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CHRISTMAS



"At Christmas play and make good cheer,
Far Christmas comes but once a year."—Thomas Tusser.

A multitude of Santa Clauses descends upon our land to set up temporary stations in department stores and on street corners. Wreaths appear in windows, mechanical ingenuities attract crowds to show windows, community associations vie in producing wonderful and sometimes horrible street decorations. It is the Christmas season and America takes Christmas to its big, boisterous heart.

Folk dancers are interested in folk ways. We feel, too, that the origins of our customs and traditions are too often forgotten in our bland, forward-looking civilization. We are active supporters of the theory of cultural pluralism which may be the hope and the bright star of world unity. At Christmas, as in our dancing festivals, we may well dig a bit deeper into the roots of the folk inheritance culminating in our gayest national holiday.

We know, or may dimly realize that Christmas is more than a celebration of the birth of Christ at a date arbitrarily fixed by us as December 25. In prehistoric times the end of the year was the season of celebrations of the winter solstice. The Jewish Festival of Lights, the Scandinavian rites of the Frost King, the Druidic mysteries, the Roman Saturnalia, the Egyptian celebration of the birth of Hor-

us, were all well established before the inception of the Christmas feast.

The personification of the gift-giver has also had many names: There were the Wise Men who brought gifts to the Christ Child. In Spain the Wise Men still bring presents to children. In Italy La Befana seeks out infants' pockets to deposit sweets at Epiphany or Twelfth Night. In Russia, Baboushka slips toys under children's pillows as they sleep. In France, Tante Aria rides a donkey to fill children's shoes and stockings. In Hungary, the angels bring Christmas trees, while in Poland, the Mother Star appears with other celestial beings to dispense blessings and presents.

In Germany Kriss Kringle is often a girl wearing a crown. In Bulgaria Grandfather Koleda brings gifts, in Denmark it is the elf Julenissen, in Greece, Saint Basil, in Switzerland, St. Lucy and Father Christmas, in Finland, Ukko of the long white moustaches. In many European countries St. Nicholas rides on a white horse to distribute birch rods or gifts; while the jolly Santa Claus brought to America by the Dutch drives reindeer borrowed from some northern legend and distributes largess even more freely than did the Santa Nikalaus from whom he is descended.

Many pleasant or gruesome superstitions reminiscent of Hallowe'en are attributed to the Yule season in various countries. Other nations make Christmas

a serious religious day with fasting and church services, concentrating their gift-giving and gaiety on other days such as St. Nicholas Day, December 6; Twelfth Night or Epiphany, January 6; Boxing Day or St. Stephen's Day, December 26; St. Silvester's Eve, December 31; or St. Lucy's Day, December 13.

All of the accepted symbols of Christmas are surrounded by legend and history: the decorated tree, the star, the cradle or creche, the candle, the fire on the hearth, the bells, the holly and mistletoe, the wreaths, the carols, the Christmas card (which dates from 1845 in England) and the Christmas seal (first marketed in 1904 for a Danish charity).

For those of robust appetite—and all dancers are that—the tale of Christmas foods is a delight. Many nations have characteristic dishes considered especially appropriate to the season.

The plum pudding of England we know, at least in adapted form. The mince pie, which evolved from a shredded meat pie, has been known in England since medieval times. In Sweden a pig roasted whole with a red apple in his mouth is the equivalent of our Christmas turkey. Goose is the usual Danish meat at Christmas time, while in Czechoslovakia baked carp graces the holiday table. In Poland a special delicacy is *Golumpi* or stuffed cabbage, while in Rumania stuffed pig's stomach is cherished.

Many Christmas sweets are especially dedicated: the German gingerbread men and *Pfefferkuchen* and *Lebkuchen*, the *Fruchtbrod* or hot fruit cake of (Continued on Page Ten)



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California Folk Dance Festivities In Review

Harvest Festival Features Successful Cooperation

Appropriately clad scarecrows, corn stalks, brilliantly colored crepe paper, and gay autumn leaves brightened Echo Park Clubhouse in Los Angeles for the ninth folk dance festival. This was the first affair sponsored by the entire membership as host committee, in order to encourage contributions for the running expenses of our festivals. The huge crowd showed its appreciation by participating in the dances and folk singing, and by filling the little log cabin chimneys with over one hundred dollars.

It was a wonderful festival. We enjoyed the decorations and the dances chosen. The program included selection of a king and queen, prizes for costume originality to suggest authenticity, a Polka Cornstalk dance, and a spectacular exhibition by the Clan Campbell Dancers and Pipers, led by Bessie Jones. Folk singing was conducted by Esther Liptz and Jimmie Klein. Later there was a Schottische Contest. The Cleanup Committee, under the direction of David Slater, did an excellent job.

Probably much of the success was the result of the great care and rare tact shown by the festival chairman, Kay Pelton, diminutive wife of Allen Pelton, president of both the Pasadena Recreation Association and the FDFC. With inspired organization, Kay chose her chairmen so well, that all of the member groups were involved actively in making this our best festival so far.

The most noticeable thing about the day was the abundance of gay costumes. Ruth Berryhill's red velvet Greek gown was elaborately covered with gold coins for which she was crowned with a garland of flowers as Queen of the festival. The sequin-embroidered blue velvet Polish coat, striped trousers, and peacock feather worn by Manny Gerst won him the King's crown. Jo Blackburn was acclaimed as most original in the use of simple costume to suggest authenticity in a lovely white blouse and full white skirt with a four-inch blue border, accented by a charmingly simple black girdle. The Man's

award was received by Hensel Fremstad, who wore a blue satin Russian blouse, full black trousers and off-white spats to suggest boots.

Instead of record music for the more than one hundred dancers in the linked Hora, Ijoe Regenbogen, Joyce Ginsburg, Carl Savin, and Lillie Fialkoff, from Menorah Center chanted the Hebrew Zum-gali-gali and Havanagiloh, traditional Palestinian songs. Two sets of square dances, led by Carolyn Mitchell and Paul Little kept twenty sets going in dips and dives and ringo.

In the typical "broomstick" manner, cornstalks were vigorously passed as partners were tagged while the Beer Barrel Polka played. Those who were stuck with the stalks when the music stopped, dropped penny fines into the little red brick chimneys and returned to the dancing with undiminished enthusiasm. During the festival, refreshments were available in the kitchen, under the guidance of Vicki Davis. While dancers crowded down front, and the audience joined in wholeheartedly, Jimmy Klein and his guitar led the group in Blue-Tail Fly and Foggy Foggy Dew, and Esther Lipta led other songs.

So many fine dancers were on the floor that the judges had a difficult task in finding the best Schottische dancers. After much debate and assistance from the audience, Harriet Robinson and Keith Titmus won. Each winner of the evening was presented with a folk dance record certificate through the courtesy of the American Music Company.

San Jose Area Is Host For November Festival

Because we know how much work it must have involved, we all appreciated the unusually colorful decorations used for the Thanksgiving Festival held in San Jose Civic auditorium on November 17th, and hosted by three groups of this area: San Jose Polkateers, S. J. Adult Education Group, and S. J. State College Spartan Spinners.

Many things combined to make this a noteworthy festival, foremost among them being the presence of twelve folk dancers
(Continued on Page Three)

California Folk Dance Festivities In Review

Continued From Page Two)

from the Southern Section of the Federation, including Allen Pelton, President, and Virginia Anderson, Secretary. We were so glad to have them with us; and the informative and hopeful talks they gave us during the usual good council meeting point to sure and steady growth for the Southern Section, and close ties and real cooperation between the North and South.

Along with visitors from all over California, out-of-staters are being encountered at the festivals. There was at least one person from as far away as the state of Washington.

The November-Thanksgiving theme of this festival was so skillfully carried throughout all the arrangements, from the huge dance "calendar" with its autumn harvest scene picture, flanked by picket fences, corn stalks and pumpkins, to the "Thanksgiving Menu" form of the small dance programs, that everybody got into the festive spirit of things, and the afternoon's program went along at a fast pace.

We got a second helping of the sherbet (which was a magnificent exhibition of the Casino Czardas done in breath-taking costumes by the Palomarians) when two simpler versions of the czardas were demonstrated by the dancers from various clubs who have come to be known as "Chang's Tuesday-Nighters".

After this, Bennie Scorsur made a hit with the calling of his Wabash Cannonball (we've always said squares were our favorite vegetable!) and from there the program went on to its successful conclusion.

Following dinners at the various restaurants of the town, (San Joseans looked at us with expressions that plainly said they were not used to seeing folk dancers running around loose) we gathered again at the Men's Gym of San Jose State College and added that delightful postscript to any festival menu, the Evening Party, where enthusiasm did not run down until the last record had been stowed away in its case.

Thank you, San Jose, for a marvelous festival. We'll be looking forward to coming again!

EDNA SPALDING

FOLK DANCE FEDERATION OF CALIFORNIA

Abstracts of Council Meeting Minutes

Northern Section—

1. Meeting held in Civic Auditorium, San Jose, November 17.

2. "Let's Dance" group of Sacramento and the "Sequoia Swingers" of Porterville (70 miles south of Fresno) joined the Federation, and the Tulare Folk Dancers applied for membership.

3. The council voiced their approval for another Folk Dance Institute.

4. President Walter Grothe showed the plaque which was given to the Federation as an "Award of Merit" for participation in the recent San Mateo Floral Fiesta.

5. Allen Pelton, visiting president of the Southern Section, said a few words regarding the Southland organization and suggested that anyone visiting the Los Angeles area could find a list of folk dance groups meeting there at either the Public Library or the Chamber of Commerce.

6. Mr. Fontana of Watsonville announced his activities in organizing an association of folk dancers in the Monterey Peninsula which, it is hoped, will join the Federation.

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Your Club and Mine

The Castle Promenaders and the Mulford Garden Clodhoppers are now making regular visits to the Oak Knoll Naval Hospital to entertain the patients. Acknowledgement is due to Tecla Barry for her efforts in arranging for these two clubs to perform. In addition, Tecla has been dancing for these patients with the Berkeley Folk Dancers for the past sixteen months.

Lawton Harris of the Stockton Polk-Y-Dots made a hit recently by being guest instructor at the November 8 meeting of the Castle Promenaders.

The San Carlos Peasants held a Sadie Hawkins party on November 9. We appreciated the novelty of every dance being ladies' choice. The costumes worn carried out the theme of the party.

PENNY VAN VALER

San Francisco Folk Artists are planning a very interesting Swedish traditional Christmas festival on St. Lucy's Day, Saturday, December 21, at 8:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome. Reservations must be made in advance.

The history of the festival springs from an old pagan Viking custom celebrating the end of winter and the return of the sun to the northern country. It was adapted to the Christian calendar to celebrate Christmas but has many quaint customs which are, no doubt, survivals from the pagan past.

Swedish dances will predominate on the program. There will be a pageant of St. Lucy's Day. A smorgasbord will be served and Christmas carols will be sung. If possible, come in Swedish costume.

GRACE PERRYMAN

The exhibition group of the Fun Club is becoming more ambitious by increasing its collection of English country dances. Members have been doing research work on English costumes and will be ready shortly to exhibit in authentic style. Recently, the Club has been emphasizing costume making and is including in its monthly bulletin, sketches and suggestions for making some of the simpler costumes.

FUN CLUB NEWS

The Wagon Reelers, at a recent party, had as special guests,

two Persian boys who are studying at the University of California at Davis, Kalkhosrow Sorwshian and Shidan Satheazam. In telling of dancing in Iran, Mr. Satheazam stated that the old traditional Persian dances are done as solos. Their dances have the sensuous, tremulous quality of the Arabic dance. As in Hawaiian dancing, every movement seems to vibrate through the entire body and is symbolic of something.

The boys also reported that European ballroom dancing is now favored in their country, as well as the rumba.

The San Rafael Fiesta, on Friday evening, October 25, was a gala affair, started by a parade led by a gaily decorated cart containing El Toro, the bull, portrayed by genial Dan MacDonald. The program was arranged and participated in by the entire Folk Artist Group under the direction of Grace Perryman. Besides general dancing, there were exhibitions by the Tamalpais Dancers and the Marin Square Steppers.

Wilma Young of the Sausalito Dancers and Frances Bramhall, president of the Fairfax Folk Dancers, deserve much credit for their work in taking charge of the extremely enjoyable evening's program.

More than a hundred dancers celebrated the fifth birthday of the Pasadena Recreation Association on Friday evening, October 18, in the Garfield school auditorium in Pasadena.

Starting from so small a beginning there is no record of the exact date of the first meeting, the Association has grown until it now has a minimum of fifty people participating every Friday evening.

Los Ayuneros, directed by Carl Claybaugh, visited us with their brilliant Mexican costumes and intricate steps of Chiapanecas and Guadalajara. Helen Yost fascinated us with the Hat Dance and one of her own compositions.

The surprise polka contest was won by Jack Russell and Esther Liptz, who were presented with the birthday cake as a prize.

SARA and JOHN NORDQUIST

On November 10th, the I.W.O. Finnish Hall Folkdancers of Berkeley contributed their share to a program sponsored by the Berkeley Chapter of United Finnish Relief, Inc. They gave an exhibition of Finnish dances (Continued on Page Eight)

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THE GATESWINGERS



THE GATESWINGERS

A HISTORY

The Gateswingers group had its beginnings because Fay Bowman, a Y. M. C. A. director of physical activity, was alert to the possibilities of using folk dancing as a co-educational activity in the "Y" program. Mr. Bowman enthused over folk dancing as he saw it demonstrated by Vera and Charles Holleuffer in a Church Recreation Leadership Class. It was due to his interest that the first group at Central "Y" was started in 1938. This was a six weeks course, meeting every Monday and consisted of folk dancing led by the Holleuffers and community singing.

For a while, we met monthly with two six weeks courses given each year. In the process of evolution, the group interest shifted to dancing and the singing was dropped, although it remains an important part of every Gateswinger party and outing. Naturally, by popular demand, we soon shifted to more frequent meetings until our pre-

sent status was reached, having the advanced group on Monday and the beginners each Thursday.

Gateswingers are organized on a committee basis, with sixteen elected committee members from whom a chairman is chosen. The chairmen, all of whom have done much more than was expected of them, have been Barbara Hurst Matthai, Harold Arndt, Dalton Stern, Ken Wade and Bill Ballou. This is a committee that functions! Rarely does a member miss an executive meeting and all take part in teaching dances, in assisting in the beginners courses and in "sitting at the door" to check cards and welcome guest folk dancers. Because this is such a cooperative group, it is hard to single out leaders' names but mention certainly must be made of Aloyse Christensen and Ronald Connelly, who have taught so many new dances.

The importance of having a beginners' class has always been recognized. At first when we were all freshmen dancers, there

was no problem but soon arrangements had to be made for people who needed instruction. Ida Nicholas led the first beginners' classes with infinite patience. Then Aileen and Ken Wade took over and did a fine job for a long time. When they left for Kodiak, Alaska, Ida Nichols (now Mrs. Albert Krause) again taught beginners. Through these able volunteer leaders, scores of new members have become enthusiastic dancers. It was Faw Bowman who first made contacts for the group to go out on exhibitions.

The process was to send a set of eight dancers and a caller to a party, to demonstrate some of our fastest and fanciest square dances, and then to lead the party in simpler dances which even the novice could enjoy. We are faced with the problem most folk dance groups have—more requests for demonstrations than we can satisfy.

There was a brief fling with the Convention Bureau of San Francisco. When they obtained dates for us, we were paid and we turned the money over to

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The Gateswingers

(Continued From Page Five)

the YMCA for Campers' fees, lest we become professionals.

It was with great anticipation that we entered the Square Dance Competition at the California State Fair in 1941. Up to that time, some of our group had never seen a square dance performed outside our own group, but we came home very well pleased, with second place. Two weeks later, we sent two sets to be feature attractions at the San Mateo Flower Show held at Bay Meadows.

The Gateswingers are unique in one respect—we have many callers and are constantly finding new ones. Some have come to us from other groups in other parts of the country and some we have developed. We enjoy them all, each with his or her own enthusiastic style. Maybe you've guessed it—we love to square dance!

This account would be incomplete if it did not mention the servicemen who have added so much to the group in the last three years. Many came from groups in other parts of the country and were glad to share their knowledge with us. And quite a few learned to dance with the Gateswingers and became the most enthusiastic dancers of all.

The Gateswingers have been hosts to the Federation five times since it was formed in 1943. One little gem we remember from a Valentine program which was filled with couplets about dancing, ran:

"Roses are red, violets blue
I'd like to Polka, Wooden
Shoe?"

Forerunner to Federation meetings with us were International Nights, the first of which was held at the Central "Y" in May, 1940. All the ethnic groups in San Francisco which we could reach, were invited, and, although only the Czechoslovakian, Polish and Scandinavian groups participated, it was a very gay and colorful affair, bright with native costumes.

Such is our history. We started at Central YMCA, San Francisco, and are happy still to be part of its program. It is a mellow group, old enough now to have traditions, many real romances, and what a baby crop! Come and visit us some Monday night.

VERA HOLLEUFFER

IN MEMORIAM

The passing of Boris Abramson has left folk dancers with a deep sense of loss.

Boris was born about 52 years ago in Kiev in the Ukraine. At nineteen he was a non-commissioned officer in the Czar's Army. A few years before World War I he moved to Canada. The girl he married there had been his first love in the Ukraine. The war changed what was to have been a short visit to Pittsburgh and prevented her from returning to the Ukraine for a medical career. Boris and his wife lived in several cities in the United States and Canada and raised four children.

Although he had no professional training, Boris' native talent allowed him to imitate and retain any dance he saw.

Throughout his life he kept his promise to his mother never to enter dancing as a profession, but he maintained it as a hobby.

He enjoyed writing dramatic skits, he made miniatures in Hollywood for the movie industry, and he was consulted for the direction of dances in several Russian pictures. At this time, he was proprietor of two tailor shops in Los Angeles.

Some time later, he moved to San Francisco where he impressed folk dancers with his brilliant performance of Ukrainian dances. He was an active member of Chang's International Folk Dancers and contributed greatly to the Russian dance repertoire of the Federation.

FRANCES SHINN

Activities Slated

Christmas Festival

We'll all have fun at the Oakland High School gym, Sunday, December 8th, for that is the place and date of the Christmas Federation Festival. The host group, the Turnbees of Oakland, are making every effort to arrange a good program of dances and entertainment.

Dancing starts at 1:30 p. m. and will continue until 5:30.

Oakland High School is located on MacArthur and Park Boulevards.

The Federation council meeting will be held at the locale of the festival, starting at 12 noon.

In the evening, after the festival, the Oakland Folk Dancers welcome the Federation to their Open House Dance to be held at their clubhouse on Park Avenue and Newton street, Oakland.

South American Recordings

An interesting conference recently took place with Walter Grothe, Dan McDonald, and Song Chang, representing the Federation, and Camilo Lentini, a Latin American orchestra leader and composer, on the subject of recording south of the border folk dance rhythms for Pan American Records. Mr. Lentini, presently of Hollywood, recently completed a series of recordings for this Los Angeles firm which has been active in the folk dance music field.

A native of Argentina, graduate of the Royal Conservatory of Naples and holder of citations from five Latin American countries for his interpretations of their music, Mr. Lentini hopes to pioneer introduction of such rhythms and steps as the Panamian Bambuco, Argentine Ranchera, the Cueca, Passillo, Huapango and Maxixe, to mention but a few.

His most recent pressings in authentic styling and treatment for Pan American, are of the new Italian inspired rumba, "Maria Mia" and the samba, "Ba Tu Ca Da."

Activities Slated

Christmas Festival in Los Angeles

Because the Harvest Festival was such a huge success due to the cooperative effort of all the member groups of the Southern Section of the Folk Dance Federation, the same system has been decided upon for the Christmas Festival. We are looking forward to the Festival to be held at Echo Park Clubhouse from 1 to 5 p. m. on Sunday, December 15. Chairmen for the event are Virginia Anderson and Esther Liptz.

The Echo Park Clubhouse address is 1632 Bellevue Ave., Los Angeles.

Folk Dancers From India

The Westwood group is proud to include among its members, two young men from India. Obed Ur-Rahman-Khn from Punjab, and Fazlur-Rahim-Khn from the northwest frontier province of India. They have given examples of their ethnic dances in native costume.

RAY SHAW—A Biography

Almost everyone who has danced in the Los Angeles vicinity, has learned to enjoy Ray Shaw's calls. Ethel Shaw attends most of the many dance groups where Ray is the popular leader, but because of a fall some time ago, she no longer takes part in the actual dances. However, her spirit joins in, even from the sidelines. Here is her write-up of the Shaws.

"I was born in Colorado Springs and grew up there. Ray was born in Kansas, but spent most

of his early life in Los Angeles. I met Ray in an amateur theatrical production in Colorado Springs, where he was going to college. He graduated from Colorado College as a civil engineer. He worked at this on the Union Pacific railroad for a year before deciding to attempt to capitalize on his voice. As a young man, Ray had rather a good voice and was the tenor soloist in an Episcopal choir during his college days. He had quite a gift for the dramatic,

and it was as a singer that he went on the stage. But since it was in musical comedy he had to develop his dancing. He soon found that his voice was not sufficiently outstanding to put him in the top brackets, and so he drifted to the managerial side of the business.

Some five years afterward, when he had returned from a lengthy tour of North and South America with the "Merry Widow" Company, we were married, and he left the stage for good. After our marriage, we spent two years in Canada where Ray was the director of the exhibition, managing the exhibits and entertainments for the International Dry Farming Congress. We finally went to San Diego to find a place with the Panama-Pacific Exposition. Because of a change of plan, he went to work for the City of San Diego.

As Ray always had a restless urge to travel, he made arrangements with the Government of Japan to teach English. Our son was born in Japan, and we decided that he had to be brought up as an American, so we came to Los Angeles and settled down. Ray went to work for the Los Angeles city schools and has remained with them ever since.

In Japan, he traveled around the country a great deal and was interested in learning all he could about their dances. His most interesting experience was on one of the small islands of the Inland Sea where he had gone to investigate the Bon Festival, a very religious rite designed to entertain the spirits of the dead who return to visit their old families. The climax of the Festival is the Bon Dance which begins at gloaming and continues until long past midnight. It is a great circle somewhat similar to the "Kolo". All of the inhabitants participate, while a group of the young men of the village take turns playing the battery of drums in a never ceasing rhythm. Different members of the circle take turns singing verses of ancient songs extolling the virtues of the departed. Ray finally joined hands with the circle and performing the monotonous step joined in the chant that was used as a chorus. The old women of the village grew more interested in Ray than in the worship of the departed. Suddenly a group of the young men closed in on him and not too gently removed him from the

(Continued on Page Nine)



RAY SHAW

(Continued From Page Seven)
circle. After much discussion in their broken English and Ray's

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Folk dance records are not easy to get. Record stores like ours (if there were others like Art Music Co., Berkeley) can't just write Mr. Victor and ask for 100 Little Man in a Fix.

For years, during the war, and later because of OPA, records with limited sales possibilities just were not made. It will take some time for all your old favorites to be re-issued; Decca has not reissued a one of their records that used to sell for 35c because they can't sell a record for 35c today.

We import records, but time and strikes and breakage make that difficult—so difficult that few stores will bother with it. Our last shipment from England in May went out—FAST. The re-order, much larger, reached New York November 18 and should arrive here about the time you get this Let's Dance—seven months later!

Because records are our full-time concern, you may be sure we have all the folk dance records we can get. Remember, the Art Music motto, inscribed in blood beneath our escutcheon (crossed chisels on a broken record azure, rampant) "If we ain't got it, we can't get it".

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very lame Japanese, it was decided that he meant no harm, and it was agreed that he could remain as long as he pleased provided that he kept himself out of sight. This he did and remained to the end. Later, he learned that he came out of it rather fortunately for it was in a very similar incident that Lefcadio Hearn, the rather famous author on things Japanese, was seriously blinded when the entire village threw dirt and stones at him when he visited the sacred Bon Dance.

I have always been especially fond of the squares, though I never was much interested in European folk dances. Ray, on the other hand, enjoys them all, with squares his favorite. During his college days, he learned to call the Lancers, and one summer called the dances at the old Half Way House on Pike's Peak mostly the Virginia Reel. In Canada, we learned many of the then popular dances: the Valeta, Highland Schottische, Trilby, and some others. Up there we used to polka to the music of a very large bagpipe band. This was in the days of the Bunny Hug, Turkey Trot, and some remnants of the Cake Walk. Later, at San Diego, Ray called the Paul Jones at many of the dances we attended, and also the Virginia Reel.

In 1939, when his brother Lloyd Shaw, published his book on Cowboy Dances, Ray began calling them for the faculty of his school, Venice High School.

Soon after Lloyd's book was published, Letitia Innes got a group together at her studio to learn the dances. Ray was a member of this group. First they called themselves "Hollywood Barn Dancers", but they began adding European folk dances to their programs and changed the name to the "Hollywood Peasants". They perform most of the folk dances of the Federation, a great many Mexican dances, and have a distinct preference for "Squares" and other early American numbers.

Mondays and alternate Saturdays, Ray leads the dancing in Plummer Park. On the other Saturdays Ray is at Silver Lake Playground, a very congenial, homey group. It has been running for many years. Ray Littlejohn was their first caller and they used to call it the "Directors' Dance". The Directors of all the City Playgrounds used to attend, later outsiders were welcomed, and Ray and I started going. Ray Littlejohn is a machinist whose father was

a square dance caller. For many years, before the current revival of square dancing, Ray Littlejohn called several regular old time dances. He was a very popular caller. Then Littlejohn had a breakdown, and Ray took over. He has been calling there for about four years.

Probably much of the pleasure of dancing at Silver Lake comes from the spirited playing by Anita Starkey on the violin and Mamie Paxton on the piano. They both love to square dance, and their enthusiasm is contagious through the music they play.

Ray Shaw was instrumental in the forming of the Southern Section of the Federation of which he is vice-president. He dabbles in water colors, and, if the music is right his favorite call is "Sally Gooden".

ETHEL SHAW

Your Club and Mine

(Continued From Page Four)

in authentic costume on the stage of the Finnish Hall against a realistic backdrop of birch trees.

The I.W.O. Folk Dance Group presented the Potku Masurkka and Tantoli. Then with a quick change to the Ukrainian nationality, accomplished by the girls tying their shoulder kerchiefs around their heads), the group presented Vo Sadu Li V-Ogorode (In the Orchard), the Ukrainian Kerchief dance.

Authentic costume touches and dance explanations were ably handled by Martha Hendrickson.

Folk Dancers looking for a Monday night group will find the Finnish Hall Folkdancers happy to welcome them. The group meets from 8 to 10 p. m., 1819 Tenth Street, Berkeley.

BETTY KARPPI

Congratulations Department

Erica Simone and Bob Sattan, Westwood Folk Dancers, were married on October 19th in Beverly Hills. Later a folk dance reception was tendered them by their friends, to which the bride came in a lovely Hungarian-Polish wedding costume while the groom wore the beautiful peasant shirt she had made for him. Bob and Erica as well as their friends enjoyed the Chinese banquet and folk dancing which followed.

Festival at Gruyeres In French Switzerland

The first of August is to the people of Gruyeres what the Fourth of July is to us. The bells, which joyously peal forth on this day, may serve any number of purposes at the will of the carillonneur.

The populace of Gruyeres walks singing up the hill, through a narrow arch to the ancient tower of the Chateau Gruyeres, the citizens being in their gorgeous costumes made of brilliant silks and satins. The white-crossed, blood red flags of Switzerland flutter from every house. Above all doors is the scarlet flag of Gruyeres with its white crane strutting through the center.

After a while, the joyous pealing of the bells ceases, and voices rise in that stirring song, "Le Ranz des Vaches" or "Kuh-reigen" (Comballed). Then follows a parade of the "costumed dolls". Gruyeres children, dressed in their lovely gay costumes and very proud to be "in on things". Then come the men, walking solemnly, wearing their traditional costumes, which consist of dark blue trousers, white shirt, a black straw skull cap. Most interesting feature is the blue jacket with its tiny puffed sleeves and embroidered lapels. Also, each man has the inevitable huge bowled pipe (even if he does not smoke) which has a lid to prevent the flying of sparks on a windy day. Then come the womenfolk, cheerfully marching behind their men. Resplendent in their silks and satins, they set off their good-looking blondness with broad-brimmed straw hats, tying the long black velvet streamers under their chins.

The parade circles the village fountain and finally comes to a halt in front of the village shrine, where the crowd assembles in a circle to sing chorals, ballads and patriotic songs as their forefathers have done before them.

Suddenly, as the last note dies away, a terrific bang is heard. All eyes turn to see a rocket bursting in the air, the sparks falling into the gay crowd. This is the signal for which the youngsters are waiting. Forgetting their laces and silks, they dash madly towards the man with the fireworks. Soon all are swinging sparklers, Roman candles and red flares to make

a fantastic sight on the old market place. Arched windows, gilded coats of arms and flags stand out brilliantly in the glaring light. A whirling cartwheel on a post high above the fountain is the climax to the fireworks spectacle. Sometimes a daredevil will climb up the post gingerly, to steal the still red-hot frame of the wheel as a souvenir while a spellbound crowd watches.

Late at night bonfires are lighted all over the hills by herdsmen. Once the mountain-folk used bonfires as a sort of wireless to pass information and news of victories quickly from isolated outpost to outpost, but now they are used to highlight the celebrations of holidays and great occasions of all sorts.

LIESL BARNETT

VETERAN SQUARE DANCERS

Oldest and largest square dancing organization in California and one of the most authentic, is at Santa Rosa. Operating without loss of a meeting night in 17 years, 300 rural farmers and their wives gather every Saturday night to their own hill billy band and vigorously and vivaciously go through old time square and ballroom steps.

The average age of the dancers is 55 years. So familiar are they with the calls of their leader, William Smith, that as soon as he announces a square, off they go to it, seeming almost heedless of his singing, sonorous calls. The perfection with which they execute the many graceful, beautiful geometric patterns, is in a class by itself and can usually only be achieved by those who have been doing squares all their lives.

Viennese Waltz

The rarest and most beautiful form of the Viennese Waltz is rarely seen in America and generally only in movie sequences

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of Austrian court scenes. It is a styling most characteristic of Officers of the Guards and the nobility.

The main variation of its interpretation is the manner in which the counter-clockwise box step is done. In this, in imitation of the "about face" of an officer on military parade, the left foot swings in a wide arc around and back of the right, giving an elegance and eclat not otherwise obtainable.

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STAFF

Henry Koopmann, Editor.....1249-A Ninth Ave., S. F. 22, Calif.
 Assistants Cheryl Kleinhammer, Trudy Somerville
 Lillie Fialkoff, Associate Editor.....3622 City Terrace Dr., L.A. 33
 W. S. Ballou, Business Manager.....857 Third Ave., San Bruno, Calif.
 Paul O'Bryne, Advertising Manager.....3263 Sacramento St., S. F. 15, Calif.

CHRISTMAS

(Continued from Page One)

Austria, the rice pudding of Scandinavian countries in which an almond is hidden to bring luck to the finder, the Dutch **Klaasjes** cakes and **Marsepein**, Italian Magi Cake, and poppy seed loaves in Hungary, Lithuania and Poland.

In Armenia, the Christmas Eve meal includes spinach, because it is believed Mary ate this vegetable before Christ was born. In Ukraine a **Koutia** is made with porridge to represent straw in the manger, fruit is for the Babe, and honey for the spirit.

Rumanians bake thin dry wafers to simulate the swaddling clothes, dip them in honey or syrup. German pretzels were originally shaped to represent the calendar sign of the winter solstice. Mince pies were sometimes baked in the form of a manger, often cross-latticed with crust to represent the hayrack of a stable.

Special drinks for Christmas include the Swedish **Julglogg** made from wine and brandy, spiced and fruited; and of course, the wassail bowl of England made of ale or wine spiced and sweetened; and the eggnog or Tom and Jerry we know.

Come bring, with a noise,
My merrie, merrie boys,

The Christmas Log to the firing;

While my good dame, she

Bids ye all be free,

And drinke to your heart's
desiring—Herrick.

LOIS RATHER

FOLK DANCES FROM NEAR AND FAR

Volumes I and II

A new edition, Volume II of the book, **Folk Dances From Near and Far**, published by the Folk Dance Federation is now available. Copies of Volume II as well as Volume I may be obtained from Ethel Turner, 3262 Sacramento street, San Francisco 15, California.

The price established by the Federation Council is \$2.00 for each volume.

SILVER LAKE PERSONALITIES

If you want to be assured of an enjoyable evening in Los Angeles, join the congenial group of people who have been flocking here for many years to the calls of Ray Shaw on the first and third Saturday of every month. Here the specialty is early American and square dancing. The most popular is the Penny Dance, in which odd individuals scurry about passing rattles as they tag for new partners. Those who are left holding a rattle when the music stops, pay a penny as a fine. (The pennies have been used to buy wool for knitting of an afghan for a hospital.) This dance is a marvelous mixer; try it in your own group.

The Silver Lake group is a recent addition to the Folk Dance Federation. The president is Mrs. Ruth Lohr, who, when not dancing, goes in for sailing with her husband. Mrs. Lohr has been a leader of the Girl Scout Marines for nine years.

Claire Ellner, vice-president of the group, is a newly-wed. Her husband is also a member. They toured Washington and Canada for four months before settling down to regular Silver Lake dances.

Mrs. Charles F. Redmond, secretary, has been folk dancing for only one year, but you would never know it. She is as adept and enthusiastic as an old-timer and both her husband and young daughter are equally interested. Their son, Corky, a veteran, bemoans the fact that his friends have not been introduced to square dancing as yet. On their vacation at Yosemite this summer, they met Ray Shaw, also on a vacation, and on a full moonlight night, they danced on the Mirror Lake parking lot in the unusual setting of grotesque shadows on the surrounding cliffs.

The treasurer, Alma V. Allen, has an active program. Besides being a member of the W. A. Club of Glendale, playing tennis, ice skating and folk dancing,

she is a collector of pitchers. Like many of the members of the Silver Lake group, she is the mother of grown children, a boy and a girl.

Visitors to the Silver Lake group are struck by the friendly good time everyone is having. Probably much of this is due to the spirited musicians, Mamie Paxton at the piano and Mrs. Anita Starkey at the fiddle, who are excellent square dancers in their own right.

Calendar of Events

Sunday, December 8—

Federation Festival, Oakland High School Gym.

Turnbees, hosts—1:30 to 5:30 p. m.

Open House—Oakland Folk Dancers, 8:00 p. m.

Park Avenue and Newton Sts., Oakland.

Sunday, December 15—

Federation Festival, 1 to 5 p. Echo Park, Los Angeles.

Saturday, December 21—

St. Lucy's Day Swedish Christmas Festival, sponsored by San Francisco Folk Artists, 321 Divisadero Street, San Francisco, 8:30 p. m.—Reservations in advance.

Saturday, December 28—

Yuletide Festival, Davis Lubin School, 36th and K Streets, Sacramento. 8:00 to 12:00 p.m. Wagon Reelers, hosts. Everybody welcome.

Tuesday, December 31—

New Year's Eve party in Fairfax Pavilion. Sponsored by Fairfax Folk Dancers, 8 p. m. Federation groups invited.

Sunday, January 19, 1947—

Federation Festival, Glen Park —1 to 5 p. m. San Francisco Glen Park Folk Dancers, hosts. Evening party—Scandinavian Folk Dancers, hosts. Mission Community Center, 362 Capp Street, San Francisco.

January—

Federation Festival
East Los Angeles Co-op, hosts.