

# Let's Dance!

SEPTEMBER  
1952

THE MAGAZINE OF FOLK AND SQUARE DANCING 25c



OUR AUSTRIAN DANCES--SEE PAGE 7

*In This  
Issue*



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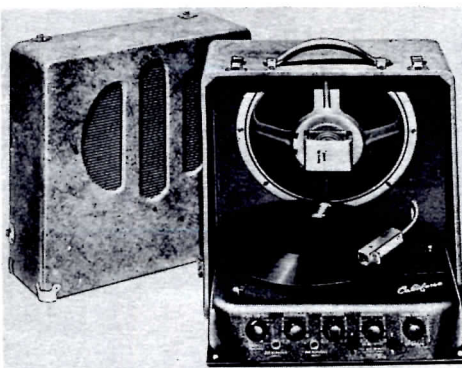
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THE FOLK DANCE FEDERATION OF CALIFORNIA

## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

By Lawton D. Harris  
EXHIBITION DANCING

We know that this article will be misunderstood but feel the need of "viewing with understanding" certain trends that seem to be coming more and more evident in the exhibition phases of our program.

We believe that some phases of "exhibition dancing" are both historically authentic and presently desirable. They present a means of introducing others to folk dancing and to assist ourselves to better folk dancing. They add color and spice to our programs.

Recently we have seen three or four fine exhibitions of what is more accurately known as the Classic Dance. They were interesting . . . they were well done . . . but let's call them what they were and are. The program notations did so!

Another trend—not so new—is our overdramatization, over spectacularizing of folk dance materials. One nationally-known observer at the Woodminster Bowl performances said, "Only two folk dances on the program—splendid dancing—but not true folk dancing." We selected four and possibly five as actually folk. Again, the audience was given the true picture as the narrator continually said "arranged from authentic steps." However, we believe that such announcements have not been thoroughly understood. Frankly, we believe that if tampered with to any great extent, the dance is no longer actually folk dancing—any more than Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsodies are actually folk music—although the themes and melodies are taken from old folk tunes. Liszt did not claim that they were folk music—perhaps we should be similarly more careful.

What is our purpose—Entertainment? Then our trend is fine—it is really a super show! Another effort to sell folk dancing—? Then we should be doing folk dancing—simply and correctly, without very much adulteration or "improvement."

### Our Cover

The Teen Twirlers of Sacramento in the Swiss Muhltradt—a feature of the State Festival exhibitions. Photo by Hodson (Sacramento).

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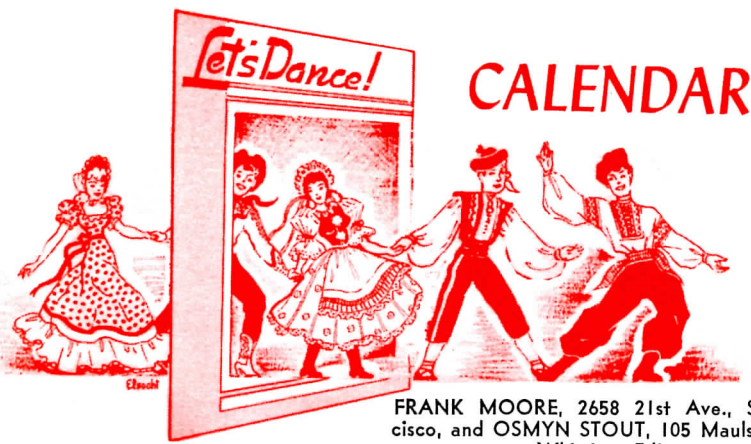
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A new club roster is being compiled. Only "current clubs" will be listed. Dues become delinquent on September 1

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## FEDERATION FESTIVALS

### North

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14 — Walnut Creek Softball Park, Civic Center Park, Walnut Creek. Council Meeting 12:30 in Recreation Center. Dancing: 1:30-5:30 and 7:00-10:00. Host: Diablo Council of Folk and Square Dance Clubs.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26 — Memorial Auditorium, Fresno. "Raisin Festival." Council Meeting 12:30. Dancing: 1:30-5:30. See *Other Events* item.

NOVEMBER—Open.

DECEMBER — San Jose Auditorium. Hosts: Peninsula Folk Dance Council.

### South

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12—Glendale Civic Auditorium, 1401 N. Verdugo Rd., Glendale. An Indian Summer folk dance party. Council Meeting, 11:00 a.m.; dancing, 1:00-5:00 p.m. Hosted by the Berendo Folk Dancers. Chairman: George Holly.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 1 — Long Beach Municipal Auditorium, foot of American Ave., inside the spectacular Rainbow Pier. Dancing: 8:00 to 12:00 p.m. Hosted by the Silverado Folk Dancers. Chairman: Ralph Gordon.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14—Santa Monica Municipal Auditorium, Ocean Park. Hosted by the Santa Monica Folk Dancers.

JANUARY, 1953—Pasadena Civic Auditorium. Hosted by the Pasadena Folk Dance Co-op.

## REGIONAL FESTIVALS

### North

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6—College Gym, Redding. "Tenth Anniversary Party." Host: The Wonderland Twirlers.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21 — Lodi. Afternoon: Lawrence Park. Evening: Lodi Armory. Dancing: 4:00-7:00 and 8:00-11:00. 14th Annual Lodi Grape Harvest and National Wine Show. Folk and square dancing. Sponsor: Recreation Department. Host: Lodi Folk Dancers.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21—Kezar Pavilion, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco. Dancing: 1:00-5:00 and 7:30-11:00. Sponsor: S. F. Folk Dance Council. Host: Changs International Folk Dancers. Trudi Sorenson, chairman.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 28—City Park, Willits, 3rd Annual Folk and Square Dance Fiesta. Dancing: 1:00-5:00; Evening: High School Gym. Host: Friday Nighters Folk Dance Group.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4 - SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5—Civic Auditorium, Santa Cruz. Dancing: Saturday, 7:30-11:00; Sunday, 1:30-5:30. Host: Santa Cruz Breakers.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19—Kezar Pavilion, Golden Gate Park. Sponsor: San Francisco Folk Dance Council. Host: The Swingsters.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26—Oroville Municipal Auditorium. Fifth Annual Fall Festival of Folk and Square Dancing; Afternoon 1:30-2:30. Evening, 7:30 ? Host: Oroville Old Time Dance Club Inc.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25—Memorial Auditorium, Fresno. "Raisin Festival." Evening program of folk and square dancing with exhibitions. Dancing: 7:30-11:00. Part of Raisin Festival celebration.

### South

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 26—Santa Barbara. McKinley School. Dancing, 8-12 p.m. Hosted by the combined folk dance clubs of the Santa Barbara area. Chairman: Bill Herlow.

## OTHER EVENTS

OCTOBER 24-25-26 — "Raisin Festival," Memorial Auditorium, Fresno. Program: Friday evening—square dance jamboree, hosted by Central California Callers' Association. Saturday evening—folk dance festival. Sunday afternoon—Federation Folk Dance Festival. Post-festival dinner and get-togethers after both Friday and Saturday parties. Other civic Festivities.

*All material to be included in the Calendar of Events must be forwarded by the twenty-fifth of the month two months previous to publication date to: Frank Moore, 2658-21st Avenue, San Francisco 16, Calif. Southern Section Calendar Events should clear through Osmyn Stout, 705 Maulsby Drive, Whittier.*

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# From the EDITOR'S MAIL BAG

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** In the absence of Danny's contribution, and also because of vacation wanderings, you editor submits a number of items which he found interesting. We expect Danny back next month. In the meantime we present Danny, his wife and their daughter in their interpretations: 1. "Childhood Years"—Kentfield; 2. The Dreistreier—"It Can Be Done"—Oakland Y.M.C.A. party. (Photos by Phil Maron)



**SACRAMENTO**—The Folk Dancers in this area are becoming very interested in the Dancing Slab which is under construction in William Land Park. Doug Nesbitt, Chairman, and Kellis Grigsby, Vice Chairman-Treasurer, have been meeting with city recreation department representatives and planning with them the opening ceremonies. It won't be long now! Surfacing will be completed shortly. Temporary lighting and seating arrangements will be provided so that some Saturday night soon dances can be held. There is a possibility that a permanent speaker's platform will be constructed by the opening night.

of charge at any of the gates. Watch your newspapers for additional information.

\* \* \*

**CHANGS HOBBY SHOW**—You'll want to attend the Hobby Show of Changs International Folk Dancers on Sunday, November 2nd, in their hall at 1630 Stockton Street, San Francisco. This is an every-other-year event with Changs, the last Hobby Show having been presented the latter part of 1950.

Already lined up are exhibits in weaving, wood carving, men's embroidery, hand-made jewelry, collections of china and costumed dolls, all displayed by club members. Another member promises to do caricatures of visitors, so step right up and hold that pose for him.

Plans now include serving international foods, keeping the true spirit (or flavor?) of international folk dances, but, according to Chairman Paul Milani, it's too soon to tell about that.

**STATE FAIR FESTIVAL, SACRAMENTO**—Again we call your attention to a Folk Dance Festival which will be held once more on the last day of the State Fair on the Fair Grounds in front of the Counties Building. We will dance between the hours of 6 p.m. and 11 p.m. All Folk Dancers in costume will be admitted free



All folk dancers and friends of folk dancers are invited (and who isn't a friend of a folk dancer?). The doors will be open from 1:30 to 8:30 a.m., so you'll have plenty of time to "browse" around the many varied and interesting exhibits.

(Continued on Page Eight)



The first folk festival since World War II in Salzburg, Austria, was held recently in this old castle and was attended by Millie von Konsky.



The Fiesta Dancers present an ancient "Syrtos" at Kentfield Festival, which used an historical approach. Grace San Filippo, leader, is on extreme left.





## Report from Southern California

BY PAUL PRITCHARD

1050 TWELFTH STREET, SANTA MONICA

Southland activities last month kept everybody hopping and included many things of which Folk Dance Camp was undoubtedly the biggest. While, strictly speaking, this occurred up north, campers from the south were so numerous up there, it certainly rates as a major southland event.

As this is well covered elsewhere, we'll not dwell on camp life other than to say we had a swell bunch of teachers and everybody made lots of friends among them and their fellow students.

Another occurrence which brought the dancers out in droves was the festival hosted by the SAN DIEGO FOLK DANCERS. Beginning with a Saturday evening picnic at Mission Beach (O Boy! what food!), it concluded with a dandy indoor festival in Balboa Park on Sunday. Exhibitions included a "Highland Fling" by Enid Gardner; "Ras Leela" by the Hindustani Nautch Sabha, "El Jorapa" by the Silverado Folk Dancers; and a real comic version of "Shuddelbux" by Van Vander Walker and his Convair Hoedowners.

On Sunday, July 13, twelve hardy souls from the Los Angeles area ventured forth to Lancaster, where it was 104° in the shade—and no shade—to aid and abet Lancaster's shining light of folk dance enthusiasm, Ralph Du Bois, start a group of beginners. There was much heat, much good will and fellowship, and marvelous refreshments.

Don't forget the SANTA BARBARA month-end festivals at McKinley School—everyone is invited and all are asked to wear costumes. The city recreation department co-sponsors a class for beginners, 7:30 to 10 each Thursday at Peabody School, so if you have friends you'd like to get onto the bandwagon, send them over there and get them started. ERNEST SCHILLING is keeping me posted on all matters of interest up there and BILL KNIEDSTEDT is keeping the local folks in the know with his publicity and radio program.

Have you WESTWOOD CO-OPERATORS answered the cards that were mailed to you? I know Daphne Upton is very desirous of having all information possible in order to determine the number of active members and the extent of their activities.

A fitting climax to the Independence Day celebration, and dances Friday and Saturday was the Folk Dance Festival in the beautiful San Jacinto mountains at IDYLLWILD. For their debut as hosts, the VERDUGO DANCERS, still in their first year as a group, were responsible for an afternoon program generally agreed upon as outstanding in fun, delightful dancing, and entertaining exhibitions. Under the able leadership of their president, RALPH MILLER, and ELMA McFARLAND, dances kept everyone on their toes in spite of the warm weather. The setting, in the Idyllwild School of Music and Arts, could hardly be equalled anywhere. The most popular dances were interspersed with squares, the first group being called by the

popular and attractive lady from Colorado, ANNE PITTMAN, and the second by ROBERT McCAMENT of the Glendale group. "Sleights Sword Dance" and the amusing "Old Man's Jig" were exhibitions under the direction of ELMA McFARLAND. PAUL and HELEN ERFER presented "Unterwestner Schuhplattler" and the JARABE DANCERS of Pasadena, HELEN YOST directing, gave "Jarabe Tlaxcalteco." Our Long Beach friends, the Silverado Club, performed the "El Jarapo," directed by PETRA WRIGHT.

BUD GROTZINGER is spending almost all the time up in Bakersfield that JAN WERLING isn't spending down in Gardena—and methinks that ere this hits print, either the GANDY DANCERS or CIRCLE 8 CLUB will gain a new member with a loss to the other club, depending upon which town will be called "Home, Sweet Home."

The SANTA MONICA FOLK DANCERS' "Twilight Festival" brought a large turnout. This is the group's second full scale festival of the year—some long lost faces appeared here too—"T. Y." TANABE and MILDRED and KEAMER WALTERS among them. Exhibitions included dances by the TERPSICHOREANS, the SILVERADO CLUB, GRIF-FITH PARK FOLK DANCERS, the ANN TOLAND SCHOOL, and a Flamencan dance by DIANE CAGLIARDI.

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Minnie Anstine receives Santa Barbara Advertising Club award for the "Most effective promotion stunt of 1951"—the doll and costume exhibits for last year's State Festival.

LET'S DANCE!



# OUR AUSTRIAN DANCES

A letter from Dr. Susanne Polsterer

*The GOODWILL TOURS OF AUSTRIAN STUDENTS AND TEACHERS TO NORTH AMERICA having occasioned the publication of a book, AUSTRIAN FOLK DANCES, by The National Press, Millbrae, we have asked the co-initiator and art director of these Tours, Dr. Susanne Polsterer, about her views on American folk dancing as compared with European. Here is her reply:*

On our Goodwill Tours through America I have repeatedly been asked this question of how folk dancing in America compares with folk dancing in Europe. As there is more to be said on this matter than can be conveyed in a short message, I will restrict my reply here to one essential aspect, namely that of the spirit underlying the folk dance movements on both sides and the practical consequences of that spirit in international relations.

Also, I will have to restrict my answer to my own country, Austria, even though I am convinced that a great deal of what is true of the folk dance groups in Austria is also true for many folk dance groups in other European countries. Naturally, what I am going to say is a generalization which will not fit every folk dance group in this country or back home; on the other hand it applies not only to folk dancing, but to a certain extent also to folk music, the wearing of national costumes, etc.

In Austria the folk dance groups have been created and are for the greater part still conducted by men whose ardent desire it has been to preserve the cultural heritage of our nation as expressed in our folklore and folk art. The predominance of this, in itself excellent, motif has given to folk dancing in Austria a somewhat sterner and more rigid character than it has here in the States. The demand for the authenticity of the dances has been exaggerated so that almost no margin is left for the individual or local variations which will be found in any living thing. The folk dance has to be executed exactly as it has been recorded by some folklorist—exact to the very letter. Anyone who deviates in the slightest is treated as a heretic. And as usual, the disciples are often more orthodox than their masters. A number of taboos have sprung up in consequence to protect the museum-character of the folk dances, one of them being the belief that, our folk dances can or must only be danced by connationals, not by any foreigner. And on the contrary: Austrian folk dancers will confine themselves as a rule to the dances of their own nation and not dance those of other peoples.

I still remember the censure and resistance I met with in our first Austrian Goodwill Group when I included in our programs two Hungarian Csardas from the Burgenland. Although I had been taught by Hungarian teachers and practiced in Hungarian groups, my Austrian compatriots were absolutely sure that I could not dance these Csardas correctly. They gave me many a bitter hour, and any less obstreperous creature might have given up her attempts to represent an ethnic minor-



Dr. Polsterer waves to Let's Dance! readers

ity of her country to which she did not belong herself.

Austrian folk dancers are thus inclined to be exclusive, cliquy and to stress that which separates us from other nations. As a result they are considered cranky or nationalistic by the greater part of the population and they do not find the response their cause would deserve.

How different is the spirit we have encountered in the many American folk dance groups we have met on our Goodwill Tours! The American folk dancers, even those among them who have a due respect for the authenticity of the dances and costumes, never lose sight of the main objective dancing has in our present Western civilization, namely that of bringing people together and giving them fun. As a result folk dancing in America is a live thing, a real movement which is spreading rapidly. There are no racial or national prejudices, on the contrary, the American folk dancers take pleasure in studying the dances of other peoples and often take great trouble in imitating them. What is the result? Firstly they find out how much the various nations have in common, and secondly they create personal bonds to the nations whose dances they are dancing; they have something in common with them, they are not perfect strangers any longer.

Their interest and sympathy has been aroused and they will receive anyone or anything coming from those other countries in a friendly spirit. In this way folk dancing in America has become a powerful instrument for the promotion of international understanding and goodwill.

Naturally the purpose of preserving the traditions of a people has its good sides too, as we will realize when we remember the great part which folk lore and folk art have played in keeping small subjugated Balkan nations and their love of freedom alive—think for instance of the Balkan nations under Ottoman rule. However, what we need today is not to assert our national peculiarities against others, but to contribute them for the benefit of a common cause, for the joint task of preserving Western civilization or even human culture as a whole. I do not see any reason why both purposes, the preserving of national cultures and the promoting of international tolerance, understanding and cooperation should not be served by folk dancing. I believe that the American folk dancers are showing us the way.

*May I take this opportunity of sending greetings to our friends in America?*

## Costume Department

# WHAT IS AN AUTHENTIC COSTUME?

By IRENE WELLER, Guest Writer

Reprinted from the bulletin of the Society  
for International Folk Dancing (England)

A folk costume is not something which sprang up in the night; neither is it necessarily one particular style of clothing worn by any particular part of a community, nor is it a period costume. It is a collection of apparel put together over a number of years, often over centuries, and springs from the geographical, mental, historical, fashionable and spiritual characteristics of a people.

Many parts of a costume may be traced back to the Middle Ages and beyond. The short coats worn with so many costumes were worn all through the Middle Ages and were continually changing in detail up to the 18th and 19th centuries. The wide metal decorated belt dates from an even earlier age. Many pieces of clothing were added to the old costume, but often the old pieces were not discarded. Thus we are confronted with two hats or two jackets worn simultaneously. Elements from a particular style were adapted, presupposing the original fashionable style of high society. The laced bodices of the women's dresses are adaptations from the corsets of the court lady, but the peasant, having no maid, the lacing had to be at the front instead of the back.

Tight knee-breeches were in the fashionable world in the 17th century and were commonly worn by peasants in many countries by the 18th century, thus taking close upon 100 years to infiltrate successfully to the popular peasant taste. The military influence was great in Europe and traces may be found in almost every man's costume: The long coat, the frequent use of red and blue, the long boots, which were probably introduced into Europe by the Turkish invaders, and the head-wear.

Superstition takes a hand. Many parts of the costumes were worn originally to ward off evil. Edges decorated with fur on leather or with strips of red (a protective color) geometrical patterns in lace and embroidery (protective symbols), metal objects, rings and buttons (the shining objects defeat the evil eye), embroidery patterns, left unfinished or with a deliberate inaccuracy in the design (so that the devil may not be imprisoned in the embroidery), all were important to the credulous peasant.

Costume is usually a mixture of stern common-sense and gay ostentation. The strong trousers of the man, the useful skirt of the woman, the stout-heeled shoes, the footless socks (straw being considered cheaper, stronger and more comfortable than socks), all combining with the ribbons, sequins, beads, laces, and embroideries to make one garment fit for both work and festive occasions. Folk costumes became reasonably static about 100 years ago, and any costume presenting style, color or fabric introduced to the world after that period should be regarded with caution.

From the above points you have a reasonable guide to authenticity, and when making a costume from a picture or postcard, bear these points in mind. As English people we have no national right to a folk costume and our European friends have a natural reluctance to seeing us wear their costumes in a casual, sloppy or inaccurate reproduction or manner. We would do well to remember the pride and affection they have for their national costume and watch ourselves to see that we do not offend through lack of knowledge or thoughtlessness.

## From the EDITOR'S MAIL BAG

(Continued from Page Five)

Have you seen the neat, handy sized Directory of Folk and Square Dance Groups, comprising the San Francisco Council? It is unusually attractive and includes classes under Recreation and Adult Education classes. Congratulations to Chairman Frank Moore and cabinet!

\* \* \*

The Stockton Polk Y Dots and the Stockton Y.M.C.A. combine forces to present a series of monthly Jamboree dances (second Saturday evening) starting October 11th, featuring materials from Let's Dance! Jack McKay, square dance editor, will teach and call the new squares as they are printed each month. The more simple folk dances (shorter routines) will be taught by various Stockton teachers. The current copy of Let's Dance! and subscription blanks will be on hand—no mimeographed materials will be "passed out." This gladdens the heart of an Editor. Maybe you can do it in your home town. The program is a natural follow-up of a ten weeks' course taught by Jack McKay and managed by Mrs. Helen Gill.

\* \* \*

We regret to announce that George and Marjorie Posner have moved from the Bay Area. They will continue to contribute to Let's Dance! Marjorie volunteers to answer your "costume questions." Their new address: Capt. George E. Posner, Hq. First Army Sig. Sec., Governor's Island, New York 4, New York.

\* \* \*

From our Tour—"We are having a wonderful

trip so far with good food, clean linen, feather beds, good weather, kindly people—no serious language problems . . . and much . . . folk dance, music and song. We attended the first folk festival in Salzburg since the war. It was held in the old castle in the picture."—Millie von Konsky.

\* \* \*

When asked by the Panel Chairman in a Camp Assembly program "Do you ever burlesque your dances?"—neither Catherine (Scotland) nor Anta (Sweden) knew what was meant. After explanation, Catherine said, "Never!" and Anta added, "Sometimes at a party—but never publicly nor at a Festival." Anta's Hambo

exhibition goes well with Madelynne's. Sweden also has its "characters."

\* \* \*

As we went to press we were most unhappy to hear of the very serious illness of Lloyd "Pappy" Shaw. "Pappy" has been one of the finest persons in the field and probably the greatest single influence in our present resurgence of Square Dancing.

\* \* \*

Michael Herman is reported as making very satisfactory improvement after a recent severe operation. Vyts, after another big operation, continues to improve and both of these fine leaders expect to be "out with the dancers" before too long.

(Continued on Page Seventeen)

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(The following are personal opinions of the Record Editor—not official Federation rulings!)

Rondo has issued two new records of interest to Folk Dancers—both prepared under the supervision of Paul and Gretel Dunsing and using Maxham's Folk Orchestra. These German dances were all taught at the Folk Dance Camp and subsequent institutes in San Francisco, Modesto, Fresno, and Los Angeles. They should prove to be very popular. They are well-played, properly arranged, and are the only recordings available for these dances.

RFD 9—Achttouriger Mitwalzer (Eight Tour with Waltz)

—Geestlaender Waltzer

RFD 10—Jaegerquadrille (Hunter Quadrille)  
—Offener Walzer (Open Waltz)

This last is also the music used for the very lovely "Good Night Waltz" taught by the Dunsings.

\* \* \*

ARZI RECORDS (recorded in Israeli)—These splendid recordings for Israeli Dances will find hearty reception wherever these dances are used. At Folk Dance Camp Dvora Lapson featured "The Song of Songs" Album—modern Israeli songs and dances based on Biblical themes played by The Jerusalem Broadcasting Symphony Orchestra, with Soprano Naomi Zuri adding vocal interpretations. Included are

770—Dodi Li/769—Iti Milvanon

771—Ozi/776—Ana Halach Dodech

772—Im Barazim/777—El Ginat Egoz

A second album, Israeli Dances, was prepared under Dvora Lapson's supervision and contains dances already in use: Hakotzrim, Sissu ve Sissa; Hanoded; Harmonica; Mechol Ovadia; Debka Gilboa.

We doubt if these records can replace the Folkraft already in use. They are more "oriental" in flavor and well played.

\* \* \*

ISRAELI FOLK DANCES is a third album of Israeli dances, this time recorded by the Israel Music Foundation in New York City. Again the dances are more familiar but represent mostly dances grafted more definitely upon older Eastern European roots than Palestinian and Yemenite strains. Historically these are the first efforts to build a folklore for the new nation as it emerges from ancient sources. Included are

114—Mayim/Hanoded

115—Hora Aggadati/Sherele

166—M Hoopalnu/Cherkassiya

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# ZDRAVO!

# CASTANET PLAYING

By GRACE PERRYMAN

Castanets, those noisy little bits of wood held in the dancers' hands, have always been a source of wonder and delight to the spectator; and quite obviously also a delight and a satisfaction to the dancer as well since they have been used since ancient times and their exact origin has been lost.

Castanets are found in ancient Greek friezes, Egyptian paintings, and Chinese scrolls, and today at least one Arabian claims that castanets, "like practically everything else, originated with the Arabs." In modern times they are not used universally but castanets are perhaps the most characteristic accessory of the Spanish dance. Andalusians call them *palillos*; Valencians call them *postizos*; Aragonese call them *pulgaretes*; Castilians call them *castanuelas*; and, foreigners call them castanets. Castanet is not a Spanish word.

Castanets range in shape, in quality, and in size, but they must fit the hand to be used properly. Therefore the perfect pair of castanets for you can only be found by playing them yourself. Herewith are directions for playing the castanets in the "classic" style. The "peasant" style is to tie the castanet on the middle finger, which produces a single flat sound, not unpleasing in groups, but lacking the variation and ringing trill of the classic style.

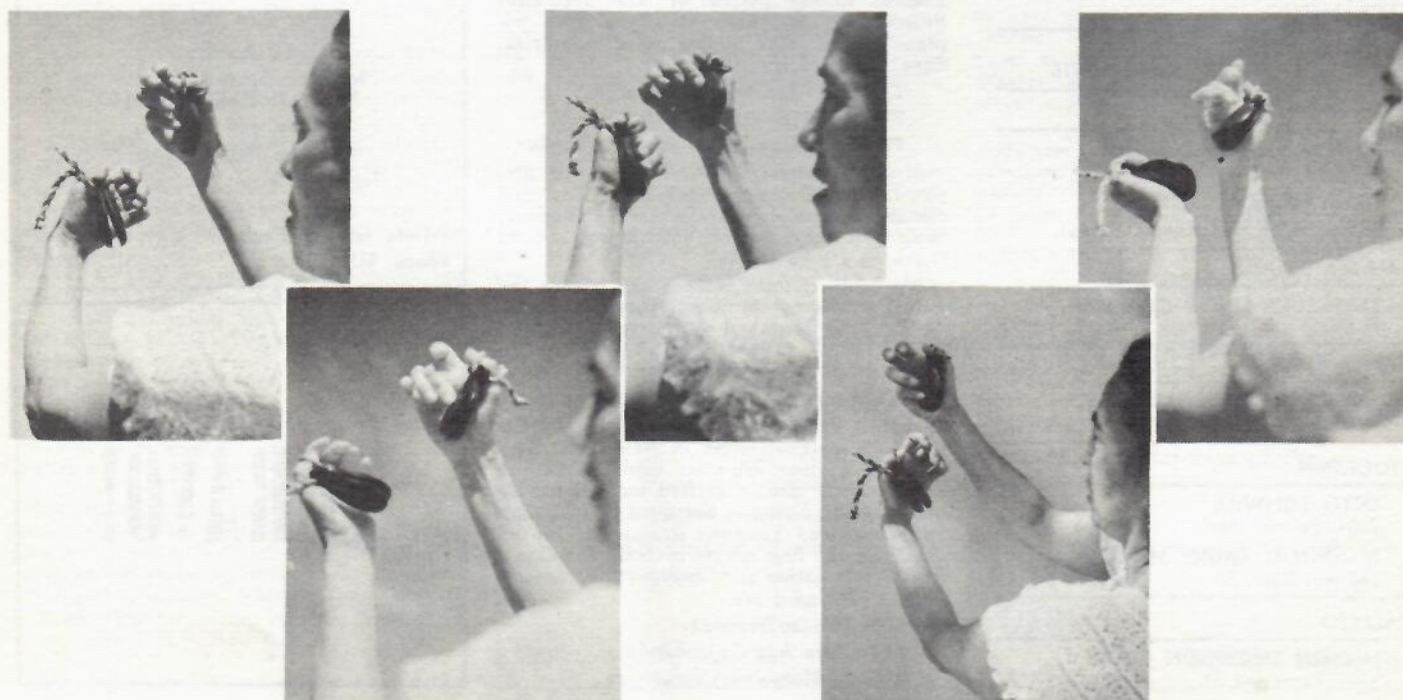
A pair of castanets consists of four shells, two for each hand. The two shells are fastened to the thumb by a string which passes over the thumb and above the first knuckle. Each end of the string then passes through holes at the top of the shells, which are held below the thumb, and one end ties around the other to form a slip knot on top of the thumb below the first knuckle. The string is pulled tightly so that the tips of the shells are apart. This will make the castanets ring and give good control. Cotton strings are best, having the least tendency to slip.

The left hand castanet should be lower in tone since it carries the accent of the rhythm. Listen to your castanets and mark the higher toned one with a nick in the wood at the top of each shell; this will be

your right hand castanets. It is practically impossible to obtain this variation in tone in plastic castanets, therefore wooden ones will give your castanet playing more interest and variety in tone and rhythm. However, castanets to be played well must fit your hand, and since wooden castanets are expensive it is well to learn the techniques with a plastic pair. Then when purchasing your "elegant" wooden castanets you will be able to play them. Be sure they are comfortable on your hand, and listen to their tone. Remember the tone of new wooden castanets will mellow with use. If the castanet sound has a ringing

(Continued on Page Twelve)

The Author Demonstrates Castanet Playing





# FASCINATION TANGO

(An Old Time English Dance)

The originator of this dance is F. Holmes of Sheffield, England. It was introduced to the Folk Dance Federation of California by Lucile K. Czarnowski at a teachers' institute held in conjunction with the 1952 Statewide Festival in Oakland. It was presented as learned from Harold P. Evans, old time dance specialist of Victoria, B.C.

Characteristics of the dance deserving comment are: (1) the unity of music and dance pattern which prevents substitution of music without destroying the quality of the dance, (2) the frequent use of *diagonal* directions in the floor track.

MUSIC: Record: Columbia DX 1558 (Tango Fascination).

FORMATION: Couples in usual social dance, tango position, M facing LOD, W back to LOD.  
Description will be for the man, woman dancing counterpart. Exceptions will be given.

STEPS: Walk, Point and Chasse (Step, close, Step).

MUSIC 2/4	PATTERN	Count Slow, Quick
Measures		
	I. <i>WALK, DIAGONAL CHASSE</i>	
1	M starting L ft, W R ft, take 2 steps in LOD.	S., S.
2	Step L ft to side, close R to L, finish facing diagonally outward twd wall. Step L ft back and draw R twd L in short point-pos. W steps fwd R, moving L twd R with a "tilting action."	Q., Q. S.
3	M moves diagonally twd wall two steps - R L, steps sdwd R with R and closes L to R ft.	S., S. Q., Q.
4	M steps R ft to side, turning sharply to his L. As R takes the weight, L is drawn toward it in short point. Finish in promenade position - that is, M R, W L hips are touching, bodies in "V" shape open pos, fwd hands joined.	S.
	II. <i>PROMENADE, OPEN AND CLOSED POSITIONS</i>	
5	Moving diagonally fwd twd center of room M short step swd. Cross R over L, commencing to turn R. W cross L over R, commencing to turn L.	S. S.
6	M step L ft to side still turning, release R hand. Both are now moving bwd diagonally to center. M L, W R hips adjacent. M L hand holding W R hand. M R hand on hip. W holding skirt. Step bwd, M R, W L - fall away position. Step bwd, M L, W R. M draw R, W L ft to slightly crossed position in front of standing foot. Moving in a diagonal direction to the wall against LOD (CW).	Q. Q. Q.
7	M steps R fwd, W L. M cross L over R, commencing to turn L. W reverse.	S. S.
8	Step R to side still turning, W L to side still turning R. Take closed position, tango hold. Both are now facing diagonally fwd to center. Moving bwd two steps M L, R, W R, L. M draw L to slightly crossed, pointed pos in front of R ft. Toe only touching floor. W opp.	Q. Q., Q. Q.
	III. <i>CROSSING STEPS AND POINT</i>	
9	Moving diagonally twd center of room M short step swd with L ft, W opp. M step R ft over L, W L ft over R, each turning one-eighth turn to face partner.	S. S.
10	M cross L over R facing twd wall (back to center), W R over L, facing twd wall. M cross R over L, turning slightly to L. W cross L over R, turning slightly to R.	S. S.
11	M step L fwd diagonally twd wall. W steps R ft back (hip contact, L with L). M point R ft short step diagonally fwd, incline body twd pointed foot. W points L short step diagonally bwd L, turn head and shoulders twd pointed foot.	S. S.
12	M step R fwd diagonally to wall, straighten body. W step L ft back, straighten body. M turning slightly L on ball of R ft to face diagonal center point L ft short step to side, incline body twd pointed foot. W turn slightly R on ball of L ft to face center, point R short step to side, incline body twd pointed foot. Take crossing steps with loose hold and pointing steps with hip contact. Keep knees "easy" on crossing steps.	S. S.

## FASCINATION TANGO--Continued

MUSIC 2/4	PATTERN	Count Slow, Quick
	<b>IV. QUICK PROMENADE, WITH TURNS</b>	
13	Moving diagonally fwd twd center of room M short step sdwd L, W opp.	Q.
	Cross R over L, turning to R three-eighths turn. Release R hand and place on hip. W does opp and holds skirt with L hand. Both now have back twd diagonal center.	Q.
	In open position both step bwd, M L, W R. M slides R foot to pointed position in front of L, W opp.	S.
14	M step fwd R, W step with L, turning to L under M raised L arm.	Q.
	M step L fwd, turning strongly to L to face almost diagonally to center. W continuing to turn L steps R ft to side and back, facing LOD and back to partner.	Q.
	M steps R ft bwd, take tango hold, finish diagonal to center in promenade pos. W step L ft bwd, take tango hold.	S.
15	M step L fwd diagonally to center, W R.	S.
	M cross L ft with R, W with L, and check (slight bend of knee).	S.
16	M transfer wt back to L ft, commencing to turn W to her L. W transfers wt back to R, turning to L.	S.
	M steps R ft back against LOD. W faces partner, turning on ball of R ft, brushing L ft to R as she turns and steps L fwd twd M. (This last step the English call a slip pivot.)	S.

## CASTANET PLAYING

(Continued from Page Ten)

quality it will become a rounded tone even though it may be shrill when new.

### SOUNDS OF CASTANETS

**Right or "tic"** Holding the right hand relaxed, the palm perpendicular to the floor, throw the hand backward from the wrist, at the same time closing the fingers. This brings the shells together with a single sound ("tic") between the finger tips and the heel of the hand (it is not necessary to use all of the fingers).

**Left or "toc"** Same action as above but done with the left hand.  
**"Tic-toc"** Same action as above but alternating the hands and making a variation in tone since the right is higher in tone than the left.

**Both Roll** Same action as above using both hands simultaneously. Holding the right hand still, strike the shell with the tip of the little finger to make a sound and immediately release it; then strike the shell with the third finger and release; then the second finger and release; then the first finger and hold it against the shell to prevent further sound from the right while striking the left with a "toc." The roll has five distinct sounds done to one beat of music, so the motion of the right hand fingers must be very quick and the left hand sound follow at the same tempo.

### Crash

Keeping the hands relaxed so that the shells are apart, strike the two castanets against each other.

These sounds are now put together in patterns to fit the music and the character of the dance. They may be further varied by playing the castanets softly or loudly. There is usually one sound for each beat of the music.

Some patterns for castanet playing at different tempos:

Waltz—musical counts 1 2 3 1 2 3  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  castanets Both left roll Both left roll etc.

Corrido 1 2 1 2  
 $\frac{2}{4}$  Roll tic-toc Roll tic-toc etc.

Jota 1 2 3 4 4 6 1  
 $\frac{6}{8}$  Both left roll left roll both Both etc.

Paso doble 1 2 3 4 5 6 1  
 $\frac{6}{8}$  or  $\frac{2}{4}$  Roll roll tic-toc both both roll Roll etc.

Waltz ending 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  Both left roll Both hold crash Both hold hold

Now all you need is practice and plenty of it. Feel free to put together your own patterns, but practice to music (any music); it will keep your rhythms steady. Good luck!



RESEARCH COMMITTEE: Helen  
Perry, Vernon Kellogg, Carol Squires

## LA MESTICITA

(Mexican Folk Dance from Yucatan)

SOURCE: "Mexican Folk Dances," M. Sedillo. Research by Letitia Innis.  
MUSIC: Record: La Mesticita—Imperial 1083B.  
Music: Mexican and New Mexican Dances—M. Sedillo.  
FORMATION: Couples side by side in a line. W in front of partners, hands joined in Varsouvienne position. Dancers move sedately and with dignified posture through the dance patterns.  
STEPS: Running Waltz\*, Waltz Balance\*, Step-hop-tap, Step-hop-step. Swing-hop.

MUSIC 3/4		PATTERN
Measures	1-8	Introduction. Dancers stand in formation.
		I. <i>Waltz and Separate</i>
A.	1-8	Partners move fwd with 8 small waltz balance steps, no body sway—both start R.
	9-16	Separate from partner (hands high at shoulder height) and turn slowly CW with 8 waltz balance steps. M moving toward original position. Finish in 2 lines, about 4 ft apart.
		II. <i>Step-Hop and Tap</i>
		Partners face each other. W holds skirt with both hands, M has his thumbs in his belt.
B.	1	Step R (ct 1), hop R (ct 2), tap L toe in front of R (weight on R) (ct 3).
	2	Repeat Fig. II, meas. 1, starting L.
	3-6	Repeat Fig. II, meas. 1 and 2 twice, advancing toward partner.
	7-8	Four light stamps bringing partners' R shoulders together.
	9-16	Repeat action Fig. II, meas. 1-8, continuing in same direction and crossing into opposite position. Turn CW to face partner on 4 stamps.
	17-32	Repeat entire Fig. II, returning to place.
		III. <i>Cross Back-Hop, Step</i>
C.	1	Partners facing, both move to own R. Step L back of R (ct 1), hop L, raising R knee slightly in front (ct 2), step twd R (ct 3).
	2-3	Repeat action Fig. III, meas. 1, twice.
	4	Step L back of R (ct 1), step R beside L (ct 2), step fwd L (ct 3).
	5-8	Repeat Fig. III, meas. 1-4, moving to own L, starting with R ft.
	9-12	Repeat Fig. III, meas. 1-4, turning in place to R (CW), start L ft.
	13-16	Repeat Fig. III, meas. 1-4, turning in place to L (CCW), starting R ft.
	17-32	Repeat entire Fig. III, meas. 1-16.
		IV. <i>Partners Waltz</i>
A.	1-8	On meas. 1 partners move toward each other with one waltz step. Cross R wrists, palms out, elbows bent shoulder height and turn CW with 7 running waltz steps, starting R ft.
	9-16	Cross L wrists and turn CCW with 8 running waltz steps.
	17-24	In closed dance position, partners turn CW in place 8 waltz steps.
	25-31	Partners separate, hands high as in Fig. I, turn CW in place with 7 waltz balance steps.
	32	Face partners, step R (ct 1), hold (ct 2), swing L leg bwd (ct 3).

## LA MESTICITA--Continued

MUSIC 3/4	PATTERN
B.	<p>V. <i>Quarter Turn Around Partner</i></p> <p>1 Step L in back of R (ct 1), (both making a quarter turn to L still facing each other), hop L (ct 2), step fwd R (ct 3).</p> <p>2 Step back L (ct 1), step R beside L (ct 2), step fwd L (ct 3).</p> <p>3-4 Repeat Fig. V, meas. 1-2, starting R (omit the quarter turn).</p> <p>5-6 Repeat Fig. V, meas. 1-2, starting L (omit the quarter turn).</p> <p>7 Three light stamps (R, L, R), moving toward partner.</p> <p>8 Stamp R (ct 1), keeping weight on R, hold (ct 2), swing L leg bwd (ct 3).</p> <p>9-16 Repeat Fig. V, meas. 1-8, making a quarter turn to L on ct 1, meas. 9.</p> <p>17-32 Repeat entire Fig. V, meas. 1-16. Dancers travel around a square to the R always facing partner, making a quarter turn to L on ct 1 of meas. 1, 9, 17, 25.</p>
	<p>VI. <i>Swing-Hop with Turn-Waltz and Pose</i></p> <p>C. 1 Partners facing. Swing R leg bwd (ct 1), hop L (ct 2), swing R ft fwd brushing floor (ct 3).</p> <p>2 Hop L (ct 1), swing R across in front of L, slapping floor with R ft (ct 2), tap R toe in front of L (ct 3), weight on L ft.</p> <p>3-4 Step R and at same time swing L leg bwd (ct 1) to repeat meas. 1-2.</p> <p>5-8 Repeat Fig. VI, meas. 1-4.</p> <p>9-12 Repeat Fig. VI, meas. 1-4, W making a complete turn CCW, M dancing in place.</p> <p>13-16 Repeat Fig. VI, meas. 1-4, M making a complete turn CCW, W dancing in place.</p> <p>17-20 Repeat Fig. VI, meas. 1-4, W turning CCW, M dancing in place.</p> <p>21-24 Repeat Fig. VI, meas. 1-4, M turning CCW. On meas. 23-24 W makes a half turn CCW to finish with back to partner.</p> <p>25-30 Partners in Varsouvienne position move fwd with 6 waltz balance steps, starting R.</p> <p>31-32 Finish with 4 light stamps moving fwd slightly and pose.</p>

## NOTES ON TEACHING BEGINNERS

By DANNY McDONALD

So much interest in beginners item in *Let's Dance!*—leaders asking for more information about starting classes—that we hope to continue our suggestions through this column of our wonderful magazine. Individual correspondence is prohibitive, so please take it from here and prove it to yourself and your area that "Beginner Guidance" is the answer to increased registration.

Take the list as printed June, 1952, issue. First three dances the first night are side by side, same foot type, answer to the extra girl problem, etc., take one-half hour for each dance by using everyone in a single circle for convenience—teach them to shift weight, walking, heel, toe and a step, step, step, then do the same with music. When you see they are in fairly good time, then, and not until then, have them take position and walk through the progressive style of the dance several times.

Now they are ready for the music and you will be pleased to see a happy group of be-

ginners who know what they are doing and if they want to, let them repeat it, this time strictly on their own. A good leader will also stay off mike when a new group ends a dance, at least until they let off a little steam, be ready for the first lull, which usually comes in about 10 seconds and you will have their attention. After they have repeated the Oklahoma Mixer be sure to give them a couple of minutes' rest to find their own partners.

Now you are ready for the California Schotische, using the same circle system, follow up with Varsouvienne, same way. Use the last one-half hour for square dance fundamentals in a circle only, no squares formed until about the third week. Teach them walking style, allemandes, right and left grand, the other way back, etc., four count into the middle and out, single couple do-sa-do, no swing the first night.

Second week review the first three dances, add the next two. The square section should now include two couples in circle facing in and out, review allemande, teach swings, four hand do-sa-do's and do-pas-so's, star and cage

figures, change and swing from star, etc. For variety have all couples move one to the left, join hands and circle and repeat figures with new couples. More emphasis on figures than swinging, remember, they're our new friends!

Third week repeat first and second and add the next two dances. Teach the two-step before showing the Roberts. Now they should be ready for a simple square, using only the figures you have previously taught.

Fourth week, drop the first three, review the others and add the next three. Don't worry them with the true waltz step for At the Inn.

Try to keep partners together for couple dances.

Fifth night add one hour and review the first ten dances. Go right into Mayim-Mayim, now rest up while you work on the waltz step before Black Hawk Waltz.

If you only develop one folk dancer a week, that's 50 a year and if 20 teachers did the same it adds up to 1,000 new dancers! It can be done and a hundred teachers can do this as well as one, but we must have a plan.



# MATERIAL FROM THE SQUARE DANCE SECTION OF STOCKTON FOLK DANCE CAMP

EDITED BY JACK McKAY

## ENDS TURN IN

1. First and third balance and swing
2. Into the center and back again
3. Into the center turn back to back  
(*With partner*)
4. Split your corners to the outside track
5. To lines of four  
(*Walk between side couples, lady turns right, man left to form lines of four*)
6. Forward eight and eight fall back
7. Pass right through but don't turn back
8. Join your hands and the ends turn in  
(*Side couples raise joined hands to make an arch, active people walk under the arch into the center of the square*)
9. Circle four in the middle of the floor
10. Go once around and then turn no more
11. Pass right through, and split that couple that's facing you
12. Form lines of four
13. Forward eight and eight fall back
14. Pass right through but don't turn back
15. Join your hands and the ends turn in
16. Circle four in the middle of the floor
17. Once around and then no more
18. Pass right through to an allemande left
19. Right to your partner, grand right and left.

## PIN WHEEL

1. Allemande left and how do you feel
2. A right to your lady for the old pin wheel  
(*A once and a half or elbow hook*)
3. A left to the next like an old fashioned reel
4. A right to the next and all the way round
5. Left round the next and don't fall down
6. A right to the next and give her a flip
7. It's a wagon wheel so let's be gay
8. The gents star left and roll it away
9. The girls reverse, go the other way round
10. Meet your honey with a right hand round
11. Corner left and don't be shy
12. Partner right, but pass her by
13. The right hand lady with the left hand around
14. Do-sa partners, all the way around
15. Promenade your corners as they come down.

Repeat three times

## DON'T JUST STAND

ORIGINAL BY JACK HOHEISAL

1. Head gents to the center for a left hand swing
  2. Turn once and a half in the middle of the ring
  3. Then docey round that girl across (T)
  4. Back to the center and don't get lost
  5. Turn once and a half and hang on tight
  6. To a line of four—take your partners right
  7. Balance forward—balance back
  8. Swing half around to the outside track
  9. Balance again—don't just stand
  10. Then walk right ahead to a left allemande  
(*And any desired break*)
- Repeat with four gents active and change lines 1 and 2 as follows:
1. Four gents to the center for a left hand star
  2. Turn once and a half from where you are
- Repeat with side gents active and then all four again  
Can make ladies active by changing line 10:
10. Now a right hand swing to a left allemande

NOTE: A forearm grip is recommended in center for 2 gents (or ladies), as this is easy to slide into a hand grip for the ballnet.

## ALAMO SQUARE

1. All 4 couples half-sashay
2. Go up to the center and back that way
3. Now allemande left in Alamo style
4. And you stop right there and balance awhile
5. You balance in and you balance out
6. You turn with the right hand half about
7. Then you balance out and you balance in
8. You turn with the left and the 4 gents chain
9. Across the set and don't you smile
10. To an allemande left in Alamo style
11. Repeat lines 5 thru 8
12. Across the set to a left allemande then R & L grand
13. Repeat 3 more times.

## CONTRA

OLD COUNTRYMAN'S REEL

1-3-5 etc. couples active. Do NOT cross over.  
\*Active lady down the center with gent below

— — — —

— — Same way back

— — Ladies cast off

And partners down the center

— — — —

— — Same way back

— — — —

Gents cast off & forward and back

— — — —

Half right & left across

— — — —

— — Go forward & back

— — — —

— — Half right & left

— — Active lady

Down the center with gent below

\*This line given before music starts.

— Indicates "accented beats."

## BETWEEN THE SIDES AND FORWARD SIX

1. Couple number one you balance and swing
2. Down the center and split the ring
3. Lady go right and the gent go left
4. Between the sides and stand in line
5. Forward six
6. Fall back six
7. Swing your partner once and a half
8. To the opposite sides and stand in line
9. Forward six
10. Fall back six
11. Swing in the center and circle six
12. Circle six then everybody
13. Allemande left . . . etc.

# OUR FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS

## From Manila...

It might interest you to know that my class presented as its contribution to the 1952 Dance and Gymnastic Festival of the National College of Physical Education American square dances which I called "Western Medley." It was a combination of Texas Star, California Fruit Basket, Birdie in the Cage, and The Route. I incorporated those twirls which you Californians do so well. The number was well received and I noticed how particularly thrilled were the Americans in the audience. Your books were a great help to me. Incidentally, may I add that we just finally "discovered" a native dance of decidedly American origin at our latest festival of the Philippine Folk Dance Society. It is called the "Virginia" and is very much like the American Virginia Reel in formation, sequence, and mood, although the steps and music have been "Filipinized."

The physical educators and dance people from here have not put out any official records of folk dance music. However, certain private companies pressed some native folk songs and a handful of folk dance music mainly for commercial use over the radio and for home entertainment. I scouted downtown for those records you talked about and I discovered there are some records of native music which are also used for some of our dances but, as I have mentioned, they were not recorded for dance purposes and might not be exactly what you are looking for. However, I bought a record of Tinikling music played by a local rondalla or native string ensemble. I found the music well presented. As I said, this record was not pressed with an eye to a folk dancing class. However, there is a regular alternation of themes A and B and while I do not remember how many repetitions were made, I leave it to your judgment to make the necessary adjustments when you use it for your parties and programs.

You can be assured, however, of the genuineness of the local color of the music. I like particularly the record at the back. There is a vocal refrain and I find the music rather fetching. It is the music to "Subli," one of our "newer" Philippine dances. It has not been published in either *Philippine National Dances* or *Philippine Folk Dances*. Incidentally, it makes use of the Philippine castanets.

I am still anxious for pictures of Americans doing our dances in Filipino costumes.

CELIA OLIVAR  
1070-C Pennsylvania St.  
Malate, Manila, Philippines

## From Tokyo...

Since you carried an article on our club in your January, 1952, issue, we have been visited by many folk dancers who pass through Tokyo, mostly on their way to less attractive frontiers. We think you might be surprised at how many of your readers find themselves, voluntarily or not, in this part of the world. That is why we like every opportunity to pass the word that the "Tokyo Gate Swingers" meet on every Tuesday—and the welcome mat is always out.

JoAnne and I are returning to the States for home leave this summer. We hope to bring back to Japan, for our next tour of duty, a lot of new dances and ideas. We are particularly interested in the Sacramento Beginners' Program and how closely its aims and methods compare with those we have been using here for the past two years. In many respects, Tokyo is a remarkable example of the importance of such programs, and a test-bed for their workability. The American component of the population is discouragingly transient, and the isolation from folk dancing influences, from clubs other than our own, is complete.

We are also looking for ideas and assistance to help folk dancing among the Japanese. They are enormously interested, but truly need help and guidance.

Incidentally, in your January issue, you insisted I was "Jerry." I insist I am "Larry." Don't ask me how the nickname started; the story is long and not that interesting.

F. R. "LARRY" KEITHLEY  
Pan American Airways, Tokyo



Lucile Arlington, who met folk dancing in Japan when she enrolled as a charter member of the pioneer group in Tokyo, the "Gateswingers," steps right up for a pretty little whirl with Bob Burtcher, "on leave" from the San Francisco "Gateswingers" group, while he does a tour in Uncle Sugar's Navy. Photo by Bill Flack.



A couple of California Dancers whirl in a "Scandinavian Polka" at the "Gateswingers" Party in Tokyo. Betty Wagner, formerly active in dance groups in Pittsburg, California, and Bob Burtcher, member of the "Gateswingers" of San Francisco, travelled 6000 miles to have this dance together. Photo by Okey King.





## AROUND THE SQUARE SET

By PEG ALLMOND

On the bulletin board of THE MARWEDEL DANCE STUDIO in Salt Lake City there was a nicely decorated sign that said "LET'S DANCE—FUN FOR ALL" and a copy of the latest *Let's Dance!* with subscription blanks on a thumb tack. ARE YOU DOING YOUR BIT to get the members of YOUR club on the subscription list of our magazine?

In 1951 BEA CULVER came down from Alaska to attend Folk Dance Camp and when she was introduced she said she went to Alaska on her honeymoon and "five years and four boys later" she decided to come back to California, and while here attended Folk Dance Camp. A birth notice in the mail announcing TWIN BOYS—"Gary and Jack"—gave the reason why Bea was not present in the 1952 encampment. Guess she is a busy gal. When the Culvers get together they have quite a crowd!

When the Brookfield school auditorium is used for the monthly party of the HARMONY HOEDOWNERS it bulges at the seams with visitors on account of the wording of the invitations that go out. They include the generous invitation to groups to "come and bring a square."

When a traveler goes through CANON CITY, COLORADO, he receives a little newspaper with the heading WELCOME TO CANON CITY across the whole front page. In the particular issue I received the notice that caught my eye was on the front page—SQUARE DANCING EVERY WEDNESDAY! The local Jaycees and the Canon City Recreation Committee sponsor the dances. The Jaycees provide the supervision and equipment including the public address system and the Recreation Committee hires the band. Both amateur and professional callers are used. Dances are held on the tennis courts of Rudd Park, and are open to the public, free of charge. Put this item in your date book when you go traveling that-a-way.

The July party of the FORTY-NINERS SQUARE DANCE GROUP was a lulu! They had visitors from Minneapolis, Minnesota, Red Bluff, Oakland, and San Leandro. New officers to the executive board were presented. They were: New president, Gene George of San Rafael; secretary, Carl Brogger; party chairman, Opal Bischoff; new board member, Mike Bischoff. All advanced square dancers are welcome to visit the Thursday night class and also party night, which is the third Saturday of each month. Bill Castner is the group leader. Locale of the group is South San Francisco in the Buri Buri School Auditorium.

Without explanation, AL THYM disappeared from the sessions at Folk Dance Camp—and when he returned to the campus he

## MAIL BAG

(Continued from Page Eight)

### NO SUMMER CAMP AT GILROY

This summer the Gilroy Gliders have made an interesting and highly successful experiment with their club program. Instead of taking a "vacation as usual," the club organized a class for beginners and brought Ace and Marge Smith from Salinas to instruct and arranged for the use of the band room at the High School. The first two hours (and refreshments) are for any who wish to attend and our writer met dancers from Salinas, Hollister and Morgan Hill. This period is for "fundamentals" and the more simple dances. After refreshments the "old timers" dance another hour—without instruction. The average attendance exceeds 80. Thirty-five new members have joined the Gliders and 23 more prospects are attending regularly. Prexy "Chet" Davis considers the class "the best thing that has happened to us." The club is planning a big night at the Santa Clara County Fair and they plan to feature "Let's Dance!"

\* \* \*

We report with great regret the untimely death of a former Federation officer, Heidi Schmidt of Sacramento. While Heidi had not been dancing for over a year, she is well remembered and her passing is a great shock to many.

announced the arrival of a baby girl. Both mamma and baby are doing well.

At the last party of the FOLK DANCERS GUILD, members were delightfully surprised to hear of the engagement of MISS CHARLOTTE JOHNSON to ROBERT LINE. Charlotte has been teaching folk dancing classes of the Richmond Evening Schools for four years and has hundreds of friends. President LEN MURPHY CALLED THE SQUARES at the party, and guests included ART GIBBS of Portland and "MITCH" MITCHELL of The Dalles, Oregon. To add enjoyment to the evening, JACK YOUNG found himself guest of honor for his own birthday party—with a beautifully decorated cake large enough to serve 100 made by his wife, Juanita. They do things up in a big way when the Guild entertains.

During the 53rd Annual Conference of the Young Men's and Young Women's Mutual Improvement Associations (of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints) held at Salt Lake City in June, they had a dance festival with dancers from one hundred forty-one stakes. Each stake had at least one square of dancers—some more—and the caller of squares was LAWRENCE E. WALKER. The festival was held in the stadium of the University of Utah. The festival dancing was of exhibition caliber, since the stakes in every state of the Union knew ahead of time what was to be danced, squares and rounds, and so came prepared to turn in a beautiful performance.

Only American dance number of the program of the Eighth Annual Folk Dance Exhibition held in Woodminster Amphitheatre was that of the LARIAT SWINGERS of Salinas. American Squares, called by Ace Smith—with Ace and dancers all dressed in that eyetaking, glamorous black light material—spectacular, to say the least! Bill Castner was narrator of the program, and George Skopecek was chairman. The evening was cool, and a full moon added just the right touch for an outdoor performance.

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# Notes on TWO PUERTO RICAN DANCES

By LISA LEKIS

**A**BOUT a hundred years ago, while events in the United States were forming a prelude to the War Between the States, Puerto Rico still remained a jewel in the crown of a still strong Spanish Empire. While the young nation to the north was pushing west and ever expanding its frontiers, in the islands of the Caribbean life proceeded at its usual dignified and leisurely pace, punctuated by fiestas as colorful as old Spain, enhanced by melody as lovely and romantic as any ever written.

Among the colonials, the aristocrats had been dancing and singing music imported from Europe for some time, leaving the truly native folk dances to the Jibaros or the more humble people from the hills and mountains. But even the beautiful Contradanza and the stately Minuet could not long resist the influence of the Caribbean and even they acquired characteristics which separated them from Europe and identified them with Puerto Rico.

But even though fashion dictated that music and dance be brought from Europe, into this setting of natural beauty and gracious living was born a melody and a dance which drew its inspiration from the very people and the island itself, a music that is still a vital and living description of the Puerto Rico of a century past. In the music there is nostalgia, in the dance there is romance. Today it is remembered and thought of as the truly national dance of Puerto Rico—a remembrance of days past—the Danza Puertorriquena.

Originally, so the story goes, a Puerto Rican regiment was stationed some time in Cuba where one and all became intoxicated with the rhythms of a Cuban dance—the Upa. When the regiment returned to Puerto Rico, the dance came with them. However, the Upa was not destined to long and easy life. Almost immediately it was banned as being immoral (although it is difficult to see why), later it was rewritten, discarded, revived, and, in general, it is doubtful that it could have been recognized within a few years by the most discerning Cuban. Due to the prohibition imposed, the Upa was interpolated into the music of the Contradanza and generally done by the most elegant society, but after a few years both dance and music rapidly changed to become entirely Puerto Rican in character.

The surge of popularity of the Danza Puertorriquena, as it was christened, was due not in a small part to a group of gifted composers whose work made the music of the Danza among the most beautiful in the world. However, not only professional songwriters wrote Danzas. The music became so universally accepted in Puerto Rico that it became a custom for nearly every young man to compose a Danza as a tribute to his sweetheart. (It is probably most fortunate that many of these have been lost.)

The dance as done in the highest society was delicately performed with many languid

turns in an aristocratic and formal manner. The ladies carried fans which became a regular accessory of the Danza, not only for their practical use in a tropic climate but as a delightful means of flirtation in the language of the fan. The Danza, however, was not confined to the elite for long. In a very short time, the strains of the music could be heard in every part of Puerto Rico, in the plazas on Sundays, at all the local fiestas, and, of course, it is sure that the stillness of the tropic nights was often broken by young men serenading their ladies with the romantic Danza melodies. Many towns held Danza contests and it was here that many varieties of step were invented.

In any case, although there was a certain contrast between the formal drawing rooms with the melodic chords of stringed instruments and the sometimes badly-played wind instruments which were then making their appearance in the country bands, the dance was always performed in a rather rigid, formal manner suitable to the thought and custom of the times. The Danza is a dance of restraint and has none of the qualities so often associated with Caribbean dancing as exemplified by the Rumba, Bolero, and the more recent Mambo. It is fundamentally a reflection of its time and custom, and, in these days of hurry, anxiety and pressure, it is good to look back upon life as it once was.

**T**HE beginning of a new century brought a new flag, a new nationality and a different life to Puerto Rico. The Spanish-American War was over and here it meant the death of a whole way of life. Many of the old customs no longer fitted into the new way of living. The Americans from the north were a different people, and, for most of them, the formalized patterns of living that were a part of the Spanish heritage of Puerto Rico formed no part of their backgrounds.

All in all, the new century brought change—widespread and fundamental. Many of the younger generation in Puerto Rico welcomed and accepted new ways and new customs, but for them, consequently, the Danza no longer represented their feelings. This new life had something in it more vigorous, more intense than the old polite ways of society.

And so came a dance and music representative of its generation—La Plena. It is a dance of wild contrasts, frivolous at times, intense at others, but always playful. It is everything that the Danza is not. And, actually, it came from different people. For generations in the islands of the West Indies, the Africans, imported years ago as slaves, had had their own music and dance, all of which have had the greatest influence not only on the dance of the West Indies and South America, but on the dance of the United States as well. While the Danza represented the highest and most elite society in Puerto Rico, and had its roots in the romantic string music of Spain, the Plena came from the common-people who were a mixture of In-

dia, Spain, and Africa. At times the music has rude and rather primitive accents, and, rather than being delicate and romantic, is sometimes loud and boisterous, the dance itself being sensual rather than romantic. Percussion instruments are always used, including home-made tambourines which sound very much like a drum.

Neither the music nor the dance has any set pattern of style as had the Danza. It is filled with variations determined entirely by whim, and the dancer has an opportunity to perform in a completely uninhibited manner—if the music is erratic, the dance may also be. Indeed, the improvisation possible is one of the most fascinating things of the Plena. Rarely can you see the dance done twice the same way. Even the theme of the song is different. While the Danza devoted itself to love and romance, the Plena themes are concerned with everyday events and the dance may be a caricature of one of these happenings. It may also be satirical and humorous but never romantic. The times of idealized romance were gone. This dance and its music represented a new generation and a new class of people. Many times the melody may be interrupted by wild sounds and laughter simply for the purpose of making noise and upsetting the mood already set by the melody.

The Plena really sets to music the rebellion against the Danza and all it stood for. It owes its existence to two main influences—racial and epocal. In all countries at the beginning of the 20th century there was a rise in what had been known as the lower or working classes, and, in Puerto Rico, it meant a greater recognition for persons of mixed blood and African heritage. In the United States, at the same time, similar racial groups were making their musical contributions in the form of the Cakewalk, and later the Charleston and the Jitterbug. For this group in Puerto Rico, the Plena was a means of expression to tell their story, and, for them, the Danza now lacked meaning. It would have been impossible for them to dance the stately Danza as it would have been for society half a century before to have danced the vastly undignified Plena. Both are representative of their times and their people, and both are completely and purely Puerto Rican.

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# FOLK DANCE CAMP--1952

In many ways the 1952 Camp was different. The level of dancing was again higher—the participation was even higher than usual. In a very marked way, specialization was also greater—with more simple routine dances predominating. Jane Farwell brought American Play Party Games, “dirty tricks to music,” with a contagious good humor that found all of us skipping around like mad. The Dunsings—Paul and Gretel—with their German Dances, kept a constant flow of good-natured banter as they gave us mostly new dances—fun to do, easy to take home, less exhibitionist in character. Anta Ryman (*note—spelling is correct this time*) brought us Swedish Dances with vigor and a fine play of humor. Catherine Ramsay (of the Royal Scottish Society) really worked over new muscles with Scottish Country Dances, while our own Lucile Czarnowski smoothed us out with her Early California Dances. Perhaps the most popular dance of all was the Israeli Dodi Li as taught by Dvora Lapson.

In general the pace was less hectic, the dances less vigorous and spectacular and the Camp spirit more full of contagious fun. This last became most noticeable in one or two assemblies in the Camp parties and the boat ride.

The Committee is trying to return to a few of the spectacular dances, but still retain all of this contagious fun, as they work on next year's camp faculty invitations—many of which have already been accepted.

The Square Dance section featured Ricky Holden, Herb Greggerson, Gus Empie, Bob Hager, Bill Barr, Jack McKay, and Vera Holleuffer. They were tops and sold squares most effectively at all Camp gatherings. Ralph Page continued the conquest of the West—with his New England Contras.

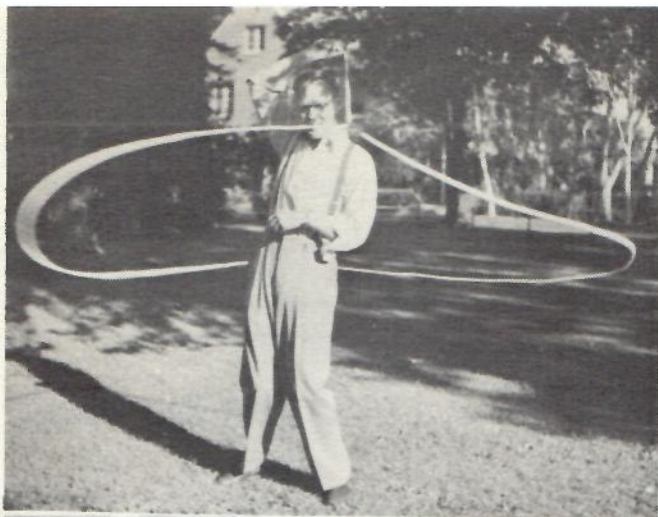
A spectacular feature of Camp was the making and twirling of lariats under the tutelage of Bob Hager—over a half mile of rope was made up into lariats. Gracie Perryman got most of the camp female contingent yak-yaking with castanets.

The sound system problem was greatly lessened by a “Gym-work out” by Bev Wilder and Jack McKay—but the closing Festival employed sound by “Lindsey of Redwood City”—the best we have seen or heard. With no distortion at the stadium, the music and calling were still distinct enough for dancing two miles away (A friend that far away wanted to know what record we used of “Alabama Gal” with the calls on it—merely Jane Farwell in action).

Eighteen colleges and universities were represented by faculty enrolled in camp as students, five came from foreign countries, sixteen different states, and eighty-five different California communities were represented.

Next month we will run an article on some of the fun and side lights of camp. Now, let's close this report with high praise to faculty (in many respects the best yet), to a swell bunch of campers and to the Committee—Mildred Buhler, Vera Holleuffer, Jack McKay, Walter Grothe, George Murton, and Ace Smith.

The pictures, top to bottom—Ed Kremers “puckers up to spin;” the faculty practices; the Dunsings play on their recorders; we disembark from the “Happy-Go-Lucky” at “Lost Isle” for a barbecue between sessions. Below, Bob Hager gives Jack and Walter a lesson; Jerri Joris (Lithuanian costume) brought good news from Vyts. Photos by A. C. Smith





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