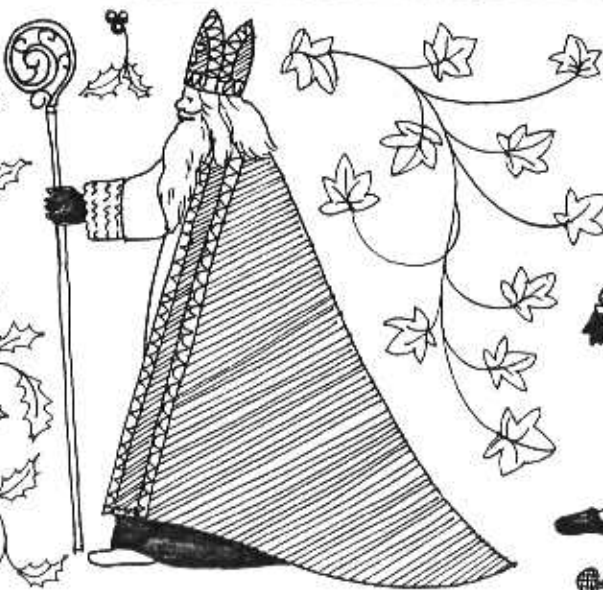


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1985



SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING

EDITOR: Lily Avery - temporary address, c/o 65 Lonsdale Avenue, London E6 3JZ

The typing this month was done by Lily Avery and Kelsey Blundell. The printing, packaging and posting was organized by Doug Wells.

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This month's beautifully drawn cover is by Lesley Boorer and shows Christmas characters from various parts of Europe - clockwise from the top: Befana from Italy, a Percht demon from Austria, Hans Trapp and the Christ Child from Germany, and Black Peter and St. Nicholas from Holland.

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CHAIRMAN: Charles Steventon, 64 Erridge Road, London, SW19. Tel: 01 542 3831

SECRETARY: Joan Rackham, 16 Bathurst Avenue, London, SW19. Tel: 01 543 1891

TREASURER: Judith Holloway, 28 Shepherds Road, Watford, Herts., WD1 7HX

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Roland Minton, 10 Benyon Court, Balmes Road, London, N1

DEMONSTRATION SECRETARY: Kay Leighton, 9 Barnes Rise, Kings Langley, Herts.
Tel: Kings Langley 62763

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A FIXTURE DIARY for organizers to check for duplication on dates, and also to confirm those arranged by them, is kept on behalf of the S.I.F.D. by Frank Flanagan. His address is: 124 Fairbridge Road, Upper Holloway, London, N19. Tel: 01 272 5003.

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Enquiries and orders for books, records and cassettes should be sent to
Audrey Whiteley, 16 De Vere Walk, Watford, Herts.

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S.I.F.D. T-shirts (white with new design in red and black) £2.70 (£3 by post), available in small, medium, large and extra large sizes from Kay Leighton (address above). Old design ('Legs') - a few available in small size only £2.50

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Car stickers from Judith Holloway (address above) 30p each.
Please send s.a.e. 4" square.

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WOULD ANY MEMBERS WHO CHANGE THEIR ADDRESS PLEASE NOTIFY EDWINA AND MICHAEL HOLDUP, 16 NETHERBY GARDENS, ENFIELD, MIDDX., AS WELL AS THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

A NOTE OF THANKS

Now that we are approaching the end of 1985, I should like to take the opportunity, once again, of extending my grateful thanks to all the people who have helped with SIFD NEWS throughout the year on a regular basis. To Kelsey Blundell for taking my place as Editor so efficiently for several months while I was abroad; to Doug Wells and family for the hours of work they have put in, printing, collating, etc., to Lesley Boorer and Rachel Novak for keeping me supplied with cover designs, to Hazel Cheal for being so willing to help with typing when required, and to Edwina and Michael Holdup for continuing to keep up their good work in addressing the hundreds of envelopes. Thank you very much all of you for taking on these jobs and helping to ensure that the SIFD NEWS reaches our members regularly throughout the year.

Thank you too to the people who support the NEWS by sending in articles of interest, letters etc.

LILY AVERY, Editor.

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SECRETARY'S NOTES

These are the last Notes I shall write as Secretary of the S.I.F.D. I have enjoyed my five years in the hot seat very much, and am grateful for all the help I have received, especially from Chairman Steve. His unfailing patience and good manners at Committee Meetings have kept us on an even keel - most of the time anyway! I have met many interesting people in the folk world during the five years and have received letters from many parts of the world. When I retire I shall have a busy time visiting the writers of these letters - if my Premium Bonds come up!

I am very glad that the membership reached the 500 mark during my time as Secretary and I hope that numbers will keep rising. I would like to see more young folk coming along to dance and to take an active part in the running of the Society. I am happy that the S.I.F.D. got the chance to appear at the Sidmouth and Eastbourne Festivals, and hope that we shall continue to do so in future years. I think that our appearance at the Royal Albert Hall was a high spot, even if we did not make the television programme!

The job has kept me very busy and I have learned a lot about dance and music, but more than that I have learned how much work some people are prepared to do, quite often behind the scenes, in order to keep the Society going. Long may they and their successors continue to do so for without them there would be no SIFD NEWS, no Day Courses, no Badge Examinations, no Cecil Sharp House Dances, no Summer Schools, no Weekends Away - in short, no S.I.F.D.

JOAN RACKHAM
Hon. Secretary

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S.I.F.D. TURKISH/TRANSYLVANIAN COURSE

On SATURDAY, 14TH DECEMBER, Garry Karner will be revising Turkish/Transylvanian dances taught at the Swansea Summer School this year.

Place: Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regents Park Road, London N.W.1.
Time: 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.
Cost: S.I.F.D. members £3, non-members £4.

Refreshments, including lunches, available from Cecil Sharp House Canteen.

The next S.I.F.D. Day Course will be on 11th January, when Aily Eistrat will be revising Estonian dances taught at Swansea this year.

SIFD LOOKING-TO-THE-FUTURE SUB-COMMITTEE
INTERIM REPORT NOVEMBER 1985

This Interim Report is based on consultations, in various forms, held with several groups and individuals and a Branch over the past few months. There remain groups and individuals whose views need to be solicited, but some "pointers" to future developments seem to be emerging.

A. Present Situation.

1. S.I.F.D. is, for many, a nebulous body run by a few nominated volunteers. There is gratitude for some of the various events and services organized by them but not much enthusiasm for others, notably centralised judging of competence for badges.
2. S.I.F.D. was formed to respond to a felt need; the situation has changed and a fresh initiative is called for. Our one Branch feels it needs more autonomy and that it has a role to play in helping other groups, just as it was itself helped initially.
3. It is imperative to remember that any proposal for future action depends, for its successful implementation, on enough members being willing (and able) to assume responsibility. Few are likely to be so willing unless they can feel that they are responding to the wishes of the wide membership and have their support.
4. As interest throughout the country has been fostered and has increased, especially recently, it is clear that people's first allegiance is to a local group or class. This is true of many people in London. Even when the group is led by an S.I.F.D. teacher, or is an affiliated or associated group, many of its members are not, and see no advantage in being, members of S.I.F.D. There is a feeling that efforts should be made to recruit them as S.I.F.D. members.
5. For many, and for various reasons, the emphasis has shifted from partner dances (largely W.European) to line and circle dances. The pace of this development has been rapid and has produced a "split". There is, unhappily, some animosity between "aficionados" of the two "strands". As the repertoire has expanded rapidly, there is a feeling that the general standard has declined and that "good dancers" are not sufficiently catered for. There is also some feeling among members who like both (or many) idioms that the diet is becoming indigestible. The question of "authenticity" also tends to cause divisions.
6. There are difficulties arising from the problems of providing materials soon enough and regularly enough to keep pace with additions to the repertoire.

B. Further lines of enquiry to be pursued by the Sub-Committee.

1. The active fostering of wide tolerance to heal and avoid divisions.
2. Ways of achieving the main objective of S.I.F.D.:- the encouragement of folkdancing and the enhancement of standards of performance and enjoyment.
3. Re-definition of what should constitute a member body of S.I.F.D.
4. Change of organizational emphasis from a central body, pioneering outwards, to an association of "branches", groups or clubs or classes, feeding inwards to a central body.
5. Provision of a "forum" for exchange of views, experiences, problems, dances; and identification of wishes and needs.
6. Recruitment through local agencies and central support for it.
7. Provision of a central H.Q. and the status of London.

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8. Composition, election and function of an Executive Committee.
9. Need for a review of the Constitution.
10. Associated questions of finance.

In all these matters the philosophy is to recommend that procedures and events should be tried out rather than time be wasted waiting for a blue-print for the future. The aim is to present ideas for an active continuous development rather than a static master plan.

URI GERSON, Chairman

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SIFD AFFILIATED GROUPS

BROMLEY INTERNATIONAL CLASS meets on Mondays in term time only, 7.30 to 9.30 p.m. at St. Marks C.E. Primary School, Aylesbury Rd., (off Westmoreland Road) near Bromley South Station. General Class - mainly line and circle dances. Tutor: Fiona Howarth, 17a Ravensbourne Road, Bromley BR1 1HN. Tel: 01 460 2305.

RAINMAKERS INTERNATIONAL FOLKDANCE GROUP meets every Friday at St. Michaels Church Hall, Broadway, Letchworth, Herts. 8 to 10 p.m. Details from Sheila Leavy, 7 Miles Drive, Clifton, Shefford, Beds. Tel: Hitchin (0462) 814798.

BRISTOL INTERNATIONAL FOLKDANCE GROUP meets every Thursday during term time, at Henleaze Infants School, Park Grove, Bristol, 7.15 to 9.15 p.m. Further information from Hilda Sturge, 10 Carmarthen Rd., Bristol, BS9 4DU. Tel: 0272 621802.

BARNET INTERNATIONAL FOLKDANCE GROUP meets Fridays, October to June, Teaching 8 - 9.15 p.m., Requests to 11 p.m., at Hadley Memorial Hall, Hadley Highstone, Barnet. Leader: Brian Dowsett, 75 Fordwich Rise, Hertford, Herts. Tel: 0992 52717. Secretary: Margaret Morton, Tel: 01 427 8042.

THE TURKISH FOLKDANCE GROUP meets on Monday evenings during term time, 7 to 9 p.m. at John Keats School, Avenue Road, Swiss Cottage, London, NW3 (near Swiss Cottage Underground Station). Tutor: Halil Celebioglu. Secretary: Pauline Welch, 01 393 1919 (home) or 01 337 6976 (school).

HAVERING INTERNATIONAL FOLKDANCE GROUP meets Thursdays, 8 p.m. at Harold Wood Primary School, Recreation Avenue, Harold Wood, Essex. Secretary: B.S. Burton, 61 Rutland Drive, Hornchurch, Essex.

BARLOW INTERNATIONAL FOLKDANCE GROUP meets every Tuesday from the first Tuesday in September to mid-July, except Christmas week, at Chorlton United Reformed Church Hall, Wilbraham Road (corner of Egerton Road South), Manchester M21, from 7.45 to 10.15 p.m. Further details from Philip Lloyd, 268 Upper Chorlton Road, Manchester, M16 0BN. Tel: 061 881 3613.

HIGH WYCOMBE INTERNATIONAL FOLKDANCE CLUB meets every Monday evening (except Bank Holidays and during August) at Sir William Ramsey School, Rose Avenue, Hazlemere, near High Wycombe, Bucks. from 7.45 to 10.15 p.m. Contact: Uri Gerson, 14 Curlew Close, Downley, High Wycombe, Bucks. HP13 5DY. Tel: High Wycombe 23434.

HARROW FOLKDANCE CLUB meets most evenings for English/Playford/American Square but on the 4th Sunday of most months for International Folkdancing, 7.30 to 10 p.m. at Harrow Arts Centre (opposite Harrow Weald Bus Garage), 356 High Road, Harrow Weald. Contact: John Lawes, Tel: 01 907 4700.

OXFORD INTERNATIONAL FOLKDANCE GROUP meets every Wednesday throughout the year, 8.15 to 10 p.m. at St. Giles Church Hall, Woodstock Road, Oxford. For more details, contact Diana Porteus, 105 Southmoor Road, Oxford, OX2 6RE. Tel: Oxford 57543, or Teresa Blunt, 13 Upper Fisher Row, Oxford, Tel: Oxford 250308.

HUNGARIAN FOLKDANCING GROUP meets Sundays, 3.30 to 6 p.m. at Willowfield Centre, Legrams Lane, Bradford. All are welcome. Further details from Rachel Novak, 88 Legrams Lane, Bradford, BD7 2AH. Tel: Bradford 576903.

NUTBROOK INTERNATIONAL FOLKDANCE GROUP meets every Thursday, 7.45 to 9.45 p.m. at Kirk Hallam Community School, Godfrey Drive, Kirk Hallam, nr. Ilkeston, Derbyshire. (school terms). Secretary: Gillian Morral, Tel: Sandiacre (Nottingham) 393204.

40TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION NEWS

IMPORTANT CORRECTION. Will leaders/teachers of groups/classes please note that the leaflets I recently sent you stated that Westminster Council had offered us the stage in the Jubilee Gardens, London. This should, in fact, have read the Victoria Embankment Gardens. All other details on the leaflets are correct. I have already received one form back!

T-SHIRTS COMPETITION. No entries were received by 31st October, and so Lesley Boorer has again produced one of her first-class designs. Very many thanks, Lesley! We hope to have them on sale at the January Cecil Sharp House Dance, at a price only slightly higher than present stock. We are also having another 100 of the Horlepiep design produced.

CELEBRATION WEEKEND, 10th/11th May 1986. I can now tell you that our M.C.s for the Dance will be: Simon Guest, Frances Horrocks, Jack Richardson (we hope) and Charles Steventon. Many thanks to all for agreeing. Tickets will be on sale from January at £3.50 each, children under 16, £2. This is cheaper than the Dance two years ago when we made a large donation to the Leukaemia Fund in memory of Margery Latham. Further details will be given in January. Don't forget that Margaret Joyner will be able to help you find friendly accommodation for the weekend if you need it. Write to her after February if you need overnight accommodation, and please note that Margaret's correct address is 113 Hartswood Road, London W12 9NG (not 133 as printed last month). She would also appreciate further offers of beds to add to her list.

For Sunday, 11th May, we are hoping to arrange a Thames Boat Trip with dancing. If you have a costume, do bring it and wear it. We can perhaps then process along the Embankment.

CELEBRATION MUGS. Arrangements are now well in hand for the supply of 500 mugs with an S.I.F.D. design on them. Again, we are extremely grateful to Lesley Boorer for doing the art work, which is most attractive and will be in two or three colours. The mugs will be available early in the New Year, depending on how long the firm takes to fulfil the order.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

I have received an empty open envelope posted on 12th November in Croydon. It probably started life with a weekend booking slip, so I suggest the sender lets me have a duplicate! JACK RICHARDSON.

I shall be abroad for the whole of December, January and February 1986 and will therefore not be available to deal with any correspondence or telephone calls. My classes will carry on in my absence. ALAN McLEAN.

We raised £24 for The Prince's Trust at the November Cecil Sharp House Dance. Thank you for your support, and particularly to donors of prizes and helpers with the raffle. J. CANT.

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S.I.F.D. AFFILIATED GROUPS

THE KALINKA DANCERS learn, practise and perform folkdances of the USSR, Mondays 7.30 to 9.30 p.m. at the Free Church Hall, Ormond Road, Richmond. All grades. Teacher: Jenia Graman. Tel. 01 876 0514.

LOIDIS INTERNATIONAL FOLKDANCE GROUP meets on Thursdays 7.30 to 9.30 p.m. at Moor Allerton Memorial Institute, Stonegate Rd., Leeds 17. General International. For details, Tel. Leeds 664384 or 787837 (evenings & weekends only).

WIGGINTON INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCE GROUP meets every Thursday during term time 7.45 to 9.30 p.m. at Wigginton School (near Tring). Details from Margaret Cullen, Hemel Hempstead 58277

"FIRST WORLD FOLK DANCE FESTIVAL"

Having booked two weeks' leave and not being totally worn out by the Swansea Summer School - which as a first-timer I found both impressive (for the sheer hard work done in the organizing and scheduling) and enjoyable (many new dances learned and outings arranged), with thanks due to Jack Richardson and his helpers - I was able to spend a couple of days in Munich at the "First World Folkdance Festival". I am sure that many folkdance festivals have aimed at having a worldwide flavour, so quite why the organizers called it the First World Folkdance Festival is not clear. Maybe it was the first such festival to be held in Munich or in Germany.

The aims of the Festival were as most others, namely to bring culture from other parts of the world to Bavaria, and thereby promote international understanding and contact between peoples. Gunter Roleff (a non folk-dancer) first had the idea of organizing the Festival after attending a festival in Boston, which left him most impressed. Prince Luitpold of Bavaria is the President of the International Society of Friends of Folkdance, which engaged an agency to arrange the Festival, which took place from 6th to 11th August, although unfortunately I was only able to attend on the 8th and 9th.

World vision was certainly not lacking. At the opening ceremony, 72 groups from 37 countries were represented. A group from Australia had travelled the furthest distance. Three groups came from U.S.A. and several African, Asian and South American groups took part. Europe was, of course, well represented and included eleven Spanish, seven Italian and six British groups. The Romanian group ran out of money at the Austrian/German border and had to be collected! When the musicians were included, the organizers had to handle over 3,600 participants. Although events were centred on Munich, one excellent idea was to book evening appearances of various groups at fourteen different towns and villages throughout Bavaria. This was very popular, and at one such performance several hundred people gathered outside the hall, since all the seats were sold out. They refused to go home, so the dancers came out and gave a repeat performance on the streets until after midnight! The organizers even received permission for two daily performances at "Mad" King Ludwig's fairytale castle, Neuschwanstein.

The programme itself comprised three parts: Evening performances, in Munich and neighbouring towns. These were either "Festival Evenings of Folkdance" or theme-based such as Italian or Anglosaxon evenings. Then there were a number of daily open-air appearances at strategic locations in Central Munich throughout the day. Those I was able to find and which actually took place were very popular. I saw a German group demonstrating Nagelschmied and Hammersmiths - the latter rather differently from the S.I.F.D. version. Finally there was the competition.

An international jury comprising seven members (including Nibs Matthews) had the difficult task of deciding how to award £25,000 worth of prizes. Points were awarded for general impression; authentic or stylised dancing; authentic or stylised costumes; traditional or modern instruments; singing; and best entertainment. The winning group (which I did not see) with the highest total was from Malta. Special awards were presented for the best in each of the above categories (except general impression) and for groups of children under 16. I think there was also a costume exhibition, but I neither saw nor heard mention of it.

I attended two evening events - the Spanish evening with dances from all over Spain, which were performed by a number of very able and colourful groups and which included a "bullfighter dance" from Central Spain. The other evening event was a Festival evening - quite well attended but by no means sold out - which included a variety of dances from all over the world: Kesteven Morris (a women's team); three Indonesian groups who performed some fairly unexciting dances very gracefully and to a very high standard; an extremely lively man's dance from India; and a French group, "La Quiolee" from the region around Tours. This group performed a variety of rustic dances in a very dignified manner. They wore peasant costume which was very subdued. The ladies wore white lace bonnets and shawls and all wore clogs. One of their

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dances closely resembled La Badoise, which we recently learned at the Italian class at Swansea.

I was also able to attend one of the competition sessions, where most of the dancing was to a very high standard. One dance from Ghana was quite amusing. It depicted two men out fishing with a net. Later, their women came with baskets and gathered up what the men had caught. When the women had gone away (bottoms wiggling furiously!), the men went to sleep, but the women came back, stole the men's hats and retired. The men awoke and accused each other, then when they realized it was the women who had taken them, the men chased them round and off stage. Italian and Portuguese groups then performed some very noisy dances very well.

All in all, the Festival provided an excellent opportunity for a student of folk-dance to observe closely a large number of groups from different countries and to study their style. However, much more information could have been made available by the organizers, so that audiences could appreciate dances in different styles from different regions, and thereby derive full benefit from the dances.

It is hoped that the Second World Folkdance Festival will take place in 1987, and thereafter annually, with every fourth Festival to take place in Munich.

MICHAEL RIDOUT

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DANCE-SWOP SEMINAR

I find, with extra commitments at home, that I can't get to London as often as I would wish, but I was so very glad to be able to do just that on 2nd November. Thank you, Uri, for your idea, and thank you Steve for putting it all together. It was a most worthwhile day, particularly when people were prepared to travel from much greater distances than mine....Worthing, Bristol and WHITLEY BAY.... and of course many other spots "off the map"!

I feel that the idea was a really good one, but that it was such a pity that many who could have gained much could not be there. One of the objects was to widen the scope of our repertoire of social dances, but the programme of a social dance depends so much on the M.C.s. There weren't many there, I think, so once again the newer ideas may be lost, at least in London. After Roy Clarke's letter in the NEWS, the thoughts he expressed seem to have been borne out in fact. Yes, we are an International Society, and as such need to be seen to be involved in all idioms of folkdance.

When we first started to dance in the Midlands, there is nothing I would have liked better than to have limited our scope to a narrower field, but as a representative of the Society I felt that we had to cover a wider field. So, despite my years of Study in Hungary (like Alan McLean, since 1967), we have always tried to take a more international line. There were leaders there at the Seminar of three specialist classes. Where were the others? Where were the folk who go to the dances at Cecil Sharp House? Sadly, few of us can attend them because of getting home in time to get up on Monday to go to work, but if we were able to go, I know we would expect to find a full international programme.

It was a lovely day; the material was interesting, and well taught, and I for one would support another like it. It's so rewarding to attend a really well-prepared session....notes, tapes, programme poster....I know well the time it takes to do all these things.

Uri, Steve, Joy....my thanks to you all.

SYBIL CHAPMAN,
Droitwich.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.....

Dear Lily,

May I, through the SIFD NEWS, thank all friends and members for their prayers and Get Well cards and messages that I have received during my recent hospitalization. It has confirmed my belief that we are not just disconnected groups of dancers, but a whole gathering of caring, thoughtful folk, and it takes something like this to make me realize what a lot of true friends there really are.

My one regret is that I will not be able to attend the Swansea revision courses at Cecil Sharp House.

Thank you all once again.

STAN DEWEY

10 Wie Close, Droitwich, Worcs.

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Dear Lily,

Some Personal Thoughts on S.I.F.D. Present (and Future?)

Apologies to the many fans of "Danza degli Ombrelli" for ever doubting its authenticity. The history lesson on the origin of the umbrella in last month's NEWS was very interesting, but completely irrelevant to what Barbara and I (not just Barbara) were trying to say in the October issue. I will not bother to make reference to other particular dances including grand entrances, bows to audiences etc. as I am sure that some learned people would be able to prove through their research that these too have ethnic origins and have been revived by dance groups.

The point of our letter, which appears to have been missed, is of more concern to me than the authenticity of any particular dance. Many dances in the S.I.F.D. repertoire are of relatively recent origin; for example Kreuz Koenig and Levi Jacksons Rag, both of which incidentally I enjoy dancing. These dances are readily accepted by some members who will totally reject other dances from other countries because they are "modern" and "made up". It is this attitude of branding some dances as acceptable and others as unacceptable to which I object.

I have witnessed within S.I.F.D. a tendency to accept as "gospel" what has been taught by both visiting teachers and our own S.I.F.D. teachers. I used to be in that band myself, but have seen visiting national teams defying points of style dogmatically insisted upon by those teachers, and have also been taught the "same" dance differently by different "national" teachers. What do I do? Whom do I believe? Do I put it down to regional variations, or evolution of the same dance, or do I just accept that each teacher is doing his or her best to re-teach a dance as nearly as possible to the way that he or she was taught, and decide which variation I prefer? I now tend to do the latter, and if I have been taught other variations I tell people of this. What I definitely do not do is try to tell other "nationals" that they are doing their dances wrongly because I have been taught differently, as I have seen some S.I.F.D. members doing. There is a need for all of us to be humble with respect to the dances we do (and I admit I have not been very humble in this letter) as the very most we can be are intruders into other peoples' cultures. They are not our dances that we do but have been borrowed by us for our enjoyment.

I have always tried to be very diplomatic in all of my dealings with the S.I.F.D. and have gone out of my way not to rock the boat, but have concluded that if all of the recently expressed concern about the lack of youngsters in the S.I.F.D. and about the future growth of S.I.F.D. is real, then people must speak their minds. So, having started controversially, I will continue.

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I honestly believe that if S.I.F.D. wishes to attract young people, it has got to change drastically its image. Not many young people will be attracted to a mainly middle-aged society (I include myself in that) unless it has life and sparkle. I do not know, but would guess, that the founders of S.I.F.D. were mainly young people who were mixing and dancing with others of their own age group. I have certainly heard it said that years ago one of the attractions was the opportunity to meet and dance with other young people of the opposite sex. Young people tend to like to mix with people of their own age, so if we have few young members we probably need to recruit not individuals but small groups of young people so that they have their contemporaries to relate to. To recruit, we need to gain their interest, not by advertising or by displays - these are good for our ego but not I would suggest for recruitment - but by somehow encouraging them to join in and experience the joy of folkdancing. I now come back to our original letter in October; the young people whom we have, or have had, in our area have generally been attracted to the Israeli dances which we do, and especially to the more lively Israeli dances. This is not to say that they do not enjoy the other dances. If we reject the dances which the young definitely seem to enjoy, then we may lose the opportunity to introduce them to the wider world of folkdancing.

I would ask the question; why do visiting teachers and dancers from countries like Holland remark about the age of our dancers in this country when most of the dancers in their own country are young? (Sorry, I haven't researched this properly and cannot quote average age ranges etc. I have had to rely on chats with a few dancers met in this country). Maybe we should look at the dances they do, the way they run their dances and classes etc. I am not suggesting that we want to arrive at the situation where the S.I.F.D. is composed of all young people; that would I believe be a retrograde step. There must somewhere be a happy compromise where the young and not so young can meet and dance together. They both have much to offer; the young their vitality and the older their experience.

The major question which I believe members should ask themselves is, "Do we really want to change things and encourage growth? If we attend a dance group where we know everybody, we know the dances, we feel we belong, we have respect etc., why should we change things and spoil it all? The answer, I believe, is that stagnation can lead to one thing only - death. Let's all celebrate the 40th anniversary of S.I.F.D. not only by showing people how good we are, and indulging ourselves in grand celebrations, reunion dances, commemorative mugs etc., although I agree there is a place for this. Let's go out and meet and dance with the young people on their own ground, if they will have us, at Universities, colleges, youth clubs, anywhere that we can. Let us all try to make the 40th anniversary year the year of growth.

ROD PERKINS
30 Knighton Rd., Northfield,
Birmingham B31 2EH

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Dear Lily,

I was pleased to see Roy Clarke, in the last issue, drawing attention to something that I have felt very strongly, albeit quietly, about over the years. As an outsider occasionally attending folk dances, I always felt that the S.I.F.D. should really have read S.E.I.F.D., viz. The Society for European and Israeli Folk Dancing, and it was probably this feeling as much as the Club's lack of finance which prevented Merry Andrew from seeking affiliation until some eight years after its foundation.

Although originating as a club for non-dancers who had "caught the bug" from one-night-stand dances, Merry Andrew quite quickly developed into a club for committed dancers who already attend one other dance club for the discipline of English, International or Modern Square Dance on a regular basis and are

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seeking something different from the normal club evening. I am quite sure that our liberal "open mike" policy for all club evenings (where we do not have a visiting specialist) - merely ensuring that at least one kolo and one contra or square are included and that all dances are taught if necessary - has been responsible for producing dancers who are capable of, and more important, who enjoy, dancing a wide variety of figure and solo dances from all parts of the globe.

Recently, one of our members introduced a dance taught by an American to a German who taught it to another American living in Belgium who then put it to French music! But Merry Andrew is not unique. The November 2nd "Dance Swap" session at Cecil Sharp House, besides being a very enjoyable and exhilarating experience for all who took part, produced a much more global representation of dance than we have come to expect from a regular International meeting. Surely there are parallels here which point the way forward and if we can all profit from them there need be no further thoughts of schism and we will be able to continue to consider ourselves truly "International".

HENRY GARFATH,
6 Oatfield Rd., Orpington, Kent.

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Dear Lily,

This letter will probably be my last as I very much feel in S.I.F.D. circles that I am probably a voice in the wilderness and certainly not an academic who knows all there is to know about folkdance. I speak purely as a "peasant" (although not in the literal sense) and an uninformed "housewife" who loves to dance dances of the people, not dances purely choreographed for performing dance groups.

There are many people who I know are very knowledgeable and can quote a lot about a lot of things. Most of us know what dances and music we enjoy. Some of us prefer non-choreographed dances (without bows to audiences etc.); some prefer set dances, some line and circle dances; some prefer the rhythms of Eastern European music; some prefer the more familiar waltz and polka rhythms of Western Europe (and of course certain areas of Eastern Europe). We are all very different.

Rod and I have just been away on a Parish Weekend with the church to which we go, and the "theme" for the weekend was Unity and Growth, with the main emphasis on growth ("unity" is up to the people involved). Of course, it was growth within the church, but what was said and discussed is relevant to every sphere in life. Do you want to carry on as you always have - it's very cosy - or accept new people, new challenges, new innovations? It's very difficult when new people join you whom you don't know. It shakes your cosy little world - they may bring new ideas!

Roy Clarke has hit the nail on the head in his letter about becoming an Internationalist in the 1985 sense. It is having an open mind and an open heart, and not being insular and destructive in what you say and do; constructive criticism and communication is what is needed (not bottling up your feelings). It is possible to M.C. a folk dance providing a mixture of couple and set and line dances to please all. It takes a lot of preparation and organization as you don't want six or seven set or couple dances together. They need to be thoughtfully intermingled so that people without partners don't need to sit around for half an hour (unless of course they choose to) whilst set dances are being danced. I have been to dances where people have sat around for this length of time whilst couple or set dances were being walked through - not much fun if you've come along to dance. It's very difficult to please all of the people all of the time as Rod and Alf, who M.C. our dances in Birmingham, and many M.C.s in London and in other parts of the country will tell you.

Contd....

I am not a performing dancer and don't wish to do dances which have obviously been choreographed for the stage and include bows to the audience; it's nothing to do with the umbrellas (although in a social situation I envisage it would be very difficult to have umbrellas to hand). The people I am dancing with are what is important to me - not the visual impact. I just enjoy dancing and being with people who have open hearts and open minds.

BARBARA PERKINS,
30 Knighton Road, Northfield,
Birmingham, B31 2EH

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SUMMER SCHOOL IN SWITZERLAND

Following discussions last summer, Susanne Hauert is looking into the possibility of organizing a Course in Switzerland in the summer of 1986. If you are likely to be interested, would you please let me know as soon as possible. Susanne is looking at suitable locations and will get a preliminary estimate of costs. Your views on the following points are sought:-

- 1) Maximum cost, exclusive of travel, which you would be prepared to pay.
- 2) Preferred week(s).
- 3) Whether you would wish:-
 - (a) to go just for the course;
 - (b) to add on a stay in Switzerland;
 - (c) to take part in any group travel arrangements which might be feasible. This is a possibility for (a) and for (b) if agreed outward and return dates can be arranged.
- 4) Suggestions for countries' dances to be taught.

JACK RICHARDSON,
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University College, Swansea SA2 8PP
Tel: 0792 295194 or 403153 (home)

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WEST MIDLANDS BRANCH OF S.I.F.D.

International Folk Dances: 23rd November at Balsall Common Village Hall
14th December at Woodlands Park Hall, Birmingham.

- Dance Groups:
- 1) "Selpar". Classes on Tuesdays, 7.15 p.m. at Selly Park School, Pershore Rd., Stirchley, Birmingham. Tutor: Sybil Chapman.
 - 2) "Heart of England International Folkdance Group". Wednesdays 7.30 p.m. at Lyndon School, Draylesford Rd., Solihull.
 - 3) "Arden International Folkdance Group", fortnightly at the Village Hall, Station Rd., Balsall Common, Nr. Solihull, Warks.

Further details of these activities from the Secretary, West Midlands Branch S.I.F.D., Dennis V. Hunt, 27 Baginton Rd., Styvechale, Coventry. Tel: 8283 413854.

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MERRY ANDREW FOLKDANCE CLUB (SIFD Affiliated) meets every 2nd, 4th & 5th Monday, 8 to 10.15 p.m. at Sherard Hall, United Reformed Church, Court Road, Eltham, SE9. British, General International, American Square & Contra, Sword Dancing. All welcome. (No meeting on 30th December 1985).

SUNDAY DANCES at Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, London, NW1

Dec. 1st M.C. Simon Guest
Jan. 5th M.C. Charles Steventon

7 to 10 p.m. Admission: £2.20 for S.I.F.D. members; £2.80 for non-members.

On Jan. 19th there will be an extra Dance at Cecil Sharp House run by Uri Gerson, with Dunav Balkan Group playing. The emphasis will be on Eastern European dances but others will also be included (with possibly a French "spot").

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WHAT'S ON

- Dec. 1st S.I.F.D. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING. 3.30 p.m. at Cecil Sharp House
- Dec. 7th MUSICIANS FROM EPIROS AND CRETE. Traditional Greek music, food & dancing. 7.30 p.m. The Camden Centre, Bidborough St., WC1. Admission £4
- Dec. 7th ZIVKO FIRFOV BALKAN PARTY. All tickets sold, long waiting list for returns. Apologies for mistake (misprint?) in Margaret Joyner's address. The number should have been 113, not 133. However, all letters have been passed on straight away and it is thought that no-one has been penalised by this mistake.
- Dec. 13th CHRISTMAS PARTY organized by Barnet International Folkdance Club at Hadley Memorial Hall, Hadley Highstone, Barnet. Music by Dunav Balkan Group. Admission £2 including wine and refreshments. Enquiries to Margaret Morton. Tel: 01 427 8042.
- Dec. 14th S.I.F.D. TURKISH/TRANSYLVANIAN COURSE. See page 3.
- Dec. 14th "A TASTE OF BULGARIAN WINE & MUSIC" at 7 p.m. at the Bulgarian National Tourist Office, 18 Princes St., London, W1 (nearest Underground, Oxford Circus). A Look by the British Bulgarian Friendship Society at Bulgarian musical life during the last 100 years. Admission £1.
- Dec. 16th CHRISTMAS PARTY organized by High Wycombe International Folkdance Club. 7.45 p.m. at William Ramsey School, Rose Avenue, Hazlemere, near High Wycombe, Bucks. Admission £1 including refreshments.
- Dec. 20th/22nd WEEKEND AT DUNFORD.
- Jan. 4th NEW YEAR DANCE organized by Croxley Green International FolkDancers at Malvern Way Infants School, Malvern Way, Croxley Green, Nr. Watford, Herts. 7.45 to 10.45 p.m. Admission £1.50 including refreshments. Tel: Watford (0923) 41441 or 28080.
- Jan. 4th HALF-DAY COURSE & NEW YEAR DANCE. 3 to 6.30 p.m.: Introduction to Israeli Dancing. Teacher: Fiona Howarth. (bring snack or visit cafe). £1. 7.30 to 10.30 p.m.: General Dancing including American Square, English & International. £2.50 including food. Joint ticket, Course & Dance £3. Sherrard Hall, United Reformed Church, Court Road, Eltham. 'Buses 21, 108, 124, 126, 160, 161. Eltham Well Hall Station. Parking easy.

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ALL MATERIAL FOR THE JANUARY ISSUE MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE EDITOR IN WRITING BY 15TH DECEMBER. THE EDITOR'S TEMPORARY ADDRESS IS: C/O 65 LONSDALE AVENUE, LONDON, E6 3JZ.