



## WHO'S WHO

### PHIL MARON

If you have danced for any length of time, his is a familiar face. Always at festivals, plus many parties and special events, those events often possible, thanks to his generous donation of records, he is Phil Maron of Oakland, folk and square dancer for many years.

Phil is one of the lucky few who has managed to turn our hobby into a profitable business as well. Proprietor of The Folk Shop, located at 1531 Clay Street, Oakland, he has, since 1949, helped many dancers and instructors to build their record libraries. Also, included in stock are all items of folk and square dance attire. (Girls - the petticoats are delectable!)

Phil's dance history is varied and interesting. Born in Salem, West Virginia, on December 17, 1905, he was introduced to folk dancing in grammar school. During the late 20's he resided for a time in Wheeling, West Virginia, later to become the site of the first folk dance camp in America, Oglebay Park, under the direction of Jane Farwell.

Phil spent the depression years in New York, and was there when the New York World's Fair opened in 1939. Folk and Square dance parties were in full swing in conjunction with the Fair, and Phil was invited to take photos of these, a hobby-business he still engages in occasionally. He joined the "Squares and Rounds", directed by Don Chambers. This club included contras and lancers in its program --- anyone know anything about lancers? (Perhaps a subject for one of our teachers to pursue.)

Three thousand miles to the west, San Francisco was hosting her own World's Fair, and during the summers of 1939 and 1940, Phil visited Bagdad-by-the-Bay and saw many dance events. It was during this period, back home in New York, that Phil met several of the early dance leaders - Michael & Mary Ann Herman, Ralph Page, Al Brundage, and many more.

When World War II reared its ugly head, the "Squares and Rounds" club reached out to our servicemen and taught and exhibited in canteens in New York City; Phil was an enthusiastic participant in this program.

1946 brought him to California and he founded the first all-Square Dance group in the Bay Area at the Oakland Y.M.C.A. His

interest in Square Dance calling led him to help with the organization of the Square Dance Callers Association of Northern California, and he served as the first Historian. He has served as Oakland Council Treasurer, Federation Historian, and Federation photographer for several years. However, putting business before pleasure has meant that Phil has had to forego most of these outside activities. At present, he takes 35 mm pictures for slide work, and is President of the La Merritt Club, which meets at the Lake Merritt Sail Boat House.

Phil's quiet and continuous work for the betterment and continuation of folk and square dance has long been known, but one suspects not fully acknowledged or appreciated. A big "thank you" is in order - - and the next time your feet are flying to a hambo, waltz, or whatever, it just may be "courtesy of Phil Maron"!

*Suzy Martine*