

# People Worth Knowing

*By Carmen Schweers*

A person that is familiar to all the Northern California folk dancers, and who is always dressed in beautiful costumes, was born and raised near Santa Rosa. June Schaal (Shawl) of Vineburg, has been dancing since 1948. She and Wendell, her husband, had a part in the pageant of the history of Sonoma Valley that year. June was General Vallejo's daughter and Wendell was the son of Haraszthy, and they did a Heel and Toe polka in front of the Mission in the play. After that they started going to classes in Sonoma. Bernice Schram was the instructor.

About two years later June was asked to start a class of children from the Huichica School. Later, the Mothers' Club decided they wanted to learn to dance. In order to get the husbands to come too, they started a class on Friday nights. From then on the area around Vineburg was dancing with June as their instructor.

She started a group of youngsters, called "Lolly Pops" in dancing. Part of the time some of the youngsters weren't over three and a half years old. With the demand for more youngsters to be in the class, June got the Vineburg Hall near her home and began holding classes there. More children came and classes were divided and several groups were arranged for "Baby Pops", for parents who wanted to learn to folk dance, and for even a "Senior Citizen" Group. June has progressed from one class to one every night of the week (except Thursday), and sometimes two classes in one night.

Now June is on the dance staff of the Sonoma Branch of the San Francisco Conservatory. She has classes all day Friday, with youngsters from about seven through the teens, at the Sonoma Community Center. These classes are in addition to all her own classes in her studio at the Vineburg Hall.

June has formed exhibition groups from her many classes. The "Lolly Pops" danced for Woodminster one year and on television. Her adult Exhibition group is seen quite often at festivals. June does all the costume planning for her groups, and quite often she completes the sewing of them too. She makes all her own costumes, and Wendell's as well.

Since 1955 June has been a busy person, with her teaching, attending College of the Pacific, Institutes, Festivals, and her costume making. She is a past-Chairman of the Teachers' Institute Committee. She always has a big part in the Sonoma Vintage Festival, an annual affair. She attended the Teachers' Training classes held at Merced and Sacramento, and never missed a class at either one.

A hobby of June's is to invade rummage sales and store sales and the yardage counters, for costume materials, ready made skirts and blouses, for youngsters who might not be able to afford a costume, but would like to dance with the group. She has also started a Children's Costume Fund, with the help of the National Exchange Club, to provide costumes for children in the future who might not be able to afford one otherwise.

June and Wendell give a great deal of time to their folk dancing, but have time to run a General Store and take care of the Vineburg Post Office. If you want to have fun, attend one of the Third Friday parties June has at her Studio.

They entertain many friends, and to be a guest at their home and to eat Wendell's barbecued steak or chicken, is really a treat. They are fine people, and their many friends prove that they are well liked by all.



*June Schaal in Costume of Early California*