



Volume 1 - Number 10

October - 1944

By subscription only

### LET'S DANCE!

"LET'S DANCE" is the new name of our paper. And we like it. We can't think of anything more characteristic of this wonderful dance spirit of ours. It's short, exciting, and original.

"LET'S DANCE" invokes the idea of fun, recreation, and beauty. It also invokes the idea of our paper stimulated to broader horizons. "LET'S DANCE" intends to formulate itself to our needs. We are not smug. We want to progress. We have come a long way already. But we still have a lot of ground to cover. So, Let's Dance!



### REDWOOD CITY

Our costumes looked quite gay in the brilliant sunshine. And we could have asked for no nicer setting than the Sequoia Union High School in Redwood City for our last Festival, October 8th.

To top off everything the swimming pool was available for those who wished to go swimming afterwards. A chicken barbecue in the school cafeteria followed.

Chairman Mildred Buhler, in addition to being an excellent Square caller, is to be highly complimented for keeping the program running so smoothly.

### HONOR OUR PRESIDENT

Our very popular President, Miss Clarice Dechent, has been offered a Research Fellowship at Stanford University. In order to work on her Doctor's degree, available by this Fellowship, she is taking a year's leave from the staff of the San Francisco State College. She will reside with Miss Nancy Deering, a fellow folk dancer, at 281 Everett Street, Palo Alto.

She is teaching folk dancing in the Stanford Physical Education Department during the current semester in order to keep herself stimulated with our common activity, dancing.

She gives up her place on the Research Committee with regret. Madelynne Greene will fill the place vacated by Clarice. However, she will continue the Presidency of the Folk Dance Federation of California. And we shall see her as usual at the Festivals.

The Federation is very proud of the honor bestowed to its President in the form of this fellowship. And we all wish her every success in her chosen work.

### INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING IN THE WEST

By Soon Chang

(Soon Chang, a person almost mythical to many of us, may well be characterized as the father of the folk dance movement out here in the West. The article printed below is from material sent to George Monscharch by Soon Chang last year when a Federation paper was first thought of. Soon Chang herein narrates the history of the folk dance movement out here at its inception as well as many of his own stimulating ideas on the subject. EDITOR)

For centuries folk dancing on the village green has been a popular recreation of the people of almost every land. It sprang from the masses themselves. And among people with economic and cultural limitations, the dance has remained as the great pleasure in their lives. Dancing has been the only



# International Folk Dancing in the West (Continued)

activity in which they could forget their burdens and feel something of the joy of life, the only happy medium of their inner feelings.

Havelock Ellis once said, "Dancing is art both primitive and necessary." How true this is. It is most certainly beneficial to the mind and body, especially when executed in a light-hearted and carefree manner. It is most vitalizing and stimulates a completely new interest in life. Moreover folk dancing is not limited to age or sex.

If folk dancing could be organized on an international basis, conducted in many other countries and participated by different peoples, it would certainly help to bring people into a closer understanding with each other.

So it was with this international good-neighbor idea that Chang's International Folk Dancers was founded over five years ago. It has since been known as the mother-club of all organized clubs of California. I am certain too that in some other states similar clubs have been formed by some of Chang's former members.

International folk dancing was nothing new even long before Chang's came into being. It had been taught in schools, colleges, private clubs, community centers, and to some extent, dance studios. Public outdoor folk festivals have been held regularly in all parts of the country. But the idea of an organized international folk dance group, financed by a group of enthusiasts, open to the public, was certainly brand new.

These first pioneers, Chang's International Folk Dancers, went into it not only for their own pleasure, but to spread the movement far and wide. I knew that any large scale growth could only come about through a multiple of similar clubs organized on a true democratic basis. So we see today the result of their efforts which is quite gratifying indeed.

A Federation similar to the New York Folk Dance Council was long in the process of forming in our heads. In fact a letter was drawn up ready to send to the various national groups. We thought that through this channel we could break certain barriers and come into closer relationship with peoples of other lands, as well as their folk-lore, dances, and culture. However, before we planned a definite course, we sought the reactions of some of these groups. On the whole we found that they approved the idea of such social activity. Yet they remained non-committal out of fear that other groups could not perform their dances satisfactorily. Therefore we still have this barrier to smash down. Much is yet to be done.

It is a simple matter to secure dance material from reference books. But such material I am sorry to say has been revised in most cases so as to be suitable for children and teachers in physical education. Therefore there is no substitute for authentic material directly from the natives of the different countries of dance origins. And this was Chang's primary objective in forming the Federation.

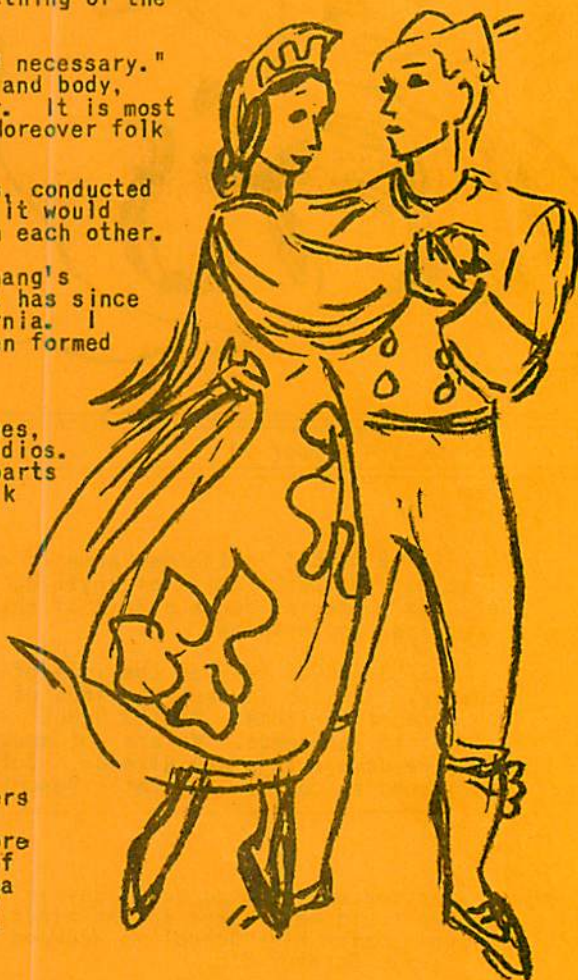
Like all things Chang's International Folk Dancers had its insignificant beginning. Its first session was held at a small studio on Washington Street near Montgomery. It was attended by three couples including myself and my wife. I started them out with the following dances: Hambo, plain Schottische, Triple Schottische, Norwegian Mountain March, Ace of Diamonds, Waltzes, etc. This was quite an order for the first meeting.

Our major problem from then on was to obtain suitable quarters for handling bigger and bigger attendances. We remained at this studio for about two months. And from then on we were constantly moving from such places as a basement in a cafe, church auditorium, kindergarten school, private club hall, and finally after two years, a rented hall on Fillmore Street.

Three months before this last episode Chang's decided to organize into a club. A regular business meeting was called. The usual procedure of electing officers and other matter was attended to. Names were suggested for the club. And out of a list of twenty or so names, Chang's International Folk Dancers was decided upon. Heretofore the dances were free to the public--only twice had we passed the hat around for small donations. Nevertheless a monthly dues was fixed since financial problems increased.

At this stage in the life of Chang's International Folk Dancers, the Golden Gate International Exposition opened. Though we were quite well known by this time, the first official recognition of our club came when the Fair Recreation Department invited us to put on a program. Since many of us had costumes already, the major job was two weeks of concentrated rehearsals. The day proved to be quite successful.

As a result of this event we were invited to dance at the Estonian Village every Saturday and Sunday in the court as long as we wished. Free lunch, drink, and passes was our compensation. Usually we managed to assemble twelve or more couples. From this time on we achieved a degree of success and fame. And more and more engagements were offered.





International Folk Dancing in the West (Continued)

Perhaps the most impressive and memorable day in our history was the International Folk Festival held at the Fair in which twenty or more groups took part. We won the distinction of being the only international organization at the Fair. It was really quite a spectacle. The lovely background of greens back of the big platform made our appearance perfect. Miles and miles of film must have been shot that day. There must have been at least 25,000 people watching the dancing. We received thunderous applause. We were honored by the Recreation Commission to lead the Grand march in the evening.

Throughout these glorious years much has been done in the matter of moving to larger and larger quarters, making up a constitution and by-laws, accommodating the host of new recruits into the movement, creating a Research Department, and creating a monthly paper covering all activities of the club. As a result of these efforts both the membership and treasury of Chang's International Folk Dancers grew by leaps and bounds. And the enthusiasm of those still in the organization will warrant it as a mainstay. It has grown too deep-rooted to ever retrogress.

Although the Federation is yet in its early stage, it has done very excellent work in carrying forward the movement. I hope that bigger and bigger things will come of it. I also hope to see the day when a regular holiday might be declared annually, an International Folk Dance Festival day! I sincerely hope that this day is not too distant. In the meantime good luck to the Federation and good dancing!

SCRAP BOOK

Those having material for the Federation Scrap Book will kindly send it to Mr. Henry Koopman, 1249A - 9th Avenue, San Francisco, California. Henry has consented to take the place vacated by Clarice in her recent move to Palo Alto.

MR. AND MRS. "BUZZ" GLASS

Mr. Henry Glass, known as "Buzz" to all his friends, meaning everyone who has ever met him, is a very busy person these days.

One sometimes wonders if enough credit is given to this tireless teacher and worker who has done so much to establish folk dancing in northern California. Because he says so little about himself, we shall try to give some idea of his dancing activities. Nor are his activities limited to dancing. He likes to hike, read good books, and ride a bicycle. Before he took up dancing he went in for many physical activities. Anyone watching him do his solo Hopak may now realize that his past physical training enables him to do this strenuous dance as he does it in his inimitable manner.

His present program in folk and ballroom dancing is as follows:

- MONDAY: Oakland High School Evening course in ballroom dancing, 7:15 to 9:15 P.M., September 18 to February 2 (next year). This includes the tango, rumba, fox trot, waltz, etc. A large class has enrolled already.
- TUESDAY: University of California Extension Class, also a fee-paying group of 50 or so. A ten-week's course beginning September 18th, from 7:15 to 9:15 P.M., surveying European folk dances and American Squares.
- WEDNESDAY: Berkeley F.D. Exhibition Group every other week.
- THURSDAY: Belongs to Buzz.
- FRIDAY: Director of the Castle Promenaders every 2nd and 4th Friday.
- SATURDAY: Director of the Castle Promenaders' Monthly Social Party the first Saturday of each month at Castlemont High School.
- SUNDAY: Festivals, Federation Research Committee, and other committees from time to time.





Mr. and Mrs. "Buzz" Glass (Continued)

Not to forget Frances, who besides keeping house, and working regular hours for the School Department, is always on hand to help Buzz.

It might be news to the newer members of the Federation to know that Frances Glass was Frances Farnell back in 1942. At that time she was the Federation's first Secretary when Buzz Glass was its first President. Their marriage resulted from this happy association.

We are most fortunate indeed to have Mr. and Mrs. Buzz Glass as members of our group activity. And we wish them the sure success that their efforts will surely bring as they mould the future nearer to their heart's desire.

-- by Ruby Biel

---

CLUB NEWS

Berkeley F.D. "Likes": The way Mrs. Buehler from Do-Si-Do teaches and calls directions... Buzz Glass' new shirt... the shy smile on Marian van Kriedt... Henry Koopman's new knitted cap... Dancing by Lake Merritt on moonlit evenings at Zaracote's... The Castlemont Promenaders new costume enthusiasm... Our own Folk Dance Conference plans... Madelynne Greene just the way she is... The new art work on Walter Grothe's suspenders.

---

Snatches of conversation overheard at Lake Merced by the Berkeley Reporter:

Take right hand and... Hi Henry... Ha ha ha... Oh there's Angelo, I'll have to thank him for painting my glasses... Right elbow underneath your partners arm, very good... Now you can all show off the Hopak... Buzz sure is travelling... There are lots of athletes out there... Somebody lost their program... Hi ya, Berkeley... The trouble is, there's only the neck and a small little piece... Connie would know as well as George... We have boxes, big paper boxes...

If you can identify any of the above remarks as belonging to you, Ruth Ruby offers you a slight reward. Address all communications to Ruth Ruby, 2618 Monticello Avenue, Oakland 2, 'phone Andover 9088. A period of two weeks after publication of "LET'S DANCE" is allowed for answers. Come on folks, did you say it?

---

The Square Steppers went on a hayride their last party night. It was a gay affair with twenty-four couples attending, some riding the haywagon and some on horseback. They sang their way along one of the skyline trails in the Oakland hills and went back to a barn for a regular "chuck-wagon" supper. And OF COURSE there was dancing. Lots and lots of it! They had so much fun they'd like to make an annual affair of it. Reel-y they would!

---

The Garfield Folk Dancers think they have set up a new record. They claim the youngest guest ever to attend an evening of folk dancing. The age of the young lady, on her first appearance at the regular Thursday night dance, held at the Codornice Club House, was exactly one month. And her name: Carolyn Edmunds.

While the president of the club, Bill Edmunds, conducted a short business meeting, she surveyed the scene from her bassinet and offered comments from time to time.

Still remembering the successful "Kid's Party" held in May to celebrate the Garfield Folk Dancers' first anniversary, a "Barn Dance" was held on September 28th at the Codornice Club House (opposite the Berkeley Rose Gardens, off Euclid Street) in order to wind up the summer vacation season.

---

Published by the Folk Dance Federation of California, 990 Broadway, San Francisco 11. Bret van Kriedt, Chief Editor; Marian van Kriedt, Associate Editor; Eleanor Bates, Art Editor; Beatrice Cook, Circulation Manager; Gilman Merrill, Associate Circulation Manager. Send subscriptions to 1272B Sacramento Street, S.F., c/o B. Cook.