jan. 8th ONE-DAY COURSE IN DANTSH DANCES. Hugh Myddelton School, Corporation Row, London, E.C.1. 10.30 am to 4.30 pm. Fee: £1 for non-members, 50p for members. Tutor: Gaye Saunte.

Jan. 8th NEW YEAR'S DANCE, run by Barlow International Folk Dance Group at Allen Hall, Wilmslow Rd., Fallowfield, Manchester, 7.30 pm.

Tickets 80p including food and licensed barter vailable from Philip Lloyd, 268 Upper Chorlton Rd., , or at the door.

Jan. 29th <u>JUMBLE SALE</u>. See page 3.

Jan. 29th ONE-DAY COURSE IN ROMANIAN DANCING. Elmfield Upper School,
Aylesbury Road, Bromley. Tutor: Marina Wolstenholne. Details
circulated last month. Enquiries to Fiona Howarth, 01 460 0468.

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Jan. 29th "SEE HOW THEY DANCE". Woodvale Folk Dance Group presents a colourful display of national dances at Borough Green Village Hall at 7.30 p.m. Tickets 50p from members or at the door.

Feb. 1st & 2nd ARMENIAN DANCE WORKSHOP at Hillel House. See page 5.

Feb. 4th / 6th WEEKEND AT HAWKWOOD COLLEGE. Organized by Roy Clarke.

Feb. 5th <u>DUNAV BALKAN ENSEMBLE</u>. Music, songs and dances from the Balkans. Commonwealth Institute, Kensington High Street, W.8, 7.30 pm. Tickets £1, £1.50 and £2.

An SIFD BALKANS WEEKEND will be held at Halsway Manor on 18th/20th February. Apply to Irene Keywood, 133 Third Avenue, Dagenham, Essex.