

1996



1996

JUNE

SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING

EDITOR: Lily Avery (Mrs.), 16 Willow Drive, Little Common, Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex TN39 4PX. Tel: 01424 845866.

--oOo--

The typing is done by Lily Avery. The printing, packaging and posting is done by Doug and Maureen Wells.

--oOo--

This month's cover design was drawn by Lesley Boorer specially for our Golden Jubilee Anniversary and we shall be using it every month throughout the year.

--oOo--

SECRETARY: Jeanette Hull (Miss), 24 The Homefield, London Road, Morden, Surrey SM4 5AS. Tel: 0181 640 5267.

TREASURER: Judith Payling (Mrs.), Rosebank, 56 Quickley Lane, Chorleywood, Rickmansworth, Herts. WD3 5AF.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY &

GROUPS LIAISON OFFICER: Alan Morton, 26 Durham Road, Harrow, Middx. HA1 4PG. Tel: 0181 427 8042.

PUBLICITY OFFICER: George Sweetland, 28 Hayes Court, Camberwell New Road, London SE5 0TQ. Tel: 0171 701 3785.

--oOo--

S.I.F.D. GOLDEN JUBILEE DANCE - SATURDAY, 12TH OCTOBER 1996
with SIFD Players and Dunav Balkan Group

Tickets will be on sale later in the year.

S.I.F.D. members: Single £10, Double £18
Non-members: Single £12, Double £20
(including refreshments)

To be held at the Camden Centre, Bidborough Street, which is close to Euston and King's Cross stations.

At our 40th Anniversary Dance, Will Green staged a very interesting exhibition of S.I.F.D. memorabilia. It would be nice if we could do the same for our Golden Jubilee Dance, but we need someone to organize it. If anyone is willing to do this, please get in touch with me. There is plenty of room inside the hall, and contributions should be forthcoming from fellow members of the S.I.F.D.

Another important part of the proceedings is a CAKE. Is there anyone able to do this - expenses paid, of course. It would be for roughly 300 people; a fairly accurate estimate could be given nearer the date, as tickets are sold. Offers to me.

KAY KEDGE
9 Barnes Rise, Kings Langley,
Herts. WD4 8AN. Tel: 01923
262763

EISTEDDFOD, LLANGOLLEN

If anyone is going to Llangollen by car and would be able to give me a lift I should be very grateful if they would contact me. (I would, of course, be happy to share petrol expenses etc.). I should like to arrive some time on Tuesday, 9th July, and leave after breakfast on Saturday, 13th July.

LILY AVERY

ACCOMMODATION IN LLANGOLLEN

We have a spare twin room for July 9th, 10th, 11th (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday) of the International Eisteddfod week. Contact Mary Pemberton on 0117 9669006 before 17th June if you are interested.

S.I.F.D. DAY COURSE - YUGOSLAV

The June S.I.F.D. Day Course will feature dances from the former Yugoslavia, with Frank Dowling. Frank taught a similar course for us last year, which was one of the best attended and most popular of the year. He has kindly consented to teach another course for us which will feature more dances from the Zivko Firfov repertoire.

Date: 8th June 1996

Time: 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

Venue: Trefusis, Cecil Sharp House, Regent's Park Road, London N.W.1.

Cost: Members £6.00, non-members £7.00. Concessions available on request.

MAGGIE O'REGAN

NOTE TO S.I.F.D. CLASS AND GROUP LEADERS

Firstly, a thank you to everyone who provided the additional information requested in last year's letter concerning Association/Affiliation renewal.

Recently, the Committee decided to introduce a new reduced subscription of £18 annually for folk music groups and bands that may wish to affiliate to the Society. This is to acknowledge that music groups do not normally require Society teaching resources but it is estimated that the subscription does cover the cost of providing the customary monthly two copies of SIFD NEWS. Publicity will be maintained on the same basis as normal affiliation.

ALAN MORTON
Honorary Membership Secretary
and Groups Liaison Officer

S.I.F.D. SHOP

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY MUG now in stock. Design by Sister Anna, printed in red, black and gold on white ground, at cost of £4 each. Please can you all help with the transportation of the mugs to other club members. I will not be offering a postal service on this item but will try to make them available at as many events as possible. See enclosed Order form for other items available.

CLAIRE STEELEY

S.I.F.D. cassettes, instruction books, etc. are available from Eleanor Gordon, 92 Norbiton Avenue, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey KT1 3QP.

INTERNATIONAL FOLKDANCE SUMMER SCHOOL, YORK
27TH JULY - 3RD AUGUST 1996

There are still plenty of places available at the Summer School if you would like to join us in York! We have been very disappointed by the unusually low response we have so far received, especially since this is the last summer school that we will be arranging. We had hoped that it would be at least as successful as the others so we could finish on a high note, not fizzle out like a damp squib!

As our usual participants know, our plans offer a great degree of flexibility. It is possible to attend on a residential or non-residential basis, which means that you are able to tailor your living accommodation costs to your own desires. The local Tourist Board can supply you with a list of camp sites, youth hostels, self-catering accommodation, or guest houses for bed and breakfast if you do not wish to stay in the college. If you are unable to attend for the full duration of the course it is possible to attend on a daily basis at a cost of £12 per day plus your accommodation. This cost includes classes with the specialist teachers every morning (including morning coffee!), participating in any of the afternoon activities arranged by participants on the course, and an international social dance each evening. If you live locally and would like to come to the evening dances, this also can be arranged.

We do not intend to cancel the school and disappoint those who have already booked a place and planned their holidays, but this does mean that due to the low response we will be running at a loss this year. So please could you do everything in your power to publicize the summer school for us and try to get more people to come? If we run at a loss it could mean the end of the summer schools that we have enjoyed for so many years!

DAWN and PAUL WEBSTER
Greenacres, Broadstreet Common,
Nash, Newport NP6 2AZ
Tel: 01633 272662

+++++++

WEST MIDLANDS BRANCH COTSWOLDS SAFARI - 9TH JUNE 1996

| | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| 11.00 a.m. | Moreton-in-Marsh |
| 12.15- 2.30 p.m. | Bledington |
| 3.00 p.m. approx. | Broadway |

We hope to have our picnic lunch on the village green at Bledington (which is on the B4450 about 4 miles south-east of Stow on the Wold) but have again booked the village hall from 12 noon to 2.00 p.m. This is to provide toilet facilities, and shelter should the weather be bad. There is an inn by the green where drinks can be obtained, but of course their toilets are for customers only. We are looking forward to another good day.

MAVIS LOWE

+++++++

ANNIVERSARY DANCE IN THE NORTH. To celebrate the Society's Golden Year, a Special Dance for members who live in the North. 6.30 to 10 p.m. at Oldham Vith Form College. Most of the dancers will come from the North but we shall be very pleased to welcome anyone else who happens to be passing the College on SATURDAY, 29TH JUNE. Traditional dress, if possible. "Opanka" group from Manchester will be demonstrating. Tickets £2.50 in advance, £3 on the door. Family £5. For maps, tickets etc. contact us on 01942 831141 or 0113 2682340. FELLA YASHPON, JULIE KORTH, MARINA WOLSTENHOLME, PAT PHILLIPS.

FRENCH DANCING AT YORK

Why French music? Why French dance? A personal viewpoint from Jessica Abrahams

Something happened in the Folk Revival in Europe that was different from what was happening in England. While in England dance was rescued and to an extent recreated from the aftermath of the Industrial Revolution by a conscious effort of dedicated and perhaps rather academic individuals, dance in France survived much more strongly both in terms of social practice and in terms of regional variety.

In a physical climate that is more accommodating than Britain's for the arrangement of outdoor dance music and dance festivals, musicians were exploring traditions that were structured enough to provide a musical framework while the enthusiasm of their audience in dancing as a response to that music sparked off a new generation of composers of dance music within that framework of traditional style.

While some groups researched carefully into the old styles of music and dance, others took the framework and pushed it as far as they could while still being more or less guided by what the dance audience could understand and respond to. In this rich and fertile environment for a truly living tradition you have music that is encouraged by the visible response and participation of dancers; and dance that is energised by new and exciting music. This is not a folkloristic snapshot of the past with period costumes and quaint old instruments but a form of social and creative expression open to anyone willing to understand the basic framework, and a means of delight and challenge to everyone at their own level of experience.

Why this is different from English folk music and traditional ceilidh or country dancing seems to me a question of approach. Sometimes the image of English folk dance seems to be polarised between those who treat it like a game of rugby without a ball and those who trace elegant figures with the most passionless possible contact with partner or anyone else in the dance. French folk tradition has retained a variety of dance types which are more challenging technically, as well as delighting in the non-verbal often flirtatious or playful communication between dancing partners, or the sense of physical closeness and harmony within a group of people sharing a dance. This is not exclusive to French dance but it seems specifically lacking in a lot of English dance; and it is caused not least by the stop-start nature of the way we often do English dances - while some people are moving others stand and wait their turn, so it is difficult to maintain a sense of flow.

The best way to discover the pleasure in French dance is to go to France - for example, to the pan-European party that takes place for several weeks in July in central France around St. Chartier and Gennetines. Or any of the many festivals, **stages** (short courses), or workshops that take place throughout the year, all over the country. (Many are listed in the calendar section at the back of TRAD magazine).

A taste of the French summer festival season will be coming to York in August, brought to the International Folkdance Summer School by Marie-Claire Viala, who will be teaching the dances of South West France (Gascony, the Béarn, Pays Basque) as well as some dances from the Balearic Isles. Half French, half Catalan, she has taught at workshops and festivals in France and elsewhere in Europe, and will be teaching French dance in England for the first time this year. (Re the Summer School, see Dawn & Paul Webster's article on p.4.

JESSICA ABRAHAMS

Please note that this article expresses the opinions of Jessica Abrahams - not a dance or cultural historian but a dance lover first and last! For information about dance festivals in France, contact Jessica at 66 Goodhall Street, London NW10 6TU. Tel: 0181 838 1996.

IRISH SET DANCING AT YORK

The folk dancers of Ireland have reclaimed their national dances. The set dances of Ireland nearly died out, not, as so often, just because interest waned and young people wanted to disco, but also because of a concerted effort by religious and secular authorities to suppress the sets. The church resented people dancing sets in the homes and at the crossroads because it could get no hold on the strong social network thus created. The Gaelic League, the official body charged with the preservation of Irish culture, saw the sets, one step away from the Napoleonic quadrilles, as un-Irish imports contaminating the purity of the national folk culture. The Government saw a potential source of revenue and passed the Public Dance Halls Act in 1935 outlawing dances in homes where sets were danced and admission was charged. Henceforth, dances were allowed only at licensed premises.

Joe McNamara (b.28 Aug. 1911) recalls, "House dances stopped during the war (World War II) because they were illegal. The gardai would come and close them down. The government wanted the revenue and tax. Priests stopped house dances, but they built parochial halls and got licences and had their own dances."

Martin Byrnes (b.2 Nov. 1919) recalls that around 1949 or 50 at a cheili run by the General Athletic Council for their annual convention, sets were not allowed. ".....they stopped us dancing a set on the floor, and we were told to do what was asked or sit down."

Today, we can stand up for a set because of the work of men and women who have gone into the Irish villages to dance with the "old-timers" and to record their memories of the way the sets were danced by them as young people and as far back as when they were children watching their elders.

But what of the dances? They are dances for four couples in a square formation though many dances can be done as a half set by two couples. A "set" typically consists of four to six or seven parts, generally with some sort of "chorus" figure recurring in each part. A clear link can be seen to the quadrilles of the 18th and 19th century, and relationships are also evident to many of the four couple dances of other northern European countries. American square dances are also clearly related and appalachian clogging must stem in part from the special embellishments to the foot work in the sets, known as "battering". Though there are clear relationships to other dances, past and present, the Irish sets have developed their own distinctive character, largely due to the lively character of the music. The vitality displayed at a set dance is a joy to experience. Some SIFD members were given a brief introduction to set dancing at the very successful September SIFD day-course taught by Jeff Holland. Those who attended gave an enthusiastic response.

Timmy McCarthy is one of those dancer/collectors who has worked to save set dances. An accordion player as well, he generally provides his own music while teaching. In addition he is a fine singer. At the York Summer School this year he will be eloquent, funny, eminently watchable, and above all passionate about the dances he brings to us. His style is well summarised by the organizer of one of his recent courses in London; "It's not just the dancing; it's the "craic"!

Anne Leach
Caspar Cronk

The above information has largely been taken from "Set Dances of Ireland" by Larry Lynch and has been reproduced with the kind permission of the author.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

July 5th BARNET SUMMER PARTY. Music by Dunav Balkan Group. 8.00 p.m. at Church House, Wood Street, Barnet, Herts. Contact: Brian Dowsett, 01992 582717.

July 5th-7th GRIMSTHORPE INTERNATIONAL DANCE FESTIVAL, Grimsthorpe, near Bourne, Lincolnshire. For information, ring 01778 424846.

July 5th-7th(?8th) FOURTH MILTON KEYNES INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF FOLK ART. For information contact Jill Gourlay, The Festival Office, 30 St. John Street, Newport Pagnell, Bucks MK16 8HJ. Tel: 01908 610564. Fax: 01280 824200.

July 7th ISRAELI DANCE DAY with Anat at Stone Cross Memorial Hall, near Eastbourne, E.Sussex. Contact Rowena Martin, 01323 503991 for details.

July 20th BULGARIAN DANCE WORKSHOP with Galina Turker, 11.30 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. at St. Margaret's Parish Institute Hall, followed by OXFORD BALKANSKO ORO SUMMER PARTY, 7.30 to 11.00 p.m. £3 each or 55 for both. Pay on door. Contact: Roger Wicksteed, 01865 511898.

July 22nd-26th INTERNATIONAL FOLKDANCE COURSE with David Mowat. Line and circle dances, mostly Balkan and Israeli, plus one or two from South America. The course forms part of the Oxford Summer School at Milham Ford School, Oxford. You can book for the whole, or part, of the course. Contact: Richard Speed, Tel: 01367 710593.

July 27th to Aug.3rd YORK INTERNATIONAL FOLKDANCE SUMMER SCHOOL. Contact: Dawn and Paul Webster, Greenacres, Broadstreet Common, Nash, Newport, Gwent NP6 2AZ. Tel: 01633 272 662.

Aug.4th-9th ISRAELI FOLKDANCE SEMINAR at De Montford University, Bedford, Teachers: Shmulik Govari, Shlomo Maman, Moshiko Halevy and Moshe Telem. Details from Israel Folkdance Institute, Balfour House, 741 High Road, London N12 0BQ.

Aug.23rd-26th WEEKEND AT DUNFORD HOUSE, MIDHURST, WEST SUSSEX (August Bank Holiday). Balkan orientated. Contact Irene Keywood, 133 Third Avenue, Dagenham, Essex RM10 9BD. Tel: 0181 592 4427. A deposit of £50 is required (s.a.e. please).

Sept.7th-14th BALKAN DANCE HOLIDAY in Dovedale, the Peak District. An HF Special Interest Holiday with Cathy Meunier teaching a selection of Balkan dances. Ring for a Special Interest brochure on 0181 905 9388 (24 hours).

Sept.27th-29th DANCING AND WALKING WEEKEND at Charlton Kings, near Cheltenham. There are a few vacancies. Contact Roy Clarke, 0181 367 2649.

Sept.28th DAY COURSE OF POLISH DANCING organized by Loidis I.F.D.G. Tutor: Janice Wrench. At Lidgett Park Methodist Church, North Park Avenue (off Lidgett Lane) Leeds. Maps available. 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. Cost: £4.50 for S.I.F.D. members, £5.00 non-members. Bring packed lunch; drinks available. For further details, contact 01132 682340.

Oct.12th S.I.F.D. GOLDEN JUBILEE DANCE (See p.2).

Oct.26th WOODVALE I.F.D.G. AUTUMN DANCE, 7.30 to 11.00 p.m. at Borough Green Village Hall. M.C.s: Jan Bryce, David McKie. Guest M.C.: Hugh Wood. Tickets £5.00. For more details, contact Alan Cant, 01732 883405.

Oct.26th RAINMAKERS 20TH ANNIVERSARY DANCE, 7.00-11.00 p.m. at Ickleford Village Hall. M.C.: Jill Bransby. Band: "Cloudburst". Tickets: £5.00. For information contact Richard Thom, 01438 316651 (may be Answerphone).

Contd...

Contd...

Nov.1st-3rd BIANCA DE JONG AT BRECON. Residential weekend with Bianca's superb teaching of Balkan dances and opportunities for walking in a delightful area. For details, send s.a.e. to Cathy Meunier, 115 Chetwynd Road, London NW5 1DA.

Dec.7th ZIVKO FIRFOV FOLKLORE GROUP PARTY at Moorfields Primary School, London E.C.1. Contact: Irene Keywood, 0181 592 4427.

~~*****~~

HUNGARIAN FOLK DANCE AND MUSIC CAMPS IN TRANSYLVANIA

The dates and locations for the annual camps are as follows:-

July 21st-28th Szekelyfold camp at Ocna di Sus (75km East of Tirgu Mures)
July 27th-Aug.4th Gyimes camp at Lunca de Jos (105km North of Sintu Gheorghe)
Aug.4th-11th Kalotaszeg camp at Sincrai (70km West of Cluj-Napoca)
Aug.11th-18th Mezoseg camp at Rascruci (25km North of Cluj-Napoca)

In each case, the "all-in" basic cost is DM200 for the entire week. "All-in" means 3 meals a day, camp site, dance/folk song/music lessons and displays, transport from nearest train station (where necessary). Sleeping at a village family's house can be arranged (cost generally DM3 per night extra). In most cases, excursions are also available.

The dances are improvisational couple dances, with Beginners and Advanced classes. Teachers are mostly locals, with celebrity guests from Hungary. Bookings in advance are necessary (no deposit required). For information in general, and Gyimes bookings, contact Malcolm Acheson (Tel: 0171 226 1843), 105 Plimsoll Road, London N4 2ED. For Szekelyfold and Kalotaszeg bookings Fax 00-40-64-193463 or write Nemeth Ildiko, Heltai Gaspar Alapitvany, 3400 Cluj-Napoca, Clinicilor nr.18, Romania. For Mezoseg, write Kallos Zoltan, 3400 Cluj-Napoca, str.Decembrie 22. nr.16, Romania

MALCOLM ACHESON

~~*****~~

FOLKLORE DANCE TRIP TO BULGARIA

Terra Bulgaria Agencies in conjunction with Stichting Turbulent announce their traditional dancing holiday in Bulgaria from 19th to 26th October 1996. The chosen destination is Blagoevgrad in Bulgarian Macedonia (Pirin). Naturally, as well as dancing and music, there will be folklore evenings and excursions. There will also be a visit to Skopje.

The organization is in the hands of Bianca de Jong and Henk Spelt, who will also lead the trip. Both speak Bulgarian and are well acquainted with the situation in Bulgaria. There will also be an English or German speaking Bulgarian guide. Cost: 1399 guilders (at present about £571). This includes flight, hotel on half-board basis in 2-3 person rooms, dance instruction, folklore evenings and excursions. Information from Terra Bulgaria Agencies, Henk Spelt, Postbus 237 8070 AE, Nunspeet, The Netherlands (03412) 57375 or from Stichting Turbulent, Bianca de Jong, Tel/Fax (020) 620 3880, The Netherlands.

MARINA WOLSTENHOLME

EASTBOURNE FESTIVAL WEEKEND, 3RD - 6TH MAY 1996

This is just to thank everyone who participated in the Eastbourne Festival, and to hope that you enjoyed it. The Friday evening dance was M.C.'d by Malcolm Shaffer assisted by Barbara, and put us all in the mood for dancing for the rest of the weekend.

Philhellenes, led by Maggie O'Regan, taught great dances in several workshops, as well as performing in the town all day Saturday, the showcase in the evening, and a couple of guest spots on Sunday night. The costumes were wonderful, and such a lot of work went into them. Jessica Abrahams brought her musician and dance colleague along to introduce a variety of French dances, to suit all abilities. Judy Ingram taught a selection of Israeli dances, and the music (if not the steps) remained in your mind. I know that Judy was not well, and she bravely carried on with the sessions. Jeanette Hull took on the General International workshop, assisted by Anne Leach, together with the Monday afternoon reminders. Jeanette also led the Sunday evening dance in the Gym with "Cloudburst".

Jill Bransby started off with a music session on Saturday, along with "Cloudburst", then followed this with a lively dance in the evening, again with the assistance of the band, and rounded off the weekend with a song session on Monday. "Cloudburst", which consists of Martin, Wendy, Hazel, Celia, Elinor and Dave, and also Jill (I hope I haven't forgotten anyone) were kept very busy. At one point they had to be in two places at the same time, so it was agreed that "Drizzle" would accompany one caller while the rest of "Cloudburst" were elsewhere.

Our foreign team this year was "Hupsakee" from Holland. Although some of the dances they taught were already in our repertoire, the enthusiastic young team brought new life to them (especially Gort Met Stroop). They also gave a demonstration of how to put on one of the elaborate hats and explained about the various costumes. Many thanks to Virginia and Roy le Croisette, who looked after our Dutch visitors so well.

I would also like to thank Claire Steeley and her husband for their work in the shop, and to all of my unofficial helpers who acted as door stewards or equipment minders whilst I was occupied elsewhere. I could not have managed without you. THANK YOU.

If you were not able to come this year, I hope this gives you an indication of what you missed. Thank you again to all who took part, and please accept my apologies if I have missed out your name.

Sincerely, HELEN EZRA

--oOo--

CELEBRATION DANCE, WORTHING, WEST SUSSEX - 20TH SEPTEMBER 1996

DANCE INTERNATIONAL (WORTHING) warmly invites all dancers to a Golden Jubilee Celebration Dance on Friday, 20th September 1996, 7.00 to 10.30 p.m. at The Barn, Field Place, The Boulevard (near Durrington Station), Worthing, West Sussex. Admission £2.00 including refreshments. We hope as many people as possible will take this opportunity to come in costume, although it is optional.

Dance International meets every Friday, 7.00 to 10.00 p.m. at The Pavilion which is also at Field Place, and visitors are always welcome. For additional information, contact either myself on 01903 265879 or Jean Chennell on 01903 505763.

MARGARET MATTHEWS

MORE ABOUT "A TRAVELLER"

The "traveller" referred to by Caroline Thomas (see May issue, p.8) was, in fact Mary Edith Durham, who has been one of my heroines for a long time. She was one of those Victorian ladies who was sent abroad for the sake of her health. What she was suffering from appears to have been terminal boredom, for on reaching Dalmatia, and later Montenegro, Albania and Serbia, she travelled extensively on horseback, with two men, the first a Bible Society Missionary and the second a tobacco-smuggler. Sadly, on one of these physically demanding and perilous journeys she contracted malaria and really did become ill.

In 1903-4 she spent five months doing relief work in Macedonia, trying to help refugees and people injured in the revolt against the Turks, and in 1907 King Nikola of Montenegro asked her to help at the Balkan States Exhibition at Earl's Court. In 1908 she travelled all over Albania and recorded her adventures in the book "High Albania". In 1911 there was an Albanian uprising which was crushed, and Edith Durham with her own money tried to provide food, clothing and medical care for the people she had come to love. In 1912 the Balkan War broke out, and once again she had wounded to care for. When Greece invaded Albania she appealed to the Foreign Office for help to relieve starvation and disease among the refugees but her letter of 28th July 1914 arrived when the British Foreign Office authorities here had other things on their minds. She was forced to return home, but later went to work in hospitals in France and Egypt.

Edith Durham was a wonderful artist, and throughout her travels she collected, sketched, made notes, and took photographs. She used to buy embroideries and textiles to give the makers much-needed income, and sometimes she was presented with beautiful garments in recognition of her relief work. By 1912 she had noted that a more Western style of dress was creeping in, and she started to purchase traditional garments to preserve them, and as a record of the skills and way of life which was starting to disappear.

I have made three pilgrimages to the Bankfield Museum to see the collection. Only one or two garments are normally on show but the whole collection can be seen and photographed by appointment with the keeper. There are some incredibly beautiful pieces, some worked in gold thread on silk and velvet, others worked in silk on fine muslin.

As can be seen, Edith Durham was a remarkable woman. Even before the First World War she was warning the Great Powers about the territorial ambitions of Serbia, but she was really more interested in anthropology than politics. She might have changed history. Her books are out of print, and so far book searches have not managed to find any for me. If any member possesses any of her writings I would be grateful to know, especially "High Albania" 1909.

MARINA WOLSTENHOLME
Robin Cottage, 4 Commercial Rd.
Grindleford, Sheffield S30 1HA

Bibliography: "The Durham Collection" by Laura Start, Bankfield Museum Notes, 1977.

"Black Lambs & Grey Falcons, Women travellers in the Balkans"
Edited by Allcock & Young, Bradford University Press, 1991.

DUNFORD HOUSE, near Midhurst, Sussex

Jack Richardson is now able to confirm that Dunford House has been booked for a Walking/Dancing weekend on the pre-Christmas weekend, 20th to 22nd December 1996. Enquiries to Jack, 01792 295194, or University of Wales, Swansea, Dept. of Chemical Engineering, Singleton Park, Swansea SA2 8PP.

The second part of Dr. Towner's essay on defining folk dance:

WHAT IS A REAL FOLK DANCE? SOLUTIONS?

It is possible to rescue the Classical concept of folk if we throw out the unproven assumptions, but idiosyncratically retain variations of them as prescriptions. Thus we can focus on a particular population whose people share a common culture. This population, our selected folk, may or may not occupy a region defined by Political boundaries. From out of their repertoire of dances, we select only those that are several hundreds of years old, and that can therefore be defined as traditional. The question of their creation is immaterial, but the dances being survivals out of many, possibly with modifications along the way, can be said to belong to and represent that particular folk culture.

This solution can only be of theoretical interest, because in practice, there are few if any dances that have documentary evidence proving their continual (possibly evolving?) existence over hundreds of years. There is no way of separating the old from the new. Nevertheless, this solution is probably as near as we can ever get to the definition of a REAL FOLK DANCE.

The dances collected around the turn of the Century by such as Cecil Sharp in England (and others in the rest of Europe) have formed the foundation dances for the subsequent folkdance movement. They are historic dances, since the population at large pursued other dance forms. New dances have been devised by the folkdance movement using elements from those earlier dances, and these have remained with the folkdance enthusiasts rather than with the folk. Thus it can be said that folk dances are defined as those dances performed by the folkdance enthusiasts! The term "folk" remains a useful label for such dances, although its original significance has been removed.

Turning to the International folk dancer, it is my view that s/he need not worry too much about the source of their dances, though I think that s/he should be aware of it (an appeal I made without success many years ago). The various Overseas dance organizations, equivalent to the E.F.D.S.S., provide instructors, publications, music etc. for what they regard as their folk dances, and who are we to argue? We should feel no guilt in taking on modern dance forms such as the Israeli which are terrific to dance, but we should not kid ourselves that they are Traditional Folk Dances. We should have no hesitation in taking on the recently made-up dances mentioned by Jenia Graman provided they are interesting to dance, and that there are knowledgeable instructors available. I feel, however, that it is a pity that the Society does not, or is not able to, look outside Europe. For example, India and China both have "village dances", many based on the circle or kolo formations, which certainly come nearer to the concept of folk than do, say, the Israeli dances.

In summary, I regard the term "folk", as for example in "folk dance", as a useful label for the dances embraced by the folkdance enthusiasts, but having no other significance or implication. It is a sterile exercise to attempt to select dances on an imagined concept, viz. folk. This may prove controversial, but it is in line with current usage, though few will admit it. It certainly makes it difficult to explain to a potential member what characterizes the dances we choose to perform.

G.D.TOWNER

=====

FOR SALE

Appalachian Dulcimer, triangular shape; beautiful wood, sweet tone; with leather case. £60 o.n.o.

Flatback Bouzouki/Mandocello (Musikalia) - capo on 4th fret - Octave Mandolin; with soft case. £60 o.n.o.

Contact Roger Wicksteed, 01865 (Oxford) 511898.

THE SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING

ORDER FORM

FROM:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Post Code: _____ Phone: _____

SEND TO:

Mrs Claire Steeley

34 Broadwater Avenue

Letchworth

Herts. SG6 3HF

Phone :01462 686419

| ITEM | COST | No. | COST |
|--|--------|--------------|------|
| The History of the SIFD | £1.50 | | |
| Membership Badge | £0.90 | | |
| Car Sticker | £0.30 | | |
| Notelets - Packet of 10 in two designs | £1.20 | | |
| Shoe Bags in calico - printed design | £4.00 | | |
| Pens - Flags on cap, printed: "The Society for International Folk Dancing" | £0.99 | | |
| T Shirt - Anniversary Design-Natural Size : small, medium, large or extra large | £10.00 | | |
| Polo Shirts - white, printed Red or Green Size: small, medium or large | £12.50 | | |
| Tea Towel - Anniversary design in unbleached cotton | £3.50 | | |
| Sweat Shirts - Dance with the World design Grey - Size: medium or large | £14.00 | | |
| Christmas Cards - Party Design - 5 per pack | £0.75 | | |
| | | Total | £ |
| Add Post & Packing £1.00 for 1 or 2 items | | | £ |
| Grand Total , Cheques payable to : SIFD | | | £ |

