

SIFD NEWS



MAY
2002

Polish Folk Costumes

SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING

Internet website: www.sifd.org

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The typing is done by Lily Avery. The printing, packaging and posting
is done by Dalila Heath.

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This month's cover is one of the illustrations in the book, "Polish Folk
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S.I.F.D. DAY COURSE - SWORD DANCING

<u>Date:</u> 11th May 2002	<u>Place:</u> Trefusis, Cecil Sharp House
<u>Time:</u> 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.	<u>Cost:</u> £6.00 S.I.F.D. members £8.00 non-members

Those of you who attended the last Day of Traditional Dance at Cecil Sharp House in October may have seen the demonstration and workshop run by the East Saxon Sword Dancers. They perform both rapper and longsword dances. It made quite an impression on some members, who requested that we should ask them to take a workshop for us. Their publicity leaflet states, "When it's time to take a break from the ordinary", which seems very appropriate. So, come and take a break from the ordinary at the May day course.

The next S.I.F.D. day course will be Irish, on 15th June with Anne Leach.

JANET WOOLBAR

Miscellany

- **The Sardana**

Peter and I went to Barcelona for a long weekend in early March. On the first morning we walked 50 metres from our hotel to *Plaça de Catalunya* to discover this large square full of groups of children from 4-16 learning the *Sardana*. The children were arranged in age groups and each circle had its own teacher provided by the *Escola de Sardanes*. Each group went at their own pace, the younger children were marching around and clapping to the beat while the older groups were being coached in precise arm movements. The 'canned' music was amplified through huge loudspeakers and didn't seem very traditional. The only tune I recognised was one that Tom Lehrer parodied 'Hello Mother, hello Father...'. It was fascinating to watch the groups learn different parts of the dance (*Curts* and *Llarges*) and to watch their progression for an hour or so. It was wonderful to see Folk Dancing taken so seriously as it was obviously danced with great pride and with great attention to the style.

We then went underneath the square to the Tourist Information Centre to find out where we could watch some more traditional dancing. Our guide book had suggested the *Centre Artesi Tradicionàrius*. (This is a theatre that presents performances of traditional Catalan music and dance.) We drew a blank on this. Returning upstairs to the square we found that the children who had been learning the *Sardana* were now sitting around the outside while a number of dance groups were performing the *Sardana* in costume and to live music. The people in the tourist information centre didn't tell us what was going on above! At the end of a long performance every one joined in, including me, and I can tell you that I didn't know my *Curts* from my *Llarges*!

When we returned home, our March *SIFD News* was on the doormat and we were thrilled to read the article by Robert Harrold, which drew on Kelsey Blundell's knowledge and experience. What a coincidence, I'd been thinking about Kelsey and wishing I could ask her about it. Thank you Robert and Lily.

- **Rainmakers Workshop.**

We had a wonderful day on Saturday March 2nd, with Marina Wolstenholme who came to Radwell Village Hall to teach us a truly International selection. We learned Romanian, Bulgarian, Japanese, Hungarian and Russian dances, all taught with great skill and enthusiasm. We had a good turn out and very much appreciated the time and trouble that Marina took on our Day Course. We are enjoying the dances at the club now. Thank you Marina and the SIFD.

I was pleased to read in the April *News* that Ipswich also had a good Workshop on the same day with Cory Vereijen. Don't forget that both Cory and Marina, along with a host of other excellent teachers, will be at the **Eastbourne Festival**. See you there.

- **Dance Sites on the Web**

Technophobes please look away. Last winter I took an OU computer course, to improve my skills and help with my OU tutoring. Part of my final assignment involved creating a web page (using HTML) which had five live links to WWW sites.

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I choose Dance sites, the SIFD one (naturally), EFDSS, a Sacred Circle Dance site, a private Dance site (Colin Hume's) and the National Resource Centre For Dance (NRCDF at University of Surrey). I looked at the technical features of the sites and analysed how easy it was to navigate around them, what sort of information was provided, and what philosophy was projected and whether it differed from mine. You will be pleased to know that the SIFD site came out favourably, the 'dancing men logos', that act as navigation tools, were approved of, and information about our activities could be found fairly quickly and easily. I had fun with the philosophy. My page, which was linked to a group channel, was up on the web for a month or so, but I didn't have time to write about it before, and now it has disappeared from public viewing. You can however look at the SIFD site on www.sifd.org. Congratulations to the creators.

Jill Bransby.

ROMANIAN DANCE COURSE WITH SILVIU CIUCIUMIS AT MALHAMDALE

25TH TO 27TH OCTOBER 2002

We welcome back to Malhamdale the ever-popular and talented Romanian dance teacher, Silviu Ciuciumis. His enthusiasm and sparkle, and his dances with their memorable tunes and rhythms, make his courses a pleasure to attend.

This residential weekend at the HF guest house "Newfield Hall", Malhamdale, includes comfortable en-suite accommodation, full board and use of all the facilities which include a heated indoor pool, lounges, dance room, bar, table tennis, croquet, putting etc. Newfield Hall is situated less than half a mile from the Pennine Way, which leads North to the nearby geological wonders of Malhamdale.

Dancers can select either the General or Advanced course or both courses, and there will be social dancing in the evenings. Non-dancing friends and family are welcome. Full board accommodation is £93.00 and each course is £15.00. For full details and a booking form, please send s.a.e. to me at 115 Chetwynd Road, London NW5 1DA.

CATHY MEUNIER

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SELPAR HAS MOVED!

Owing to lack of co-operation from the Adult Education Management and Queensbridge School, where we have met for the last ten years, Selpar I.F.D.G. has moved to a new venue: St. Andrew's Methodist Church, Cartland Road, Stirchley, Birmingham (on the corner of Cartland Road and Pershore Road [A441] by the traffic lights). For this term we shall meet there on Tuesday evenings, 7.30 to 9.15 p.m. until 18th June, apart from the Bank Holiday on 4th June. We met there for our first session on 9th April and they have made us very welcome.

MAGGIE KAYE

S.I.F.D. West Midlands Branch Secretary

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Lily,

Reading Paul Bradley's letter in the April SIFD NEWS, I was interested in the reminiscences of Paul, and Frances Horrocks.

Several of the folk from those days are now dead but I am still in touch with Dorothy and Harry de Caux. Harry is now very frail and in a nursing home in Caerleon, Newport, Gwent. He has a brain tumour but Dorothy writes that he is sometimes stimulated by something and she is heartened to see flashes of the old Harry. I don't know how many S.I.F.D. members will remember him; he was mainly a Harrow Green member and of the E.F.D.S.S. Morris Men, but I thought some folk might be interested to know Harry is still alive.

The last time I remember seeing Paul Bradley was at my "after wedding" folk dance. That was nearly forty years ago. My memory has dimmed since I fled to the Southern Hemisphere but it is great to be remembered by folk (and to have my name in the SIFD NEWS!).

My very best wishes to those who remember me and especially yourself, Lily; you do so well with the NEWS.

Yours sincerely,

RUTH COTON
25 Mimosa St., Woodford 4514,
Queensland, Australia

Ed.note: It is appropriate that I received Ruth's letter at the same time as Jill Bransby's article re the Sardana (see p.3) as it was Ruth (then Ruth Sharp) who first introduced the Sardana to me and the other dancers at Harrow Green. I can remember we all concentrated very hard on Ruth as leader to indicate when the changes from "curts" to "llargs" were coming. We later danced the Sardana under the instruction of Bert Price, who was also an enthusiast.

Dear Lily,

I am sure there must be people reading the SIFD NEWS who are both musicians and disabled. A group of us are proposing to run an event for a few days specifically for disabled people who would enjoy playing folk music together, based on camping. We are able to use a permanent camp site called Woodlarks, near Farnham in Surrey, which is set up specifically so that disabled people can enjoy camping in pre-erected tents.

This is available at the beginning of September 2002 and the cost is expected to be between £40 and £50. If you feel this could be of interest to you or someone you know, please contact Jane Repman on 01376 552568.

Yours sincerely,

DAVID BRADLEY
51 School Road, Great Alne, Alcester
Warks. B49 6HQ

REFLECTIONS ON THEN AND NOW

I first came across international folk dancing in the early 1950s after Wally and Janet Coultrup had set up the Harrow Green Folkdance Group. Over a period, many dances were learnt, many tutors came to instruct, and demonstrations were performed for others to enjoy. Times changed, dancers married, changed jobs, moved house and, in some cases, emigrated to explore greener fields, outlooks and possibilities. These things all happened to me; a rolling stone?, perhaps but certainly no moss (in the way of money!) attached itself to me. But sometimes I find myself saying, "Paul lad, you don't do too badly" and I manage to envy no-one.

Due to unforeseen circumstances, I did have a period of some 35 years when no folk dancing was to be had at all. However, in recent years I have come back into "the fold" and I am not so sure that I like everything that has changed over the years. Dancers have become so much more specialized in outlook and practice, with horos, kolos, circle dancing well to the fore.

I am, of course, well aware that the ladies, generally speaking, outlive their spouses and that circle dancing has become so popular as no partners are required, but how I long to belong to and be part of a truly international group where non-circle dancing is the norm, i.e. back in the days of Harrow Green F.D.G.

When I did rejoin the folkdance "fold" it was with the EFDSS clubs local to where I was living (North Essex). Tony Parkins' club at Maldon was the nearest international group and this was too far for an evening visit. Letchworth, Cambridge and Norwich were each even further away, unless I wanted to stay at a B. & B. overnight, putting up the cost. About eighteen months ago, while scanning the local authorities evening classes, I came across two international entries; one was Sally Fletcher's nice group of circle dancers in Ipswich, which I visited, and the other was Robin Hart's group at Long Melford. The latter tends towards Eastern European dances away from horos and kolos, so it suits me fine. Robin studied at Prague University and with groups in Hungary and Poland, and has tutored in London. She is a good choreographer, costume designer and seamstress. The club, known as the "Friendship Dancers", has been going for about twenty-two years and some of the original members are still there! Incidentally, her parents were both folk musicians and, looking back through the many photograph albums, in its more hectic hey-day its membership must have had a really adventuresome outlook. Currently there are thirteen members but one is about to move away, which leaves Derek (a new convert) and me with the remaining lady dancers. Until recently, one of the club had her very own Spanish group here locally. Another is an outstanding authority on all embroidery, to the extent that she gets invited abroad to lecture and display. Her seventh book gets published this autumn, all fabulously illustrated (see Helen Stevens on the web).

The "Friendship Dancers" mainly dance in order to demonstrate usually for charities, hospices, trusts, Age Concern, fetes etc. Adjustments are made to national costumes halfway through a performance by the changing of hats, aprons, scarfs etc. to the appropriate region. To our credit (I think), we were recently asked if we were on a National Tour of Great Britain! (Wishful thinking - but haloes were adjusted with a smile at the time). We are not affiliated to the S.I.F.D. and it isn't even on the agenda; sad, but I will raise the issue from time to time.

During the summer we have an annual picnic in Robin's 22 acres of woodland where fresh-water crayfish have started to re-inhabit a stream bordering the trees and open farm land and signs of foxes, badgers, rabbits, squirrels and deer were noted. A Christmas meal is held each year in Long Melford when, as in the case of the picnic, current and past members come together. I am truly sorry that age, transport and cost mean that I no longer venture to Cecil Sharp House. For those of you who can, I say "Do it while you can, and enjoy!"

PAUL (TRAPPER) BRADLEY

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

S.I. June 15th S.I.F.D. DAY COURSE - IRISH

June 21st/23rd The first ever U.K. performance by world-class Slovak dance group LUCNICA accompanied by acclaimed violin and cymbalon group "The Devil's Violin" at The Linbury Theatre, Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. £12 (£8 concessions) and £6 (standing) from 020 7304 4000, or 020 7301 1000.

June 22nd DOINA (East European) group, 3 p.m. at Victoria Embankment Gardens, London.

June 29th DAY OF GREEK DANCES with Maggie O'Regan in Bognor Regis, 10.30 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. £10. Bring-and-share lunch. Details from Janet Douglas, 01243 265010.

S.I. June 29th ARMENIAN DANCE WORKSHOP with Dalila Heath, 2.00-5.00 p.m. at St. Margaret's Institute Hall, Polstead Road, Oxford. £4.00. and OXFORD BALKANSKO ORO SUMMER PARTY, 7.00-11.00 p.m. £4.00.

S.I. June 30th S.I.F.D. WEST MIDLANDS BRANCH ANNUAL COTSWOLDS SAFARI. See p.10.

July 6th BALATON (Hungarian) group, 3.p.m. Victoria Embankment Gardens, London.

July 9th/14th INTERNATIONAL EISTEDDFOD, LL'ANGOLLEN.

July 14th CENTRAL LONDON I.F.D.G. (and possibly Croxley Green I.F.D.G.), 3 p.m. Victoria Embankment Gardens, London.

S.I. July 27th/Aug.3rd S.I.F.D. SUMMER SCHOOL. Enquiries to Roger Sturge, 0117 962 1802.

Aug.4th/9th ISRAELI RESIDENTIAL DANCE COURSE at De Montford University Bedford, Lansdowne Road Campus. Advanced & Intermediate classes, workshops on teaching techniques etc., evening dances. From £317 to £347. Details from Israel Folk-dance Institute, Balfour House, 741 High Rd., London N12 0BQ. Tel: 020 8446 6427.

S.I. Aug.24th/26th WILLINGDON I.F.D.G.'s MINI FESTIVAL at Lodge Hill Centre (a beautiful wooded location) near Pulborough, West Sussex. Shared leading of International Folk and Circle dances. Non-dancers welcome. £104 sharing, £122 single (limited availability). Send s.a.e. for detailed booking form to Rowena Martin, 60 Anderida Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN22 0PZ.

Sept.28th/29th BULGARIAN WORKSHOP with Ventzi Sotirov at Westwoods Community Centre, Northleach. Further information from Stephe Clark, 01451 860289. (See also March SIFD NEWS).

Oct.12th/13th TURKISH WEEKEND WORKSHOP with Ersin Seyhan in Bognor Regis. £32.00. Optional meal on Saturday evening £10. Further details from Janet Douglas, 92 Rose Green Road, Bognor Regis PO21 3EQ. Tel: 01243 265010.

S.I. Oct.26th TRADITIONAL DANCES FROM THE ARMENIAN HOMELAND with Shakeh Avanesian. 11.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. at Bishop's Cleeve Tithe Barn, nr. Cheltenham. For details/bookings contact Chris Lee, The Studio, The Manor, Upper Slaughter, Cheltenham GL54 2JG. Tel: 01451 821487. (No price given).

S.I. Dec.13th/15th S.I.F.D. DANCING/WALKING WEEKEND at Dunford, Midhurst, West Sussex. Includes dancing, walks, carols, Christmas fare. All rooms en-suite (singles, doubles and twins). About £113 (dependent on numbers). For further details and bookings contact Jack Richardson, Chemical Engineering Dept., University, Swansea SA2 8PP. Tel: 01792 295194 (work), 403153 (home).

All events covered by S.I.F.D. insurance are marked "S.I.". Please remember the onus is on you to mark each event when sending in the notice if your event is covered by our insurance.

GERMAN FOLK DANCING UNDER THE NAZI GOVERNMENT

"1934: At one of the biggest annual mass meetings of the Third Reich, the party congress at Nuremberg, traditional regional folk dances from all parts of Germany were danced by members of the Reichsbund Volkstum Und Heimat on twenty-two stages".

(Cited by Bröcker, 1996. See note 1)

This report leaves little doubt that the National Socialist Party, the Nazi Party, recognised the value of folk dancing in support and propagation of their ideology. Given that the Nazi Party had only been in power for about a year, though campaigning vigorously and violently during the previous years, this event points to a strong existing folkdance movement.

The early history of the collecting and preservation of German folk dances is very similar to that in the rest of Europe. During the closing decades of the 1800s, people from the urban educated middle classes set out to find and record the dying rural culture and to restore it to fresh life within their own milieu. Thus the Association for the Preservation of the National Costumes of the Alps was founded in Bavaria in 1883, to be followed soon after by many other such organizations interested in costumes, songs, dance, music etc.

In relation to the later exploitation by the Nazi Party, and at the risk of some over-simplification, two aspects in the history of German folk dancing are pertinent, viz. the youth movement and the founding of the Union of German Dance Circles in 1928.

The youth organizations, of which Wandervogel, founded in 1886, was one of the earliest, embraced folk dancing as a means of helping to promote a sense of community and togetherness among members. The post World War 1 Education Reform Movement stamped down on dances that were considered to have no pedagogical value; hence frivolous and erotic elements were eliminated. Dances were re-arranged and new ones created. Thus the control and use of folk dancing as a tool in influencing the young was already present and ready for exploitation by the Nazi government. There was no hint, however, of any nationalistic content [as far as I deduce from Bröcker]. So, when the Nazi Party gained power the youth organizations became tightly controlled ideologically through the formation of the Hitlerjugend and the Bund Deutscher Mädel for boys and girls respectively.

Many independent and disparate folkdance groups flourished during the 1920s. They were invited in 1927 to join a Union of German Dance Circles, Verband Deutscher Tankreise, to aid better co-operation. Its aims included fighting against "exotic dances" and the use of "popular music" from abroad that was driving out the authentic German dances and music. Dancing was identified as a component of the national culture and therefore only the authentic dances of the German people should be performed, especially as an example for the youth to follow [presumably to counteract the competing influences of the alien forms]. Most clubs joined the Union soon after its founding in 1928. Thus, when the Nazi Party came into power in 1933 there already existed a central folkdance association promoting German national dances, which was therefore readily incorporated into the Nazi Reichsbund Volkstum Und Heimat. Apparently most of the wellknown folkdance leaders went along with the changes. For example, Nowy, one-time Chairman of the Union, wrote:

"It is a cultural duty of the entire German nation to help the German dance to attain its rights and to bring the German feeling of form and movement back into dance.... The German folkdance movement, which affirms the new German state with all its heart, offers its services enthusiastically to that state". (Cited by Bröcker).

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But perhaps some of them at least had not appreciated what was in store. This was to include an extension of the idea of limiting the dance repertoire to those with German roots, to limiting the membership to only those Germans of Aryan extraction. Having recognised the role of folk dancing in the promotion of its ideology and hence having established the Reichsbund Volkstum Und Heimat to control it centrally, the Nazi Party thereby was also able to regulate the teaching of the dances. No-one was permitted to teach folk dances without a certificate gained through having been "properly" (ideologically) trained. However, the question on which dances should be considered acceptable remained an open question during the early years. Initially, efforts were made to create new dances, "community dances", since folk dancing was also seen "as a means of enriching social contact". But discussions also continued between folkdance teachers on whether British and Scandinavian dances (which had been popular with some groups during the 1920s) should be included, bearing in mind that they shared common roots with the German. [Perhaps some teachers were trying to make the best of a bad situation?]. Bröcker summarises the types of dances that were preferred, though it is not very clear from her paper how much control was actually imposed centrally. However, she does note, "The social dances and music that came from the U.S.A. were considered absolutely unacceptable and were furiously attacked; regardless of the kind of music, all genres were deprecatingly designated "jazz". This rejection acquired such malignant proportions that it was not only decried that "jazz" is poisoning and undermining our nation in a "battle cry" published in 1939, but jazz was even described as "one of the most dangerous military tools of the Jews".

In drawing together the threads connecting the Nazi era of folk dancing with the earlier period, I have relied on the information presented in the paper by Bröcker (1996). That the Nazi Party controlled and used folk dancing is without doubt, but perhaps not as pervasively as implied in the paper. The performance of "traditional regional folk dances from all parts of Germany" suggests a continuing parallel diversity. The book, "Folk-Dances of Germany", published in the U.S.A. in 1938 by the indefatigable Elizabeth Burchenal (note 2) supports the supposition. She includes instructions and music for 29 dances selected from those she collected from all parts of Germany during a dance-study tour in 1933/34. Of course, things may have changed later.

The rantings against "jazz" (applied as a term of abuse against all American popular music) did not preclude ballroom dancing, Victor Silvester style. The 1940 edition of his "Modern Ballroom Dancing" (note 3) includes a commendation by J.Lewitan, "editor of the German Dance magazine Der Tanz", who refers to a second German translated edition and says, "Germany has made great progress in Ballroom Dancing and is one of the best dancing nations". Silvester (1958) and Richardson (1946?) also note, in passing, visits to German ballroom events before World War 2 (note 3).

In conclusion, we note that there are potential dangers in the innocent pursuit of one's own folk dances. For some it is a recreational/social activity; for others it is a subject of study. But inevitably, being bound up with national roots, the subject harbours the seeds of racism. I doubt whether the words expressed by the German folkdance leaders during the early years of the Nazi regime explaining the role of German folk dancing in the context of German Nationhood sounded any more sinister than the recent wording of the "mission statement" of the E.F.D.S.S. :-

"To put English traditions into the hearts and minds of the people of England".

G.D.TOWNER

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NOTES

- 1) M.Bröcker (1996). "Folk Dance Revival in Germany". A paper in "The World of Music". Inst. Trad. Music: No.3/1996 (Berlin).

I have relied heavily on the information in this paper. To avoid attributing my comments to M.Bröcker, I have enclosed them in square brackets. I hope to return to the early (pre-1920s) development of German folk dance organizations when I have had a chance to study my German texts.

- 2) E.Burchenal (1938). "Folk-Dances of Germany". G.Schirmer (USA).
- 3) V.Silvester (1940). "Modern Ballroom Dancing". Herbert Jenkins (London).
V.Silvester (1958). "Dancing is my Life". Heinemann (London).
P.J.S.Richardson (1946?). "The History of English Ballroom Dancing (1910-45)". Herbert Jenkins (London).

G.D.TOWNER

S.I.F.D. WEST MIDLANDS BRANCH ANNUAL COTSWOLDS SAFARI - 30TH JUNE 2002

Starts at 11.00 a.m. at Moreton-in-Marsh. From there we move on to Broadwell (just off the A429 between Moreton and Stow on the Wold) where we have booked the village hall from 12.00 to 2.00 p.m. After that, we will again be dancing at Stanton Court, on the edge of Stanton village (off the B4632 South of Broadway) as part of the village gardens open day in aid of the National Gardens Scheme. As it's a charity event, only dancers in costume will be admitted free of charge. Time to be confirmed but probably about 3.00 p.m.

MAVIS LOWE

BALKANPLUS, 11th May 2002, at Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, London N.W.1. 7.00-10.30 p.m. £4.00. M.C.s: Frank Dowling assisted by Fiona Howarth and Clyde Olliver. Frank will include a good smattering of Yves Moreau's dances and intends to dredge up a few old and forgotten items, no doubt some of which should be best left forgotten! (Frank's words). The majority will be easy and will be quickly walked through beforehand, so hopefully there will be plenty to interest everyone.

As Frank is about to move house, the Balkanplus Committee really do appreciate the time given up to M.C. this dance, aided and abetted by this innovative line-up. This is an event not to be missed.

FRANCES HORROCKS

PASSION MUSIC specialize in East European folk and dance music on CD from Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Transylvania, Yugoslavia etc. and offer S.I.F.D. members a 10% discount on all purchases (when ordering, give your S.I.F.D. membership number). Address: 37 Red Lion Lane, Overton, Hampshire RG25 3HH. Tel: 01256 770747. Mail order only.

A CHINESE CONNECTION

In 1984 I left the Selpar group in Birmingham to come down to London. As I left, Fred Yeung from Hong Kong joined Selpar for a year while studying here. We met and have remained in contact ever since. Over the years, various members of his dance group (specialising in Eastern Europe Dance) came to see us as they visited or passed through London. In 1996, Sue and I went to Hong Kong (and Taiwan) to see the group and to teach some dancing both to Fred's group and in more general workshops. Thereafter we saw both Fred and his group more regularly as we attended the same summer dance courses as they did - this was when they were going through their Hungarian phase, building this part of their repertoire. In 1998, Sue and I were invited back for their 10th anniversary show (doing some solos and duets while they changed). Back in the U.K. one of their dancers joined our Hungarian group, Balaton, for a year while he was studying here, and then in March the culmination of this relationship was that the Balaton group went to Hong Kong as guests of the Chinese group.

The centrepiece of the visit was a show a few days after we arrived. This was the biggest undertaking our hosts had attempted since not only did we and the Legacy group dance but so did three younger groups that Fred and his Legacy members had taught, as well as two boys from another group. There were about seventy of us altogether. The setting was in front of the cultural centre in Kowloon by the harbour (with the skyscrapers and boats behind us) and an audience of hundreds sitting on the steps looking down on us. Word had passed round to the dance community so some had come specifically for the show, which explained the eight video cameras pointing at us whose owners just happened to have brought their tripods. Basically, it went very well. Our hosts are now thinking about having such regular collaborations (even if only amongst themselves) in the future as a showcase for folk dancing. In the performance, the groups mostly alternated but we also did two free dances with them (i.e. improvised but slightly organised for the stage) and we jointly performed a Hungarian choreography that I had taught to Legacy on our first visit.

The rest of the week involved tourism by day and, frequently, teaching dance in the evening. Igor Cojucar from the Romanian group Martisorul was with us and taught Romanian choreographies to both Legacy and Knack Cordial groups. I taught some Slovak. And then most evenings we ate at restaurants with the groups as they introduced us to Chinese cuisine - a large part of their cuisine judging by the number of dishes we just about managed to get through! Overall, the whole thing went very smoothly (after a year of planning) and everyone enjoyed the trip.

I thought I would add a word about folk dancing in Hong Kong. If I only consider international dancing, it has quite a following there. They have regular social dancing events. Performance groups are quite large by our standards - Legacy has 20+ girls and can manage up to 8 boys. They have quite a number of events to perform at and there are various competitions which they enter.

LESLIE HADDON



SLOVAK FOLK DANCE - A unique opportunity to learn this exciting and energetic style of traditional dance. Open classes for all ages and levels of experience conducted by the Director of the Morena Dance Company.

Sundays, 4.30 to 6.00 p.m. at Cecil Sharp House (side entrance), 2 Regent's Park Road, London N.W.1. Cost: £4.00 (concessions £2.00). Contact Andrea Okely on 0794 6382 303.