

40th Anniversary Year



APRIL 1986

SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING

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

This month's cover was drawn by Lesley Boorer and shows a "Matryoshka" Russian doll.

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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 Rd., Upper Holloway, London N.19. Tel. 01 272 5003.

Enquiries and orders for books, records and cassettes should be sent to
Joan Rackham, 16 Bathurst Avenue, London S.W.19.

S.I.F.D. T-shirts, all white polycotton.

Old design ('Legs'), a few available in small size only - £2.50.
2nd design (Horlepiep), circular design in red & black - £3 (£3.30 by post)
New 40th Anniversary design in black line drawing - £2.80 (£3.10 by post)
New 40th Anniversary design in three colours - £3.60 (£3.90 by post)

All available in small, medium, large and extra large, from Kay Leighton, address above. Cheques to be made payable to S.I.F.D.

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

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

SECRETARY'S NOTES

Plans are well advanced for our participation in the Eastbourne Folk Festival, with Mike Ridout as co-ordinator, and of course the 40th Anniversary celebrations under the direction of Kay Leighton. Only your full and enthusiastic support is now needed to make all these events a resounding success.

Looking further ahead, it was disappointing to learn that it has not been found possible to fix a date suitable to both EFDSS and SIFD for a Joint Dance during 1986. However, let us hope that 1987 will see this plan coming to fruition.

Arising from suggestions by the Sports Council and the ISTD for a National Centre for Movement and Dance, the CCPR Movement and Dance Division are holding a meeting early in April to formulate specific proposals to put to the Sports Council. We hope to be represented at that meeting.

Back to the present. On occasions, newcomers to the dances at Cecil Sharp House may feel that they have not had an adequate welcome. The Committee would therefore like to have a host or hostess, or preferably both, on duty at each Sunday dance to check that the band, the M.C. etc. have arrived, and also to greet newcomers and put them at their ease. This means that we need some volunteers of both sexes to form a rota - your turn would probably only come up once a year or so. How about it, folks? Will Green will set the ball rolling, and then it's up to you!

AUDREY WHITELEY
Hon. Secretary

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S.I.F.D. DAY COURSE

On SATURDAY, 12TH APRIL 1986, we shall be holding a "Jota Day", with dances from Mallorca and Northern Spain being taught by Kelsey Blundell and Charles Steventon.

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.

Dances to be taught/revised: Jota Aragonesa (Aragon, Spain)
Jota Redonda (Mallorca)
Jota Antigua (Mallorca)
Bolero Mallorquin (Mallorca)
Parado de Valdemosa (Mallorca)

By special request, it has been decided to include the Jota Aragonesa (not to be confused with the Jota Aragonesa de Realito) as it has not been taught for a long while. More time, therefore, will be given to this dance (during the morning) and to the Parado de Valdemosa than to the other dances. The Parado is a well-liked dance but needs a lot of practice. Particular emphasis will be given to the second and third verses. The teaching of the other three dances will be in the nature of a re-cap rather than an in-depth teaching. Therefore, if anyone wishes to cover any particular aspect of the dances, please make your wishes known early in the day (or in advance) so that we may be sure to concentrate on those points.

Notes on the dances will be available for those who haven't them already. Music for Jota Antigua, Bolero and Parado is available on the 1983 Swansea tape, copies of which can be ordered at a cost of £3.50. Music for the other two dances may be recorded on the day (perhaps during the lunchbreak) or may also be ordered and posted later.

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

The next S.I.F.D. Day Course will be on 10th May and will be an Anniversary Day "Swap Shop". Various teachers will take part and whatever they teach during the day will be included in the evening dance programme. More details next month.

NICARAGUAN FOLK DANCE

The Ballet Folklórico Nacional de Nicaragua appeared at the Shaw Theatre, London, as part of the celebrations following the "twinning" of the G.L.C. with Managua. According to the programme notes, this was the first visit to England of a "major" Nicaraguan company. It was a very interesting and pleasing, if not terribly exciting, performance.

I had no previous knowledge of dances from Nicaragua and, as I expected, the style was reminiscent of dances I have seen from Mexico, Panama and other Central American countries. My overall impression was that most of the dances were a variation of the same two or three basic steps. There was a kind of 'waltzing' or 'samba' type step (123 and) and a kind of 'skooter' step (similar to the swing step in Danish dances or one of the steps in Bolero Mallorquin). They were danced very freely without any apparent order, in a very relaxed way, with a smooth transition from one step to the next. (I was reminded of the Greek dance 'Ballos' with its free style - though with a Latin American flavour). The arms were generally held at shoulder or eye level (a somewhat bent curve) and were moved, first one, then the other, in a relaxed and elegant manner. Sometimes one arm would be brought behind the body at waist level, sometimes the man would curve his arm around the girl's neck or shoulders as the two turned together (but never touching). The girl might hold her skirt with one or both hands or move her stole.

The first dance was a ritual dance based on an Indian folk legend of witchcraft and enchantment in which one dancer appeared in the form of a skeleton of a bull. The 'warriors' banded together to conquer their fear of this ghost. Their costume consisted of short silk shorts, a kind of Aztec style collar and a black top hat decorated with motifs and with several tall straight plumes coming out of the crown of the hat. The music for this dance was a simple pipe and drum, and the foot-stepping (bare feet) was loud and rhythmic and the 'warriors' formed circles and lines and crossover figures etc. while the 'bull' weaved in and out among the dancers.

Next followed a couple dance called "Los Novios" (The Lovers) who were dressed in white - the men in a white loose tunic style shirt over straight white trousers, the girls in a full gathered skirt with a frill, a gathered bodice with small sleeves and a long white stole - both reminiscent of Mexican style dress. This was the style of costume for most of the dances. The man wore a white hat which he would hold in one hand as he embraced his partner. It was beautifully danced, very relaxed, very smooth and the dancers always attentive to each other, though never actually touching.

There were several such couple dances, including one in which the girl carried a pitcher of a traditional drink made from maize and milk, and another called 'Los Viejos' (The Old Couple). But each was a variation on the same theme - only the colour of the costume and the make-up was changed (the old couple wore masks and the old man, instead of a hat, carried a walking stick). Other group dances were also a variation on the same theme, except that many dancers would perform the same few steps in varying sequences and in varying patterns of circles, lines, crossing-over and casting off singly or in pairs, etc. In one dance all the girls carried pitchers balanced on their heads and the men tried to make them spill the contents by shouting and dancing round them and getting in their way - but all stayed firmly in place until the end of the dance when the girls took them off to show that they were not tied on.

Although I say that, on the whole, the steps were very much the same, there were one or two exceptions - particularly in the more ritual style of dances. In one dance the men's steps were like some Spanish jota steps and there were also men's leaps and capers similar to Morris steps or Basque steps. One dance called 'Banana' depicted the everyday life of the Miskito Indian tribe who make their living by fishing and growing bananas. The dance contained many movements which depicted rowing, netting the fish, cutting the crop, gathering the bananas etc. Another girls' dance also showed arm movements depicting incidents in their everyday life.

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For the first dance just a pipe and drum could be heard. Otherwise the music consisted mainly of pipe, drum, small guitars, marimbas and occasionally a violin.

Except for the ritual style dances, the costume was similar throughout. The girls always danced in bare feet, the men sometimes with their feet bare, sometimes with flat unobtrusive sandals. In one dance, the men wore black buckled shoes which gave greater emphasis to their stepping. In this dance the costumes generally were more elaborate. The girls wore decorated bodices and carried fans, and the men wore waistcoat and breeches and a hat with a brim turned up in a sort of 'tricorn' effect. I had the impression of peasants imitating the richer folk (the girls still danced bare-foot) but the programme notes did not indicate this so I could be mistaken. There was a comic dance depicting the fusion of Spanish and Indian cultures. The dancers wore decorated waistcoats and elaborate headdresses - some Indian in style and others in the fashion of a Conquistador's helmet.

The second half of the programme was shared with a singer and musician, Carlos Mejia Godoy, a prominent figure in Nicaragua, a member of parliament, a deputy in the National Assembly representing the Sandinista Cultural Workers Association and an excellent musician who has initiated a renaissance of folk music and folk culture in Nicaragua. He sang with his group, "Los de Palacagüina", various traditional and 'modern' folk songs and patriotic songs which were well received by the many Nicaraguan and Chilean members of the audience. There was a certain amount of flag waving and audience participation but they included at least one song which we were told was traditional. It had been 'lost' and was collected piece by piece - one old man would remember just a line or two, someone else would recall another line, and so on until it was all pieced together. They played the accordion, a violin, a couple of high-pitched guitars and the piano. He will be returning to London at the end of March to perform at a church with an English choir his "Peasant Mass" of which he sang a small part in this programme.

The evening's programme ended with a dance to commemorate the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, a ritual dance with a mixture of Christian and pre-Christian traditions. In the midst of the festivities, and to round off the evening, the dancers were joined by a Giantess and a Dwarf!

KELSEY BLUNDELL

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DANCE STUDIES VOL.8

Each year a new volume of Dance Studies is published by the Centre for Dance Studies, Jersey. The latest one, Vol.8, deals exclusively with research in the field of traditional dance.

For anyone interested in this type of work, this volume is essential. Roderyk Lange's article, "Guidelines for Field Work on Traditional Dance", outlines in great detail and clarity his methods of documentation which he has used so successfully for over 25 years. The other two articles also deal with the methodological approach to this subject.

These series are always full of interesting information, but aimed for the more serious student of dance. Price £4 plus p. & p., from Centre for Dance Studies, Les Bois, St.Peter, Jersey, C.I.

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ALL MATERIAL FOR PUBLICATION IN THE MAY ISSUE OF SIFD NEWS MUST BE RECEIVED BY
THE EDITOR, IN WRITING, BY 15TH APRIL.

CRI DE COEUR

If anyone is able to lend a Super-8 Sound Projector for Jaap Leegwater's Bulgarian Weekend (24th/26th May), would they please contact Cathy Meunier (01 527 6232) or Liz Mellish (01 863 7807).

40TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

Our main weekend of celebrations in London is now only weeks away!

Saturday, 10th May

Day Course. This will take the form of a mixture of dances of different countries. Details next month. A 50p reduction for the Day Course will be allowed on production of a ticket for the Evening Dance.

Celebration Dance. Tickets should be ordered in advance - £3.50 each, £2 for children under 16. Light refreshments (including vegetarian) obtainable on production of Dance Tickets, which have a small "R" in bottom right-hand corner. By this means we hope to ensure that everyone gets a fair share. M.C.s are Simon Guest, Frances Horrocks and Charles Steventon, who will have the support of our own S.I.F.D. Band, the Dunav Group, and Rosbif. There will be about four demonstrations during the evening, of one dance each, and Will Green is staging an historical exhibition. If you have a costume, do wear it!

Sunday, 11th May

Boat Trip. Again, tickets should be bought in advance - £4 adults, £2 children, UB40s and OAPS. Do wear a costume if you can. Embark at Royal Festival Hall Pier at 1.50 p.m. Boat sails at 2 p.m. prompt, returning by 5 p.m. Stations: Waterloo, Embankment or Westminster. Dancing arranged by Fiona Howarth, with live music; historic scenery; bar, but no food. Decks are covered but all windows can be opened to provide through draught! We shall be flying our S.I.F.D. banner.

Tickets for Dance and Boat Trip are obtainable from Ed Whiteley, 16 De Vere Walk, Watford, Herts WD1 3BE. Tel. Watford 21696. Cheques payable to S.I.F.D.

Accommodation in London

Margaret Joyner (now back from her travels), 113 Hartswood Road, London W12 9NG, will be able to help you to find friendly accommodation in London if you need it. Tel. 01 749 3344.

Celebration Mugs - £1 each

These have at last been delivered and were on sale at the last Cecil Sharp House Dance. They have proved popular, and several groups have taken supplies to sell at their own meetings. Because of the perils and expense of posting, it must be personal shoppers only for these mugs. Some will be on sale at the Celebration Dance. Many thanks again to Lesley Boorer for the design.

History of the S.I.F.D.

George Sweetland and I have now corrected galley proofs, and the printing of this booklet should be well on its way. Photographs and line drawings are being included. We should be able to sell it at a very reasonable cost, and hope that it will make its appearance at the Celebration Dance.

Victoria Embankment Gardens

The following groups have been booked to perform in the pretty little gardens next to the Embankment Station (opposite the Festival Hall) during the summer: Polish, Zivko Firfov, Havering, Hursley, Wigginton, Central London Class, Merton, Borough Green, Watford, Kalinka Dancers, Lykion ton Hellinidon and Rainmakers; also the Dunav Group. I am extremely pleased about the response to the Westminster City Council's offer. All are at weekends, starting from 17th May. A list of dates, times and groups will be given in the May issue of SIFD NEWS.

No.2 in our Series.

DANISH REGIONAL DANCES

Lack of transport and danger of travelling out of the villages, through woods occupied by robbers and highwaymen, is one of the main reasons for the variety of style of dance, folk-dress, and music of Denmark. Yet, amazingly, the types of dances are the same throughout the country. This includes the island of Bornholm which lies in the Baltic, much closer to the S.E. coast of Sweden than it does to Denmark.

The dances are always partner dances, from those danced progressively (which are usually recognizable by the inclusion of the word "family" in the title) to longways, square sets, dances for two couples, those for one man and two women, a few with six couples, eight couples, some dances for men only, and one dance for women only (at least, the only one I've managed to unearth).

It has been my experience that the liveliness of the style has depended largely on the agility (not necessarily the youth) of the assembled dancers, although some regions have very lively music and consequently lively dances. The steps are mainly variations and combinations of walking, step-hops, running, chasse (a polka step without much hop, usually danced forward or backwards), polka, galop (a fast lively polka), mazurka, tyrolean steps, "hopsa" and waltz. There are more complicated steps such as the minuet step, two-step, hornpipe, "tinker-step" and the "hambo"-type step (with variations).

One of the enchanting things about the regional dances of Denmark is the variety of names. Some amusing ones are, "The pig fell and broke its thigh", "Round about and straight home", "Father and mother went to market", "Leg out in the garden" and "Kick up the rump".

S.I.F.D. badge dances aside, there are many popular dances from a choice of six hundred or so that one could choose for a day course, or evening dance. A varied choice would be "Gamle Famielievals", "Polsk Dans" - both circle couple dances; a set dance for three couples such as "Trekantet Sløjfe" (meaning 3-cornered bow, as in ribbon); longways dances, "Hans Rasmussens Vals" and "Engelsk Dans". Finally, square dances for four couples, such as "Sekstur 2" and "Midsummer Nats Drøm".

The most common accompaniment throughout the country is the violin, but many instruments are used and musicians seem to be delightfully abundant in the groups that I have met.

GAYE SAUNTE

N.B. Gaye will be teaching Danish dances for the S.I.F.D. at Eastbourne Folk Festival.

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DANCE, BOAT TRIPS AND THINGS!

You will be pleased to hear that sales of tickets have been going well and we are assured already of parties of over 200 for the Dance and of over 100 for the Boat Trip. If you have not yet got tickets, you would be well advised to buy them soon. Will groups who still have tickets on a sale-or-return basis please let me have monies or returns as soon as they can and, in any case, by 20th April?

May I too thank, through the SIFD NEWS, the many members who have sent messages of encouragement and thanks with their orders - and my grateful thanks for the many messages, cards and gifts which have brought me comfort and cheer in my recent illness.

ED WHITELEY

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CORRECTION

Eastbourne Festival 2nd/5th May. The demonstration by an S.I.F.D. team in the Winter Gardens will be on the Sunday afternoon (4th May) and not the Saturday.

* "A WINDOW ON FOLK DANCE"

"A Window on Folk Dance" is a recently published work by Lucile Armstrong, a copy of which I was delighted to receive as a gift.

Many books are difficult to get into but gradually gain in interest as the reader persists. This book, on the other hand, I found to be quite the opposite. I thought it was immensely readable and full of interest from the outset. The early chapters contain a wealth of information on the origins and meanings behind our folk dances, the reasons for the shapes and patterns that we make, their representation of sun, moon and essential life forces etc., information which, personally, I find adds to my enjoyment of the dances. The author thus argues very forcibly the case for the preservation of traditional movements and style (although she does extend this same interpretation to all folk dances, even those of more recent history when we presumably had ceased to worship the earth and sun).

Although the book gave "special reference to the dances of Spain and Portugal", the information given covered all folk dances generally and, in fact, it was only when specific detail was given of certain Spanish dance steps that my concentration wavered slightly. As there was not sufficient space in this book to discuss in depth the steps and styles of the many Spanish traditions, it seemed a bit superfluous therefore to give such minute detail of one particular step. Also, the chapter entitled "Notes on Style and Movement" contained predominantly references to costume, which was featured in the following chapter - an unnecessary overlapping, I felt. It's not that I'm not interested in such 'Notes' but perhaps they have a place elsewhere (in another volume?) allowing the information on origins and meanings to stand alone in this instance.

I found the absence of an index a disappointment. I understand that much work was put into the preparation of an index but that this was cut by the publishers in the interest of economy. I wonder if a little more pruning on the chapter on 'Style' might have allowed the much-needed space for an index. But then it must be difficult to 'prune' when you have so much to say. I am sure the author has so much more information to share with us that could not be included in a book of this size. Even allowing for my reservations on those one or two chapters, I found this a fascinating and a very readable book; a must for the student of folk dance. I hope it will be read by many.

KELSEY BLUNDELL

* Available from Diki Gleeson, Oak Lodge, Theobalds Park Road, Enfield, Middx EN2 9BN, £8.95 plus 87p for 1st-class postage or 66p for 2nd class. Cheques payable to Diki Gleeson.



WYE?

Woodvale Group had such a good day at Wye that we feel it only right to let you know about it - particularly as the Secretary was kind enough to mention us in her February notes.

The day, 1st February, was terrible as far as the weather went - rain virtually all the day, but did this dampen our spirits? Well..... we were certainly very apprehensive but hopeful of a successful teaching session and dance. We had organized a variety of relatively simple dances, shared between the four of us - David and Sue McKie, Alan and Jenny Cant. The dancers who had come to learn were basically "barn dancers", all students at Wye College studying agriculture. We didn't get many for the teaching session, but those who turned up were very keen. We were a little surprised at which dances they found easy to pick up, but on reflection we shouldn't have been - formations were easy, unusual steps or rhythms more difficult. Anyway, they tried hard and were largely successful. Then, we were entertained to tea by the group's Chairman and Secretary. Conversation flowed easily and time flashed by. We talked about dancing, how their group

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had got started etc., and about pineapples!

We had quite a good turn-out for the evening dance - not as many as they had hoped, but virtually EVERYONE got up for EVERY dance - amazing! We had a wide variety of dances in the evening programme, including most of the dances taught earlier. Most of the dances were walked through - some were repeated by popular demand! Having been joined by four other members of Woodvale, we also gave two short demonstrations in costume, which were very well received.

We seemed to generate interest in quite a few of the people there; they had largely been unaware of international folkdancing or what it was all about. We went home that night tired but happy that everyone had enjoyed themselves. What contributed to the success of the day? Partly our hard work and preparation, but mostly their enthusiasm and energy. This certainly helped and encouraged us, particularly when we began flagging towards the end of the day! It certainly seems that colleges and universities could be a good area to start looking for younger members. We feel that even if we have only prompted a handful of people to pursue international folk dancing a little further, the effort was worthwhile.

JENNY CANT

P.S. I am sure that Ken Ward would have been thrilled to see Woodvale members dancing to Tina Meech's playing in the car park at Calais last May while waiting for the ferry! I would add that not all the dancers on that occasion were young, just youthful in spirit. J.C.



USEFUL CONTACTS

Alan McLean has given us the following list of useful sources of initial contact for members visiting Eastern Europe:-

"NACHO IVANOV" group (leader Maria Evtimova), Culture House, 6th Sept. Ulitsa, Sofia, Bulgaria.

"MARAMA" group (leader Ioan Gubernicu), Calea Pleuneii 61, Sector T, Bucuresti, Romania.

"PORTUL" group, Ciulei M.Joan, Com. Podureni, Jud.Vaslui, Moldavia, Romania.

"TIMISUL" group, Casa de Cultura A Municipiului, Sala L'Ira, Timisoara, Romania.

"DOINA TIMISUL" group (leader Emilian Dumitru), Casa de Cultura a Studentilor, Bul.Tineretii, Timisoara, Romania.

"RZESZOWIACY Z.P.I.T" group (director, Janusz Mejza), Mielec 39-300, Poland.

"WARMIA" group (director, Anna Matuszynska), Domu Kultury Kolejarza, Ul.Emilii Plater 1, Olsztyn, Poland.

"KUD MATIJA GUBEC" group (choreographer, Zivic Veljko), M.Oreskovic Br.10, 24212 Tavankut, Vojvodina, Yugoslavia.

"MAGDEBURG" group (director, Horst Grischenk), Kulturhaus E.Thalman, E.Weinerstr 27, German Democratic Republic.

"KUNOVJAN" group, Uherske Hradiste, Near Brno, Czechoslovakia.

Institute of Folklore (Anca Giurchescu), Beloiannia Str., Bucuresti, Romania.

County Council for Culture (president, Maria Cristian), Motilor Str.3, Cluj, Transylvania, Romania.

Council for Culture (director, Victor Ciuhurezu), No.1 Piata Scintia, Bucuresti, Romania.

Folklore Institute (Nepmuvezeti Intezet) (director, Zsuzsa Simay), Corvin Ter., Budapest. Hungary.

COSTUME BITS

Those of you who are looking for German or Bavarian type costume, and can get to the Midlands, should try the shop in Regent Street, Rugby, Warwickshire - Einbeck Supplies. The proprietor visits Germany several times a year and in his Rugby shop selling secondhand good quality clothes he stocks a number of items of genuine folk costumes. Recently, I saw three pairs of Lederhosen (for youngsters) for £5 each, a bit worn but serviceable, a Bavarian dress for £9, and a blouse at £4, in good condition. There were other items in good condition, around the same prices, but I was not able to judge "ethnic" quality. If you telephone, you might get details - Rugby (0788) 3039. Mention S.I.F.D. The proprietor apparently sells mostly to drama groups and musicians.

WILL GREEN



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.....

Dear Lily,

Two things; Firstly, the list of "forgotten dances" (see Wilf Horrocks' article last month): Kolomaika and Lezghinka (not "Lez Ginka") are not Russian but Moldavian and Caucasian, and to call them "Russian" is equivalent to calling Scottish and Irish dances "English". Kolomaika or, as you call it, Karapet, comes from Moldavia on the Romanian border. It is a couple dance but not a solo couple dance, and can be done by any number of couples to more than one melody (as, for instance, a Waltz can). Lezghinka is a Georgian men's group dance which calls for intricate, technically difficult steps, and big expressive arm movements. Therefore I do not think any of the S.I.F.D. members would be interested in learning it and if the S.I.F.D. has done it in former years, it can only have been in a very very simplified manner.

Secondly, folk dancing in modern dress (see Lucile Armstrong's article in February's issue). In Leningrad they have, every two years, a big all-Union Dance Competition for all kinds of dancing; ballet, modern ballet, ballroom, acrobatic, folkdance - any dancing. In one section choreographers submit new Social (couple) dances. They must be based on authentic traditional steps, movements and music, but easy enough for everybody to do. "Russian Lyrical Dance", which is done in the S.I.F.D., is the most famous and wellknown of them. "Soud-arotshka" ("Little Lady") is another. But there are any number of more "outlandish" dances in the book I have - Ukrainian, Moldavian, "Kartuli" (Georgian) dances from Inner Asia (Buryat, Kazakjstan), from Lithuania, Armenia, Byelo-Russia etc. It is in the U.S.S.R. more important to bring these dances to the general public, because in this vast country the styles are much more different - and in many cases more difficult - than those of the Western countries, where most experienced dancers hardly ever have any difficulties to follow any dance patterns, while (with the exception of Spanish dances) arm/hand/head movements practically do not exist, and feet/leg movements are much easier.

JENIA GRAMAN

39 Stanley Road, East Sheen,
London SW14 7EB

ED. NOTE: Re "Lez Ginka", I think Jenia has in mind a different dance from the one referred to by Wilf Horrocks in his list, as I well remember learning Lez Ginka as a Russian dance for couples, not a Georgian men's dance, and with no "technically difficult" steps, but lively music, very enjoyable and easy to dance to, and with "flirting" figures between the man and his lady partner. Also, the Kolomejka that Wilf refers to is not the dance we call Karapet. It is a couple dance for any number of couples round the room, with the couples coming together to make lines for some figures, circles of four for others, and coming into a closed circle for others - unlike "our" Karapet.

Those of you who learned the Romanian dance, "De-A Lungul" at Swansea, or have learned it at the Day Courses or elsewhere since, may like to have the words that go with the dance:-

Mindra mea de la Ciubud

Mindra mea de la Ciubud
Multe vorbe-n sat se-aud
Spune lumea pe la noi
Ca fac seara drum pe voi, mai....

My sweetheart from Ciubud
Rumours are flying in the village
The world is saying that I keep going too often
In the evening to your place.

Spune lumea, bat-o vina
C-ar fi ochi tai pricina
Ochii tai ca doua mure
Inima vor sa mi-o fure

God bless the world
They say that your eyes may be the reason
Your eyes are like two black berries
They want to steal my heart.

Dar eu lumii-n cuida-i fac
Cind le spun ca ochii-nu plac
Si-oi veni mai des la voi
Sa-ti, mindra, buze moi, mai
Si-am sa te cer de mireasa
Mindra mea, floare aleasa.

But in spite of them (the world)
I keep telling them I like your eyes
That I will come to visit you more often
To kiss you my sweetheart, with my soft lips
And I will ask you to be my bride, my
sweetheart, my chosen exquisite flower.



Whilst browsing in a secondhand book shop, I came across a gem of a book called "How and What To Dance" by W.Lamb, published in 1904. The "How" is very concerned with Deportment, Etiquette, and Dress. The following is an introduction to the section on Square Dancing:-

"It has been presumed by some amongst the most austere moralists, and maintained as a truism that admitted of no discussion of question, that Dancing has tendencies not strictly in keeping with a high moral tone. I am afraid that if we compare the appearance of some public Balls of the present day when the Lancers are being danced, with the dances a few years ago, we cannot fail to be struck by the unfavourable change which has been introduced into the habits and manners of the dancers, and on which such theorists have founded their conclusions; they regard such dancing simply as a channel for uproarious hilarity, or identify it with grossness and vulgarity. Their minds may well be exercised.

It may be said of Dancing, as had been said of other pleasures and exercises at least equally harmless, that the objectors to it are to be found only among prudes, or those who have never been taught to dance; but, to be fair, does it not seem as if much of what they say, and a very great deal of what they think, is correct? Now, it is not my business to attempt to explain how this degeneration of our prettiest and most fascinating square dance has come about, but it is the respect I have for the art which makes me take this opportunity of pointing out to my readers that romping does exist, and that this infusion of energy into the "Squares" at the expense of good manners and decorum is carried to an extreme, and ought not to be countenanced either by them or myself. It would avail little, nor is it within the scope of these remarks to say who is to blame, but it is plain that the practice is an exceedingly silly one."

I thought S.I.F.D. "rompers" might be amused by the above excerpt.

JILL BRANSBY