



RAINMAKERS'

SCRAPBOOK

VOLUME 13

1994 ~ 1995

Volume 13

The

Rainmakers'

Scrapbook

From

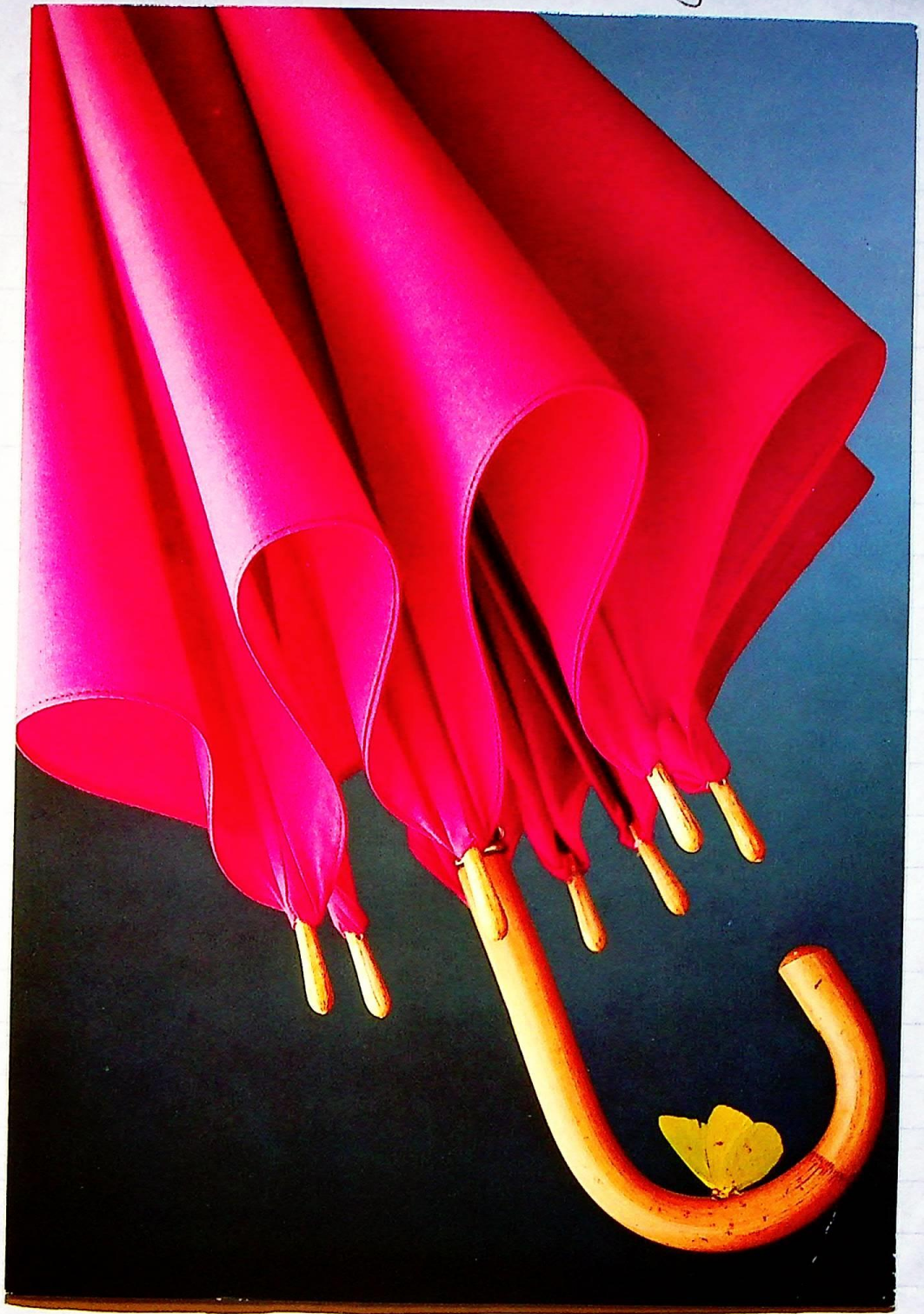
September 1994

To

August 1995

Cover picture :- Rainmakers' party in Bingen,
September, 1994.

Rainmakers' 18th Anniversary.



The Rainmakers Club was founded on September 10th 1976 and met in the Catholic Church Hall, Albert Street, Stevenage Old Town. Some of us remembered this when the club met on September 9th 1994.

Till was leading a group of members who were dancing at the Bingen Wine Festival this year at this time.

Founder members of the club who

Rainmakers' 18th Anniversary.

Many Happy Returns to the
Rainmakers Club - founded
10th September 1976

**JUST WHEN
IT WAS THE CLOUDIEST
YOU CAME ALONG!**

From Betty and Henry.

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Till was leading a group of members who were dancing at the Bingen Wine Festival this year at this time.

Founder members of the club who

and are still members
joined in the first two weeks, were
Jill, Peter, Roy, Sue, Margery, Henry, Betty.

Rainmakers in Bingen, September 1994.

12 The Gazette, September 30, 1994

WHAT'S ON

A German celebration



INTERNATIONAL folk dance group The Rainmakers celebrated their 18th birthday in style in Germany at the Bingen Wine Festival.

The Rainmakers, guests of the Bingen Town Twinning Association, danced in the opening ceremony and performed in the new Congress Centre on the Rhine.

The group's president and choreographer Jill Bransby said: "All our hard work in rehearsals was justified by the warmth of the reception from the audiences. The generosity of our hosts was overwhelming."

As well as dancing, the Rainmakers enjoyed social events, wine tasting and a reception in their honour given by Bingen's Oberbürgermeister.

If you are interested in joining the group, they meet on Friday evenings at St Michael's Church Hall, Broadway, Letchworth at 8pm. Call Mark Baalam on 0462 454210 for details.

Here is the party of Rainmakers and friends who went to dance at the Bingen Wine Festival.

Bingen is one of Hitchin's Twin Towns. The invitation to Germany came after a group of Rainmakers had danced at a Town-Twinning function in Hitchin Town Hall in 1993.

As the school term had begun some of our dancers who would have liked to be there too, could not go. However, all who went said they had a marvellous time. Richard is preparing a separate report on this expedition.

Saturday, 8th October 1994.

Rainmakers' 18th Anniversary Dance.

The Rainmakers International Folk Dance Group celebrated its coming-of-age with a dance held at Ickleford Village Hall on October 8th, 1994. The date was put back a month later than the actual founding of the club, September 10th 1976 because some of our members were in Germany then and others were on holiday. This proved to be a wise move as most of our current members plus several visitors were able to attend.



Till, our founder and President was M.C. She had devised a programme of dances that included two or three dances learned by the club each year since 1976. Cloud Burst Band, also founded by Till, provided most of the music. They normally play for English Country

dances and had especially learned the International dance tunes - no mean feat as they are so varied in rhythm - and they did very well indeed.

Till's programme was clever because, not only were they popular dances but they included dances from many countries, were a good mixture of difficult / easy, lines, circles and couple dances. As she introduced the dances Till mentioned the names of the people who had taught us some of them - for example Uri Gerson, Janet Woolbar, Kelsey Blundell, Lillian Galatis, Charles Steventon, Simon and Joan Cuest, Alan Trangmar

Most of the fifty plus people present wore a costume so the scene was very colourful.



During the evening we were entertained by Dave Garner, a friend of Belinda and Martin,

who sang two groups of folk songs. In recent years he has been to the club's dancing display on the Victoria Embankment. Jill remembered that he usually was singing whilst the dancers were changing their clothes or finding the right socks so she had never been able to pay proper attention to his singing before.

There was an interval during which we consumed a splendid spread of refreshments brought along by club members and organised by Maria.



Before our Chairman, Belinda and Jill blew out

the candles, on the birthday cake, (made by Maria) we all sang "Happy Birthday". Then Jill made a short speech in which she recalled the very early days of the club when we met in Albert Street Stevenage and how we struggled along, raising funds with jumble sales and a market stall. Gradually numbers grew, our dancing skills improved, we bought better equipment with the aid of grants and began to perform in public. After a few years we had to change our hall. The Friends Meeting House in Stevenage was the venue for a while until we moved to St. Michael's hall in Letchworth. Jill remembered founder members and others who helped us who have now left the area or died. It seems amazing that we have been going for eighteen years.

After some birthday cake and the raffle we returned to dancing.

A surprise item in the second half came when Claire's son-in-law, Mark, came forward to play music from Brittany on Old English bagpipes. It was delightful.

The dance was due to end at eleven o'clock but we pressed on with the dancing, trying to finish the programme. Alas, time beat us, so by leaving out Väira Vadmal (shown on video during the interval) Hora Miresii and the Tarantella Fasola, we concluded the dance with everyone joining in the Polonez.

It had been a thoroughly enjoyable, memorable evening.



● To the Rainmakers

Thank you for the
lovely bouquet of
flowers that you gave
me last Saturday
at the dance.

● I have enjoyed looking

at them all week - It
was nice to be able to
keep this one
(unlike the German bouquets!)

Many thanks

Jin

Dancers from Moldavia, U.S.S.R.
Design by Lesley Boorer for
the Society for International Folk Dancing

Letter of thanks from Janet Woolbar and Frank Flanagan after the 18th Anniversary Dance.



Dear Jill.

Many thanks for a lovely evening yesterday and congratulations on your coming of age.

Congratulations also on your performance of Kava Badma! I know how much hard work must have gone into it, but it was a presentation of which even Pug Cyriax would approve.

Very best wishes from

Janet & Frank

Card signed by everyone present at the
Rainmakers' Anniversary Dance, 8th October 1994



RAINMAKERS ANNIVERSARY DANCE

8TH OCTOBER 1994

DANCERS:-

Isabel Blair & Dal
 Graham.

Marie
 Mick
 Richard

Janet & Frank.
 Claire

M. Morton
 Alan
 Morna

Reg. Betty
 Henry
 Michael
 Julie

Beck-Anna.
 Sandra
 Moya
 Jane

Juan.
 Peter

Gene
Alan T.
Quaker
Maurice

18

Ray
 Margaret

Sandra Holmes.

Adrian

Fatti
 Louise & Alan.

Heather
 Marjorie
 Roger.

Pam & Peter
 Long
Rosena.
Margarete

Ann.
 Beulah and
 Martin

Card signed by band members and
entertainers at the 18th Anniversary
Dance.



RAINMAKERS
ANNIVERSARY DANCE

Saturday 8th October 1994
7.45 to 11.00
at
Ickleford Village Hall

£4.00 Members £5.00 non-members

510

Card signed by band members and
entertainers at the 18th Anniversary
Dance.

RAINMAKERS ANNIVERSARY DANCE
8TH OCTOBER 1994

BAND:-

Martin Hazel
Dawn Wendy

18

MC:- Jim Gray

ENTERTAINMENT:-

James Rob

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ANNIVERSARY DANCE**

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7.45 to 11.00
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£4.00 Members £5.00 non-members

510

RAINMAKERS

18th ANNIVERSARY DANCE PROGRAMME

- 1976/77 Mayim Mayim
Dance from Kalosca
Neapolitan Tarantella
- 1977/78 Hava Nagila
Swedish Schottische
Troika
- 1978/79 Makazice
Walczyk (Little Waltz)
- 1979/80 La Bourrée Pastourelle
Russian Lyrical
- 1980/81 Stepping Out
Horlepiep
- 1981/82 Pariser Polska
Doudlebska Polka
- 1982/83 Renningen
Gallop Kontra
- 1983/84 Sírba
- 1984/85 Rondon
Tarantella Rivilisi
- 1985/86 Schottisch Danza Degli Ombrelli
Maiezyt
- 1986/87 Chotis de la Frontera
Haro'a Haketana
- 1987/88 Santis Masoulke
Nikolos
- 1988/89 En Allant aux Chataignes
Musica Nisheret
- 1989/90 Walenki
Jarabe Tapatio
- 1990/91 Untersteirrer Ländler
Maori Stick Dance
- 1991/92 Rav Brachot
Joc de Leagane
- 1992/93 Branle a six de la Chatre
Mari Mariko
- 1993/94 Váva Vadmal
Hora Miresii
- 1994/95 TARANTELLA PASDWA
1976/77 Polonez



Jill remembers the early days of Rainmakers.

Photographs given by Jill.

Rainmakers' Day Course.

Saturday 22nd October, 1994. 11.00 a.m. - 4.00 p.m.

On Saturday 22nd October the Rainmakers assembled at St. Michael's Church Hall and at eleven o'clock started to learn seven dances from the Balkans under the guidance of Frances Horrocks.

There were two dances from Bulgaria. The first one originated in Thrace and was called MITRINO HORA.

This was followed by OKOPSKA RÜČENICA.

There were then three dances from Romania: - HORAN DOVA PARTI

ROATA FECIOILOR

SI INVERTITA DIN OAS

The last was from Northern Romania, and the teaching of it was interrupted by lunch. By this time everyone was ready to take the weight off their feet.

Having rested for an hour we proceeded with the last of the Romanian dances and by now we were getting the style.

MAÇKA YOLLARE from Turkey was the penultimate dance and finally, from Armenia, came one called GOV DEENTSEE BAR. I think this one will stick in our repertoire.

Frances has travelled to both Romania and Bulgaria and she has perfected the style associated with these two countries. She was certainly a joy to watch.

Whilst conversing with her she explained that she had been taught by someone called Silvie Ciuciumis when she was visiting Romania. She also learned dances from Excement Kuig, a Turk.

During the afternoon whilst we were having the re-cap, Belinda focussed the video camera on our tired feet and hopefully took pictures of the correct steps.

The day was wound up with the usual thank yous and Mark presented a potted plant to Frances as a token of our appreciation.

It was the end of a highly successful workshop that had been enhanced by Frances' superb Balkan style of dancing.

Roy Bowtell.

Thankyou very much Roy for going to the trouble of writing this interesting report.

I was so sorry to have to miss it myself.

The thanks of the club should be recorded to Claire Steely who gave Frances overnight hospitality as Frances travelled all the way from Surrey.

I understand that twenty members of Rainmakers attended the Day Course. There were no visitors from elsewhere.

Betty.

Tuesday 29 November 1994 — Robert Humbert House.

On 29 November, 11 Rainmakers went to entertain the residents of Robert Humbert House, Letchworth. Our audience consisted of one old man and a number of elderly ladies, some of whom were happy to participate in the simple joining-in dances. One lady told us she had done country dancing in her younger days — she recognised Parson's Farewell and had known a number of staples, including Gordon and Dalphine Stacey.

The display went well, apart from an incipient panic when — just as Roger was putting on his sombrero to do the Mexican Hat Dance with Maria — Jill realised she had not got the tape for it! However, in the best theatrical tradition, the show went ahead with the rest of the Rainmakers humming or la-la-ing the tune. We were O.K. with the early part of the dance and came out strongly for the ending, but there was a bit of a hiatus in the middle when we couldn't quite remember the tune! However the 2 dancers kept going and fully earned their applause.

After the display there was a chance to talk to some of the residents while they regaled us with tea and hot mince pies.

On a personal note, I was pleased to see that this was an enlightened place that appreciates the contribution pets can make to the well-being of older folks — a handsome black-and-white cat strolled in during the evening and watched the dancing from under a chair.

Isobel

Display / Join in Robert Humbert's House

Jiu ● 1. Neapolitan Tavernette

- Adrain + Sue
- Mark + Maria
- Roger + Julie
- Graham + Isabel
- Moya + Claire

Jiu ● 2. Dorset 4 Hand Reel

- Adrain + Sue Mark + ~~Maria~~ Julie
- Roger + Moya Graham + Claire

Jiu ● 3. Setnja all join in one.

Jiu ● 4. Row Boat all.

Jiu ● 5. Untersteiner handker.

- Isabel.
- Graham + Claire
 - Roger + ~~Jiu~~ ~~Maria~~ Moya.
 - Adrain + Jiu

Jiu ● 6. Kreuz koenig.

- Isabel.
- Mark + Maria Roger + Jiu Adrain + Sue + Graham + Julie

Jiu ● 7. Karamfil all.

Sue ● 8. Korte piep

- Roger + Isabel
- Graham + Claire
- Jiu + Maria
- Mark?
- Adrain + Claire

9. Mexican Waltz. All - Join in one.

Jui. 10. Zener Atire

As Mea. Tar.

11. Parsons F.

Adrian + Sue. ^{or Roger} Graham + Jui.

12. Umbrella Dance.

Roger + Isabel, Adrian + Sue, Graham + Jui.
+ ?

Jui. 13. Mexican Hat Dance.

Maria + ~~Graham~~ Roger.

14. Waltz All - Join in one.

15. Erev Bah. All.

We may not get through all these dances. (We did!)

RAINMAKERS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

FRIDAY 2rd DECEMBER 1994 at 8.00 pm

To be held at 'Red Gables', Benslow Path, The Avenue, Hitchin

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of 1993 A.G.M.
3. Matters arising from minutes
4. Chairman's remarks
5. Secretary's report
6. Treasurer's report
7. Appointment of auditors
8. Fixing of Annual and Weekly subscriptions
9. Election of officers and committee members
10. Rainmakers future direction
11. Any other business

RAINMAKERS INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCE GROUP

INCOME

<u>1992/93</u>	<u>FRIDAY NIGHTS</u>		<u>1993/94</u>
785.25	Weekly subscriptions	932.95	
35.00	Party	38.75	
-	Collection for Kelsey	20.00	
			991.70
	<u>EVENTS</u>		
92.00	Anniversary dance	68.00	
102.25	Day courses	98.90	
375.00	Displays	720.00	
65.50	Workshops	43.00	
75.00	Victoria Embankment	-	
.15	Donation	-	
53.40	Auction	-	
-	Sale of costumes	52.50	
-	T-shirts	275.00	
			1257.40
	<u>ADMINISTRATION</u>		
19.50	Annual subscriptions	67.50	
18.74	Interest	6.72	
2.20	Sale of badges	-	
			74.22
	<u>EQUIPMENT</u>		
-	Grant	235.00	
			235.00
<u>-----</u>			<u>-----</u>
1623.99			2558.32

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT 1993-94

EXPENDITURE

<u>1992/93</u>	<u>FRIDAY NIGHTS</u>		<u>1993/94</u>
642.00	Hire of Hall	696.00	
21.65	SIFD affiliation fee	23.30	
15.49	Tapes, instructions, videos etc	32.24	
20.75	Insurance	26.08	
30.09	Squash	29.27	
25.62	Party	2.95	
5.00	Callers Expenses	-	
-	Raynauds Association	40.00	
43.06	Miscellaneous	41.60	891.44
	<u>EVENTS</u>		
82.29	Anniversary dance	92.89	
63.29	Day courses	104.41	
59.00	Hire of hall - workshops	27.00	
39.00	Hire of hall - practises	112.00	
18.00	Travelling expenses	27.60	
35.00	Display fee	50.00	
95.50	Victoria Embankment	-	
64.40	SIFD donation	50.00	
13.00	Gathering expenses	29.00	
-	Costumes	56.00	
-	T-shirts	275.00	
-	Miscellaneous expenses	7.89	831.79
	<u>ADMINISTRATION</u>		
23.28	Postage	17.20	
6.50	Phone	45.00	
12.64	Stationery etc.	25.83	
12.10	Newsletters	2.70	
2.95	Scrapbook	9.45	100.18
	<u>EQUIPMENT</u>		
-	Speaker	56.91	
-	Radio microphone	495.56	552.47
<u>-----</u>		<u>-----</u>	<u>-----</u>
1330.61			2375.88
293.38	Excess of income over expenditure		182.44
<u>-----</u>		<u>-----</u>	<u>-----</u>
1623.99			2558.32

Notes attaching to the accounts

1. Weekly subs - 352 @ 75p
787 @ 85p
2. The administrative and rehearsal costs of organising the trip to Bingen have been included. The Bingen accounts themselves will be shown in the 1994/95 accounts as not all the amounts were dealt with before we left. The trip also actually started in the new financial year. This explains the increase in stationery and phone this year.
3. There are still some hats and, I believe one or two costumes awaiting sale, hence the small loss on costumes.
4. The cost of hiring the hall for Friday nights was not as great as we anticipated. The Hall Committee did not impose an increase following VAT on fuel costs. We anticipate that this will be rectified shortly and will take into account next year's increase as well.
5. Hire of hall for practises:-
Gathering - £53.00
Display - £ 8.00
TV rehearsal - £ 3.00
Bingen - £48.00
6. We have discussed the matter of better interest in our bank account. With interest rates so low and minimum amounts required to stay on deposit if we changed it was decided to keep the status quo. As all money is in an interest paying cheque account it avoids the problems of accidentally forgetting to transfer money to cover cheques written.

I have audited the accounts and confirm that they are a true record of the financial activities of the club.


BILL THORNE - AUDITOR

October 21st 1994

1623.99	Net Income	2558.32
1330.61	Net Expenditure	2375.85
-----		-----
293.38	Excess of income over expenditure	182.44
744.16	Balance brought forward	1052.54
-----		-----
1052.54	Balance carried forward	1234.98
-----		-----
53.28	Cash in hand	60.93
999.26	Bank	1174.05
-----		-----
1052.54		1234.98
-----		-----

Equipment Fund (included in the bank balance)

	Balance brought forward	300.00
	Grant	235.00
	Events Profit	425.61
	-----	-----
	Purchases	960.61
		552.47
	-----	-----
	Balance carried forward	408.14
	-----	-----
1052.54	Balance	4.95
300.00	Equipment Fund	1238.73
-----		408.14
752.54	Working Capital	830.894
-----		-----

Minutes of Rainmakers Annual General Meeting
held on Friday 3rd December 1993
at 'Red Gables', Benslow Path, The Avenue, Hitchin, Herts.

The meeting opened at 8:05pm.

Chairperson: Belinda Lansbury

Present: 20 members (including one new non-voting member)

1. Apologies for absence

Margery Heskins, Roy Bowtell, Graham Styles, Janet Purdy,
Peg Harris, Claire Steely, Louise Tomlinson, and Paul Waldock.

2. Minutes of 1992 A.G.M.

After correction of minor typing errors, the minutes of the Meeting held on 6th November 1992 (which had been circulated in advance) were approved and signed.

3. Matters Arising from A.G.M. Minutes

- a. Item 4. Adrian pointed out that the Yorkshire Bank now paid only 1/4 % interest on current accounts. Richard replied that there was very little difference in interest paid on current and savings accounts, but he would look into the matter and see if any better deal could be obtained.
- b. Item 7. Belinda reported that the new constitution had been discussed and approved at an E.G.M. on 24 November 1992.
- c. Item 8. Belinda reported that the "Enhance Your Dance" workshops had been successful, and would be repeated in 1994.
- d. Item 9.4. Belinda reported that the Arthritis Care Club had again forced a donation on us at our January display. It was suggested that in future, any such donations from them could be returned as donations to the Headquarters of this charity.
- e. Item 9.6. Belinda reported that Lillian Galatis had died.

4. Minutes of E.G.M., 24th November 1992.

These had been circulated in advance. Belinda drew attention to the fact that the numbers voting on item 3.(a). added up to 19, although only 18 people were present. All other voting figures added up to 18. It was not possible now to ascertain at what point the error occurred, but it made no difference to the result of the vote. Belinda read out a statement which she proposed to append to the minutes concerning this.

Adrian drew attention to a couple of typing errors: in item 5.(m)., the word "reads" should begin the second line of type; in item 9, line 3, for "from" read "form".
The minutes were then approved.

5. Matters Arising from E.G.M. Minutes

Terry asked whether the actual constitution had been spell-checked. Belinda said both she and Mark had spell-checking facilities on their computers. Mark pointed out that copies of the constitution had already been produced and made available to members.

6. Chairman's remarks

Belinda reported that a list of people holding jobs in the Club had been set up. Certain jobs have deputies. The idea of having deputies for certain jobs is just to make life easier for the job holder and the committee.

Belinda thanked all the job holders for their work, many of whom are not committee members.

Belinda said a particular thankyou to:

- Jill - for leading us almost every Friday, for teaching dances, for organizing displays, the list is endless.
- Isabel - for being wardrobe mistress over the past 15 years. Isabel is now retiring from this role and Sue is taking over. Belinda presented Isabel with a small token of thanks for her hard work over the years and wished Sue good luck.
- Moye - who quietly and efficiently provides us with squash, not only every Friday but also at extra-curricular events.
- Mark - for taking on the task of secretary, despite being Dyslexic.

To help set out some guidelines for organizing Rainmakers events we have devised 3 different checklists - these are for Displays, Workshops and Dances or Parties. The idea of these lists is to provide a memory jogger for the committee and also to have some feedback for use in future years.

Another new feature is a welcome letter for new members. This was suggested at last year's AGM by Peter who was quickly given the task of providing the first draft. Belinda thanked Peter for the idea and for all his help.

Belinda reminded members that she would be having a baby at the end of January and so will be absent from Friday evenings for a while. Belinda continued that if re-elected her main priority this year would be to encourage more people to run Friday evenings and displays and to teach dances.

7. Secretary's report

Mark's report included events from 1st September 1992 to 31st August 1993, the Club's financial year. Mark went through the highlights of the 13 displays, a day course, a French evening, 3 garden evenings, 4 Beginners Workshops and the Anniversary Dance. Mark also remembered the first Rainmakers Auction in aid of the SIFD. There were also a number of birthday celebrations including: Peter's 50th, Roy's birthday/retirement party, Janet's birthday dance, a joint celebration held for Jim & Jackie and last but not least a surprise party held for Jill's 50th birthday.

Belinda thanked Betty for keeping the scrapbooks.

8. Treasurer's report

Richard apologized for some errors in the accounts, which had occurred as he was familiarizing himself with a new computer program. In the expenditure on admin., postage should be £23.28, newsletter should be £12.10, scrapbook £2.95, and the total should be £57.47.

Richard pointed out that although we appeared to have a healthy balance, we would be spending about £500 on a radio mike, leaving only about £500 in the accounts. Terry asked about applying for a grant and Belinda said we had already received a grant of £235. Peter congratulated the committee on the presentation of the accounts; they were very simple and clear to understand.

Adrian asked what items were included in "miscellaneous" for Friday evenings, as this amount seemed rather large. Richard replied that it included purchase of slip-stop and presents; he could include slip-stop as a separate item if desired.

Adrian pointed out that insurance and SIFD affiliation could apply to other sections of the accounts. Belinda replied that they were included in the Friday evening section because that was the main reason for the existence of the Club.

Peter asked where the equipment fund was held. Richard replied that all the money was in the one bank account, but next year he could break the figures down to show current account and equipment fund as separate items.

Acceptance of the Treasurer's report was proposed by Peter, seconded by Henry, and agreed unanimously.

9. Appointment of auditors

Richard proposed, and Belinda seconded, that Bill Thorne be appointed as Auditor. This was carried unanimously.

10. Fixing of Annual and weekly subscriptions

Belinda explained the reason behind the committee's proposals for increasing both annual and weekly subscriptions. The committee considered that the 3 sections in the accounts (Friday evenings, events, and administration) should be self-funding. Analysis of the accounts for the past 5 years had shown that income on Friday evenings and admin. was dropping, while we were faced with further increases in the cost of the hall. Any profit from events would go into the equipment fund.

Jill warned against applying the system too rigidly. She pointed out that there might be occasions when a foreign teacher was available on a Friday evening; this could result in an apparent financial loss, while actually benefitting the Club. Belinda said this sort of expenditure could be met from the equipment fund. Richard said the committee could decide which section of the accounts to put such an event into.

Peter was also concerned about applying the system too rigidly and feared that raising the subscriptions might keep some people away. Belinda agreed that we would not be too rigid, but pointed out the difficulty of forecasting possible future costs; income from events could not be taken for granted, and some displays did not generate any income.

Clive stated that he did not think the proposed increase would affect attendance.

Betty agreed with previous comments, but questioned whether losses on events such as the Victoria Embankment display and the annual dance could not have been avoided. Richard explained that most of the loss on the Victoria Embankment display was due to paying Dave Garner's expenses. The committee was looking into ways of improving the annual dance. Adrian pointed out that the Victoria Embankment display was to promote the SIFD and it was important that the Club should do this.

The committee's proposals for increases to the annual and weekly subscriptions were then put by Richard, seconded by Belinda, and voted on separately.

1. The committee recommend that the annual subscription is increased to £1.50.

For, 17; against, 1; abstentions, 1. The proposal was carried.

2. The committee recommend that the weekly subscription is increased to 85p.

For, 16; against, 1; abstentions, 2. The proposal was carried.

It was agreed that the new weekly subscription should take effect from Friday 10th December 1993 and the new annual subscription from Friday 7th January 1994.

11. Election of officers and committee members

The following nominations had been received, and those persons nominated were duly elected:

Belinda Lansbury (chairperson)	Maria Kerr (committee)
Richard Thom (treasurer)	Graham Styles (committee)
Mark Balaam (secretary)	Isabel Lamont (committee)
	Kathy Molesworth (committee)

12. Hitchin Gathering

Belinda pointed out the problems caused by the increasing number of dancers in the Club and said that it had been decided that dancers for the Gathering would be selected jointly by the choreographer and the committee, on the basis of various criteria as appropriate (eg. dancing ability, height, etc). The committee had decided to reduce the number of rehearsals that would be held on Friday evenings and increase the number held on other days.

Terry felt it was unfair that those not in the display should have to lose part of their Friday evenings. Belinda pointed out that this matter had been raised before, and had been taken into account; from personal experience she thought many of the newer members of the Club enjoyed watching to see how a major display was put together.

Terry pointed out that other Clubs did not hold rehearsals in Club time. Jill said that what was proposed was a compromise. It was difficult to fit in our rehearsals around those fixed by the Staplers and Roundabouts. In any case, the display for 1994 involved only one main dance, and other people could dance it at the other end of the room from the display team.

Clive pointed out that the committee was elected to take decisions on the running of the Club activities, and Peter agreed with this.

Belinda said the Committee would welcome feedback from Club members on how the new arrangements worked.

13. Any other business

13.1 Anniversary Dance

Belinda said that the poor attendance over the past 2 years was

disappointing for the organizers, MC, and musicians. The 1994 dance would be the Club's "coming-of-age" 18th dance and she hoped it would be better supported. Richard said suggestions for alternative dates or venues could be made to the committee. Barbara suggested a Friday evening, but Belinda felt it was more special on a Saturday and probably more convenient for musicians. Jill pointed out that there was an SIFD diary that could be consulted to avoid a clash of dates. Mark replied that the SIFD event that clashed with our dance this year was not listed in the copy of the diary he had received.

Terry asked if any research had been done on the reasons for the poor attendance, and pointed out that many people take holidays in September. Belinda replied that we would consider the possibility of a date in October. Betty suggested that the date should be notified to other SIFD clubs as early as possible.

13.2 Peg Harris

Belinda read out a message from Peg thanking members for their cards and expressions of sympathy following the death of her husband.

13.3 Turkish Dances

Henry asked if it would be possible to arrange for some Turkish dances to be taught. Jill said the Turkish club in London was rather disorganized, and it would be best to look elsewhere for a teacher. It might be possible to have 1 or 2 Turkish dances included in a day course. Henry would also like more Armenian dances to be taught.

13.4 SIFD Summer School

Jill reminded members about the SIFD summer school to be held in York on 6-13 August 1994.

13.5 Honorary Life Member and Honorary President of the Club

At this point Jill was asked to withdraw from the meeting. Belinda said that Betty had proposed that Jill should be made an Honorary Life Member and Honorary President of the Club. This was agreed unanimously.

Jill was then invited to return and told of the decision. A tape recording of an appreciation of Jill made by Roy Bowtell was then played, and Jill was presented with a transcript of the recording and a certificate of Life Membership prepared by Clive. Jill expressed her thanks to everyone.

In conclusion, Belinda thanked Jill and Peter for their hospitality, and the meeting closed at 10.00pm.

A.G.M. December 2nd 1994



Members wait for others to arrive. Peter and Jill's living room.



Secretary.
Mark.

Chairman.
Belinda.

Treasurer.
Richard.

Committee
member.
Isabel.

Rainmakers' Annual General Meeting.

Friday, December 2nd 1994.

The Rainmakers' A.G.M. was held at "Red Cables" Benslow Path, Hitchin, the home of Peter and Jill Bransky.

Twenty-two members were present and the meeting opened at 8.10 p.m.

We all had copies of the Agenda, the Minutes of last year's A.G.M. and the Treasurer's Report, so it was not necessary for these to be read out. The Chairman, Belinda asked whether anyone had comments to make or matters arising from last year's meeting. There were very few remarks but the main point made was that it was a good decision to move the date of the Anniversary Dance from September to October. This year's dance, held at Ickleford on October 8th, with a band and entertainer, was a tremendous success.

Belinda then reviewed the year briefly and thanked her committee members for all their work. She also thanked Jill, in particular, for teaching the dances and helping to lead in many ways. Other club members who do jobs regularly were also thanked i.e. Ann - publicity, Sue - Wardrobe, Moya - Drinks, Terry - Newsletter, Betty - Scrapbook.

She also told us that Sue has retired as Wardrobe Mistress and that Maria will take over this job.

A guest caller, usually a club member, will take over running the Friday meeting once a month, usually on the first Friday, to give

Till a break. During the year Janet Woolbar ran a Callers Workshop for Rainmakers to encourage more members to do this.

Sue and Mark have each run displays and other members have helped to teach dances to take some of the burden from Till.

As ten new members joined the club last month, which is very pleasing, we should have a discussion later in the meeting as to how new members will best be incorporated into dancing and club activities.

Mark, our Secretary, gave a brief resume of the club's activities in the past year.

He reminded us that Rainmakers gave twelve dancing displays, nearly appeared on "Barrymore" on television, had a group visit the Bingen Wine Festival in Germany, launched a collection of tee-shirts, sweatshirts etc. bearing a Rainmaker logo, held five Garden Evenings and took part in a variety of other events. It is a busy club.

Richard then presented his Treasurer's Report. He apologised for a typing error in the Balance Sheet which gave a wrong total. This was accepted.

He explained that our expenditures were greater this year because of higher hall hire charges, higher phone bills and expenses incurred in arranging the trip to Bingen. We had received a Grant of £235 to the Equipment Fund and a fee of £500 from London Weekend Television.

We now have 54 paid up members and the average Friday attendance is 29 people.

It was decided that annual and weekly subscriptions need not be changed.

The officers of the club were re-elected as they stand:-

- Chairman - Belinda Lansbury
- Secretary - Mark Balaam
- Treasurer - Richard Thom.
- Committee :-
 - Graham Styles
 - Isabel Lamont
 - Maria Kerr
 - Kathy Molerworth.

We then had an interesting discussion on the future direction of the club. We all agreed that the main purpose of the meetings is for members to dance for pleasure and also to improve their dancing. We think that displays can be fun and are also important to entertain elderly and handicapped people. Some displays enhance the prestige of the club and bring in new members. However the club should not take on too many displays in a year as rehearsals can become a problem and we do not always have enough people willing and free to take part in a display which we have undertaken. The committee will look further into this matter.

Martin suggested that we could have a longer club evening when displays are being rehearsed. Separate rehearsals are usually arranged for major displays.

Isabel raised the matter of costumes and the point was endorsed by many members.

that people should be prepared to make or obtain their own costumes especially when they want to be in displays. Patterns are available and some members are willing to help new members with the sewing.

We agreed that it is a good thing to have new members, including young ones, joining a thriving club. Workshops and Beginners Evenings will help them to learn the dances. Peter's "Welcome" sheet is a success.

Betty suggested that we all wear our names one Friday evening early next term.

Other points raised were that we should have shorter Notices given out on a Friday and that the Notice Board and Newsletter could be used more.

In Any Other Business we were told that the price for Day Courses will be split in future i.e. £X for full day, £Y for half day.

The S.I.F.D. will be taking part in a big C.C.P.R. display at the Albert Hall. Frances Horrocks will be organising a display of Romanian dances:—

Hora Mintita (with shouts)

Giana

Hora Femelior

A Romanian costume will be needed. Rehearsals will take place in Birmingham and the show will be in London on September 30th 1995.

The club's Town Twinning. Trip to Bingen was greatly enjoyed by those who went. Jill

and Richard were especially thanked for their hard work in arranging it. Framed photographs were presented to them.

Peter said there is the possibility of an invitation to go to Nuits St. George in October 1995.

The Hitchin Gathering Display for 1995 is to be of Italian dances. Rehearsals are as follows: -

Tuesday, Dec. 6th at Radwell for the Candle Dance.

Sunday, Jan. 15th, 2-4:30 Tarantella & Candles.

Sunday, Jan. 22nd. 2-4:30 " "

Weds. Feb. 8th 8.00-10.00 Mormon Hall, Stevenage

Weds. Feb. 21st. 8.00-10.00 " " "

Dress Rehearsal.

Possibly last half hour of some Friday meetings also.

Roy raised the point that Honorary Members do not have to pay subscriptions and he had seen Peter and Jill paying on a Friday. Also callers do not pay on the night they call.

Jill told us about forthcoming S.I.F.D. Dances and said that we had been asked to run a Sunday night dance in September or December 1995. The December date was accepted.

Jill and Peter were warmly thanked for their hospitality and the evening closed.

After this we enjoyed refreshments, conversation and watched a tape made at York of the Candle Dance, the Italian Tarantella Fasola and Argentinian Dancing.

Annie Robson
c/o General Delivery
Orange Walk Town
BELIZE
Central America

Tel. from UK: 010 501 3 20325
(cheap rate is 8pm-8am all week)

10 September 1994

To my family, friends, colleagues and supporters.

Yes, this is a form letter – I've lost track of the individual letters I've written, and asking Ellie, my daughter, to type this up and distribute it seems a good short-cut. I will, of course, write individually to those who write to me, but I guessed that a lot of you would be waiting for 'news' and my first impressions.

It's a strange half-and-half country – with the housing being the most obvious sign of its Third World status. In the countryside many people, often Mayans, live in huts made of saplings and thatched with palms, with a lean-to, open on one side, for cooking and washing. They can look quite picturesque with palms and mangoes growing round. Most people in the towns live in board houses, often on stilts, with corrugated iron roofs – hellishly noisy when it rains. Some are well kept and look like nice seaside chalets. Others are very patched and dilapidated. They look worse because here are no curtains or glass windows. Silly me – I didn't think that you don't need glass in a hot country. The 'best' houses are one or two storey concrete. Floors are earthen or concrete and covered with extremely thin vinyl – again carpets are too hot. The furniture is ornate and real wood – this is mahogany country. There's usually cold tap water only and you wash clothes in rainwater collected from the roofs in huge vats. Everyone has a TV (US channels) and a VCR. Crockery tends to be poly-whatnot and garish. There is little evidence of any tradition of decorative arts.

'My' town is the only industrial area outside Belize City. Its founded on the sugar trade. We do OK for food as there's a large community of Mennonites here. These are the descendants of Dutch/Low German 19th century emigrants who finally came here en masse in the 30s, I think. They dress in a distinctive way – dungarees and large straw hats like Stetsons for the men; black kerchiefs and long navy print pleated dresses for the women. They are dairy farmers so we get cheese and milk. Everyone else is a shade of brown/black. You can tell the Mayans facially – but the Creoles, Mestizos [?] and Garifuna you have to wait to declare themselves. Even language is no help as everyone seems to switch from Creole to Spanish to English all in one sentence.

The roads are another sign of difference. There are four metalled roads in the whole country – the highways – which link the three regions to Belize City and the Guatemalan and Mexican borders. They are about the status of a B-road – say from Pilton to Barton. Some town roads are sort of surfaced. Most are like farm tracks. In towns there are drains alongside the roads, but there's good street lighting. And no pavements. The streets and gardens are full of dogs (the racket at night!) – and small children – who rush out to jump up and down in the rain and stand under the water spouts from the roofs: a lovely warm shower.

The shops were hardest for me to adjust to. Belize makes very little so there's not a lot to sell, mostly imported stuff. Big towns have at least one supermarket where you

can buy virtually everything you can at home – except for fruit and veg. The latter are a disappointment. Veg are restricted to onions, carrots, tomatoes and white cabbage – and small shrivelled sweet peppers. Fruit is water-melon, pineapple, mango and oranges. All quite cheap and brought from the street sellers. I've heard that you *can* get broccoli on Tuesdays if you are early. Other shops are all I-sell-everything shops. A common notice is 'Yes we have it!' T-shirts, tape-recorders, trainers, hair-slides, kettles – all together. 'Lola's Secret Hideaway' disappointingly sells school books. 'Boutique' means very ordinary jeans, T-shirts, shorts. My favourite is 'Glady's' (sic). There are lots and lots of open-all-hours shops with a small range of foodstuffs (even the headteacher runs one). People, despite having huge fridges, buy little and often. You can buy 1 tomato, 1 envelope, 1 cigarette. In Orange Walk there must be at least a dozen Chinese restaurants – which are also cafés and bars. Every eatery has the same basic menu – rice & beans, with pork, chicken or beef; stewed beans ditto; hamburgers and fries. You also get *escebeche* – a Mayan chicken broth with loads of onions – and *ceveche* – seafood marinated in lime juice. Soft drinks are wonderful – always made with fresh fruit.

There's not much to do in the evenings. Dark at 6.30 but quite OK to walk around until 9 or so – it's cooler then. The library – which has slightly fewer books than I had – is open till 8. There are dances and discos which the younger US volunteers in the town go to. The parks are just little squares with benches, climbing frames and trees. The people are wonderful – friendly, generous and open. You introduce yourself in shops and restaurants – it feels so good to say 'I am not a tourist, I live here!' They are pleased and curious. I do asked into homes too, which is nice. The usual form of address is 'Miss Annie' and the children call out to me as I pass.

The children know me because of school. How shall I describe it? It reminds me of my school in Liverpool in the 1940s. Very formal – the class stand to chorus 'Good morning Miss Annie. You are welcome!' every time I pop in, regardless of the time of day. The rooms are small, and crowded. Children sit at single desks in rows. There are no units or storage cupboards – there's little to store, anyway. The floors are bare boards. There are few posters or displays. Children must bring all their own textbooks, paper and pens. When they don't, teacher just handcopies a page. The absence of artwork, drawings, etc., even in the infants, is striking – can't spare the paper, I would guess. There's a lot of drilling and learning by rote. The school I know is built around a grass square. Assembly – notices, prayers and the national anthem – is held under the trees. There's no gym. Everyone works with doors and windows open and the fans on – it's really noisy and children wander in and out of rooms in the breaks. Teachers wear uniform – they favour two-tone suits with contrasting panels, cuffs and lapels, green-and-yellow, brown-and-cream, ill-made and ill-fitting.

There are many, many churches – C of E, RC, Mormon, Jehovah's Witness, Methodist, all kinds of Evangelical: and the churches mainly provide the schools. Christianity and patriotism are very high profile. News is mostly 'good' and local. Papers come out once a week and contain limited news, uplifting messages and lists of bad debtors. They also slag off those of opposing political views without much profundity of thought.

I just love it – so far. The heat is bearable – and I'm getting used to three cold showers a day. The noise of life – the dogs, the rain, next door's radio, the public speakers blaring out music in the square – is more wearisome. Household chores, like the washing, sweeping floors, cooking beans, take a lot of time – as does writing letters. Being here is an open door to new friendships: hospitality amongst volunteers – VSO, Peace Corps, and Jesuit Volunteers – is part of how you live. There's no drunkenness, that I've seen, no beggars. Of course, that's just in three weeks. I may get to miss cottage cheese, mushrooms, books, hot water and Radio 3. Mentally, I keep getting ready for winter – and have to remind myself that it isn't going to get cold and dark, so there's no rush to get things done.

I haven't travelled about much yet. I've not been out to the cayes (islands) or the rainforest area. I've only been to one Mayan ruin – which was romantic, with toucans and humming-birds as well as the temples to astound me. And I've been to one beach – not even a famous one – but looking just like a postcard.

I know that some of you are fund-raising for the schools here. My goodness, it is needed – the rubber picture stamps I brought out with me, for example, are a novelty, but so time-saving for the staff, who were tracing pages from books. Please you send any cash to:

Debbie Pitts
VSO Fundraising
317 Putney Bridge Road
London SW15 2PN.

She holds the money until I'm sure of the best way to use it. Gifts in kind can be sent to me by surface post – it takes about six weeks. Printed matter (books!) can be sent by special rate. It's taken me ages to suss out the postal system. There appear to be only rare house deliveries. The school collects its post once a week. So, letters to me should be sent to the address at the top of the first page – and I go in daily to ask. There is, unfortunately, no PO Box free at the moment – perhaps in the New Year. There are no post boxes: you can only post a letter when the PO is open – weekdays, 8-4, minus lunch. I move into my 'apartment' this week – and will then have a phone – we are 6 hours behind you in summer and 5 hours in winter. But beware of the cost of calls!

I hope I've told you all enough for starters – please keep in touch – and many thanks for sponsoring me. Cheers,

Annie.

PS There are lizards everywhere – and no kitchen is complete without its cockroaches!

A note from Ellie:

You may already know that Annie will be on the telly soon, as part of series called *Next* at 2.35, Wednesdays, on BBC 2. So far she has been filmed leaving school, training in Birmingham, sorting out the house, and saying goodbye to Ed and me at the airport. The crew are also going out to Belize some time later in the year. The series starts in mid-October, but I don't yet have transmission times for the Annie's bits. Keep your eyes peeled.

If, for some strange reason, you would like to contact me (eg. for more info on the TV), my address and phone number are (though I shall be away until early October):

Ellie Robson
250 Oxford Road
Kidlington
Oxon OX5 1ED

0865 376576

Keep writing!

From
Annie
29/11/94.



Pelicans on an old jetty at Dangriga in the south of Belize. Annie went to a festival there - Garifuna Day.



Garifuna - an ethnic group descended from Caribbean South American Indians and slaves. Their shuffling dances re-enact the refugee landings. Yellow is the Garifuna colour.



More Garifuna dancers at Dangriga.



A procession of Mestizos - girls of Mayan/Spanish mix passing in front of Annie's flat in Orange Walk, Belize. where she is doing V.S.O. work - a job in retirement.

Annie Robson. General Delivery. Orange Walk. Belize. Central America.
Tuesday 29th. Nov.

Dear Betty,

Your most welcome letter arrived today - just when I was thinking of writing especially for Rainmakers with the dancing photos enclosed, (more below) but its much nicer to write to an individual, so I'll address my letter to you, and leave it to your skill and judgment about sharing the contents.

I **do** thank-you for writing. Every contact with 'home' is treasured. I play the tapes that were given to me by Roy and by the Club and see you all so vividly. Each dance is associated with a particular partner or event. I can't remember all the steps, alas - and its very difficult to circle dance solo, but at least I tread on nobody's toes ! I am glad I can bring you all into my flat, and so pleased that I am remembered too.

Well, you say you'd like the heat. I wonder if you really would. I long for a touch of frost, some crispness in the air. How perceptive of you to meet my need and to send a snow picture. It is 'Winter' here too - which means two sheets over you in bed, and a nightdress, rather than one sheet or a nightie which was the case when I first came. I may wear a cotton cardigan over my nighshirt when I first get up at 6 a.m., but by 7.30 its sticky hot. We had one week of rain every day - but it now tends to bucket down only about once a fortnight for an hour or so, and although it has the density of a bad day at Glencoe, its warm with it.

Now, the photos, I went down South to a town called Dangriga to celebrate Garifuna Day. Garifuna are a distinct ethnic group who are descended from Carib, South American, Indians and slaves. The two met up on St. Vincent in the late 18th. century and combined to defy the British, who summarily deported them to the Honduras. Until recently there was no metalled road to the South, so there is less of ~~a~~ ethnic mix there and old traditions still survive, especially the dancing. I stayed in a house on the sea front - with the inevitable row of pelicans sitting on an old jetty, and a sand track to walk on. We went for a meal in a Garifuna restaurant. It was revolting - fish with coconut and bananas sounded quite attractive, but the whole was reduced to a grey glutinous mass, and it smelt SO fishy. I didn't eat mine - and had good old rice an' beans instead. We went to watch the children's show and parade - but this was just chaotic, with half the audience on stage and the other half playing so that the speakers gave up. That night we wandered round the town to see the dancing. 'Sheds' had been constructed - sort of palm thatch Dutch Barns. In the shed were the drummers - all the music is percussive, and lots of apparently very old ladies with lined faces, head scarves and bright long skirted dresses. They sang in Garifuna - or chanted more like, and performed lots of shuffling dances, very rhythmic and African. Not really Rainmaker stuff, the upper body scarcely moves, but the rear end gyrates and wobbles alarmingly rapidly. Next morning I did not get up at 5.30 to see the re-enactment of the refugee landings, but later went to the rally. Here speeches were interspersed with more formal dancing with people in coordinated costumes, and again to drum music. These are what the photos show. The costumes are very bright - yellow is the Garifuna colour. On the way we saw very fat ladies buying fish - it was just laid out on paper on some grass at the side of the Creek. It was very strange to me - I have got used to hearing Spanish all

around, and to the sight of the blond fair skinned Mennonites in Orange Walk, as well as Hindus and Chinese. I felt I'd been to a different country.

The girls in white dresses are in a parade in my own town, actually passing along the main street in front of my flat. They represent the Mestizos, the Mayan / Spanish mix who predominate round here. I am hoping to see some 'proper' dancing over the Christmas hols. when I plan to go over into Mexico for a break, some music and some hot water ! I will take my camera along and send you anything of interest. Alas i did not photograph the 'cultural display' one school put on for the Governor General's visit. I was stunned to see Maypole dancing here, but with a difference. There were the pole, and the ribbons, and the little girls skipping in twos, but as each pair reached the head of the set, they did Punta dance movements, which make the Twist seem rather sedate. it would have needed a video camera to do it justice.

This last Saturday I booked a trip to an orchid Farm. Didn't know what to expect - I was probably thinking of neat rows in a greenhouse, a bit like the Cambridge Botanical Gardens. I was wrong. Carlos the guide took us by boat up the New River. Showed us water plants, then landed at his 'farm'. This is a stretch of jungle on the river bank where he has protected/planted / propagated orchids. Lots of black orchids out, and tiny tiny ones like the flowers on moss, and bigger white, butterfly orchids. There are hundreds of species, and they are not all out at once, so you have to go again, but it was expensive. Bromeliads were in flower too, and something like a maranta - spiky dark green leaves with maroon undersides, something I'm sure we grow as a house plant. He called the flowers, Moses in the bulrushes. A little cradle of ?sepals ,boat shaped, and a tiny white flower nesting at the rim. We tried to get a tarantula out of its hole - wouldn't come all the way. Went cruising up and down the river looking for crocodiles and turtles but saw only one of each.

But its not all excursions. Yes, you would recognize some aspects of the schools - 48 in Reception and just no space to spare anywhere. I am doing assessments of individual children. In one school I got a corner of a classroom, ~~ten~~ desks and two chairs with their backs missing for me and the child. One day there weren't even two chairs, as all the pupils for the class had unexpectedly turned up and mine was needed in the classroom. In another school I had a very nice chair - the visitor's chair from the head's office. Other visitors had to stand. But here there was not even a corner of a classroom - I was told that the coconut trees on the edge of the field would be shady - and luckily it did not rain. A big change from my smart school building in Stevenage.

I don't know whats happening about the TV. programme. I hope the local paper will alert you. The original plan was to have several small slots about me, but I think they are now thinking in terms of two longer ones. The film crew haven't yet been out here - which is a nuisance 'cos I was hoping they'd bring me some decent tea bags ! Ellie , my daughter, has already sent me an 'Aid Parcel' with some red lentils, wholemeal spaghetti , and three Guardian crossword books. Food becomes an obsession. You can't rely on seeing anything on sale regularly - so when you see it you buy it and 'pig out'. we had aubergines a few weeks ago, cauliflowers last week, and today - pears!

once again, thanks for writing .
and a happy Christmas to my rainmaking friends
A i

Letter from Annie,
sent to the Rainmakers.

Annie Robson
c/o General Delivery
Orange Walk Town
Belize
Central America

010 501 320325

4th December 1994

This missive is my Christmas/New Year Greeting and First Term's Report – of course, it will be out of synch with any festive letters you may have written to me – which is regrettable, but can't be helped.

If you have written at any time in the last few months, then please again accept my grateful thanks. It's marvellous to 'hear' familiar voices. Last week I saw a man with a BT tee-shirt on, and so boldly accosted him. He was a fitter from Warrington, of all places, and so I took him home for a cuppa, just to go on hearing the accent.

There are compensations that can make me feel quite guilty at the thought that *you* may imagine I'm suffering untold deprivations in a noble cause. High spots have been the coral reef; a moonlight sail; horse-riding in the jungle; watching Garifuna dancing to drums in a palm thatch shed; and going on a nature trail to see the orchids. And all these are quite low-key compared to the things I may be able to do in the holidays and when I see how the money pans out. And also just ordinary new experiences, like watching bananas grow.

Yesterday I was taken to a village wedding. The chapel was a simple room/hut, like an old scout hut. It was decorated with white paper festoons made out of string, cut up straws and cut-out paper hearts. No flowers – even the bridal bouquet was made of artificial flowers. She was a Canadian missionary; he was a local Indian whom she dwarfed in size. The whole service was in Spanish, despite English being the 'official' language here. Most of the congregation were Indian or Mestizo – dark straight black hair and chiselled faces. The women and children wore their best – about half in floral prints – but the others in colourful satins and laces in amazing flounced and ruched designs, often stitched with white thread, and not too skilfully at that. It was hard to tell what was a US import and what a Mexican or Indian custom. Certainly 'Here comes the bride' on a tape-recording isn't native, but perhaps the symbolism of bride and groom lighting one candle each at the start, then using these to light one joint candle at the end was more local. After the service bride and groom led us on foot through the village to the house – or, more accurately, the garden – where the reception was. Here palm thatch shelters were erected, and all the benches from the chapel brought along. We were served fresh orange juice and the inevitable chicken, rice and beans – or you could have *escebeche*, which is a chicken and onion stew.

The other big event of my week was going to a VSO conference for 'social development workers' on St. George's Caye. This Caye was the original settlement of the buccaneers or Baymen, and where they defeated the Spanish, thus starting or preserving Belize's British connection. Sadly, it's all now just a series of tourist hotels and private country retreats. But it was quite an experience to attend workshops held on a jetty, with multi-coloured fish swimming below. The aim was to provide a meeting point and a forum for social workers and allied professionals in the country. Here is where you have to keep reminding yourself that the whole population is the equivalent of say, Watford. It was an odd mix of people – 'human development officers', or social workers; prison officers; school counsellors; refugee workers; and so on. Most of these have only ever trained as teachers, though a few older ones have had other training, in clinical psychology for example, in other countries. The demographic profile shows up too. 50% of the population is under 15, 75% under 30 – so young people get given quite a lot of responsibility very quickly. All the time I think how they are struggling against the odds – everyone has to have more than one skill, and they are working without the props of cars, postal services and press that we take for granted. The level of debate varied widely – again with the professionals struggling to establish things we take for granted, like procedures for referral, and, as they kept emphasising, the issue of confidentiality in a small country where whenever ten people are together, some of them will be related.

My own work proceeds in fits and starts. Schools close for festivals or for In-Service days led by Peace Corps volunteers. There doesn't seem to be any statutory ruling on the number of days open. I am trying to discover children with learning difficulties in mainstream schools. It's a slow process. Sometimes I work without a proper chair to sit on, sometimes with a chair and desk – but out in a field because there is no room to spare. There is no-one to tell me what tests or criteria to use, and it's hard to work out what is reasonable to expect given the dual language and the old-fashioned teaching methods used. When a 7-year-old child doesn't appear to recognise a picture of a sweetcorn or a lime, is this because they are slow, they don't know the English word, or because they are just not used to seeing pictures? As for reading, the printed word is very scarce here. The only print some

children may see is in school, and even there, there won't be very much. I've probably told you before that there are no daily newspapers, and no magazines or comics; a limited amount of pre-packed food; no hoardings or billboards, and few street signs. Some of my 'best' lessons just can't happen – like what do these shops sell, because all shops seem to sell everything saleable. And then of course there's the shortage of paper for the kids to write and draw on, and reprographic aids for the teachers to make worksheets. Even where these do exist – Bandas, Roneos, Gestetners and the odd photocopier – teachers themselves pay for the paper and ink. This is exam week in schools – even the infants do exams – and all the pupils must bring in 50¢ or a dollar to pay for their exam papers and report cards.

Well, that's dealt with the social workers, teachers and psychologists amongst my friends – and I hope it hasn't bored them, or the rest of you.

What's my everyday life like? Well, I'm getting better at doing the washing at the rainwater tank – though Mrs Rosalez still does most of my clothes and all my sheets and towels for \$5 a week. It's got chillier – still no tights or cardigans, but I need two sheets over me at night – and I hate the morning cold shower, so I'm waiting for Pedro the electrician to come and fit a heated shower head – it's been three weeks now. Food is feast or famine. If you see it you buy it – and eat it every day till it's gone. This applies to fresh veg. especially, but packaged goods also come and go. On Friday I was able to shop in Belize City, so I got some treats – wholemeal rolls, Canadian carrots (less woody than the local variety), Branston pickle – which I don't use in England but the cheese is very dull here – and, glory of glories, some Lipton's Earl Grey teabags. There's even a rumour that Marmite was on the shelves one week.

It's the same with social life. I am the only English volunteer in this district. Transport is such that, apart from Corozal, any trip to see anyone involves an overnight stay. So I may have a weekend of intense talk, and then days of nothing much. The locals are wonderfully kind and do involve me – like the person who took me to yesterday's wedding. Another family took me to their 'country retreat' at a lagoon near here last weekend. I suppose I've been in 9 or 10 different homes. But there don't seem to be any clubs or societies, except in the city, where there are evening classes and a choral, a gardening and a history society that I know of. I have joined the local WAV – Women Against Violence – group, as a way of meeting people, as well as giving my support; but it's taking time to get to know the rhythm of life and when and how people socialise. There is a barrier caused by my foreignness – people don't treat you as an equal, but in a deferential way that kind of sets you apart. I'm gradually building up a collection of books. You find second-hand paperbacks on sale in the most surprising places – like herb shops and hairdressers. I have two libraries I can use: St. Peter's and the town library. Ellie sent me three Guardian crossword puzzle books, which are an enormous boon, and may last out until Easter. I don't garden, as it's far too hot. Walking is out – but I do cycle every day, though not yet for or with pleasure. An American lecturer I met at the conference commented that everything here takes so much longer – shopping, travelling, posting and collecting letters, cooking, and finding tradesmen to do things. The word processor to which I have treated myself is a kind of companion.

Oh dear; I wonder if I've made it all sound gloomy? The reality is that it's patchy. There are times when I feel tremendously excited and privileged to be here – sights and experiences all beyond my expectations – and other days when it's just like being at work in the winter in England – no better, no worse. It is strange to be adrift from Ellie especially, and from my friends. Three months – or nearly four – is too short a time to have made any deep new relationships, and that rather than the physical thing is the hardest part. So please keep in touch – a lot of you writing occasionally is a real help. I am hoping to spend Christmas week somewhere in Mexico – I hope you all have a happy and contented time.

HAPPY CHRISTMAS

from

BELIZE

and *Annie.*

PS From Ellie: we finally have almost-definite dates for Annie's TV appearances. The first programme – Annie preparing to leave – will go out on 4 January at 2.35 on BBC 2. The film crew are flying out to Belize on 9 January, and the second programme – Annie at work – will be hot off the camera on 18 January at the same time. If there are any scheduling changes, I will let you know. Of course, I will be videoing both programmes, so do not worry if you miss them. E.

Christmas Party.
Friday, December 16th 1994.

The Rainmakers' Christmas Party last night really went with a swing. This was chiefly because most of the dances were played by a real live band - Jacob's Ladder from Cambridge. They were already in position and playing as members arrived, laid out their contributions of food, sorted Christmas cards into appropriate heaps and adjusted pieces of headgear that were part of their costumes. One Arab gentleman (Graham, in disguise) could not persuade his head covering to stay in place while he danced so he had to abandon it.

Isabel had brought posters of dancers wearing various national costumes and these brightened up the walls very attractively.

Till had devised a programme of dances in collaboration with the band i.e. ones that we like and that they can play. This system produced two that we have not danced for some time - a Latvian dance called *Tauris Sturis* or Pin the Hedge and the Welsh Grasshopper Dance. Till had to teach them but they caused some fun and everyone joined in. There were forty-six people present including the band and one or two visitors who came with them. Heather and Michael of Jacob's Ladder Band are regular dancers at Rainmakers anyway.

It was good to have such a large crowd of people, many of whom wore costumes. After a

polka game dance where couples had to stand on a sheet of newspaper that halved its size each time the band stopped playing, we were glad of an interval.

During the interval we consumed vast quantities of food and punch, including a lovely walnut Christmas cake made by Maria and decorated like a holly wreath, and had an opportunity to talk to people (which is unusual on a Friday evening.) The raffle was drawn and we wondered who would get the sock organiser that appears in every Rainmaker raffle. I think it went to one of our guests from Cambridge so it may not appear again.

Belinda then thanked Jill for all her hard work for the club throughout the year and gave her a present from the Rainmakers. As always, Jill opened her parcels and this time revealed a large chocolate candle (which is appropriate as we are learning an Italian Candle Dance) and a lovely skirt for dancing.

The second half flew by and we were unable to complete the programme. Somebody's favourite dances had to be missed out.

However, we all agreed it had been a lovely party, one of the best we have had.

16th Dec. Christmas Party.

<u>Alunelul</u>	0
<u>Kuma Echa</u>	0
<u>Little Man in a Fox</u>	2+2
<u>Fyrmann Schottische</u>	2+2
<u>Neapolitan Taranella</u>	2
<u>Jamaica Skotis</u> (will be called)	2x4
<u>Taranella Farda. (Tape)</u>	2
<u>Walentki</u>	2
<u>Dandelbaska Polka</u>	2 mixer
<u>Macka Yollare. (Tape)</u>	0
<u>El Comida</u>	2
<u>50ta Tapatia</u>	2
<u>Hora Miesei</u>	line
<u>Rav Brachst</u>	0
<u>Hora n Dona Parti</u> (Tape)	0
<u>Boanopstekker</u>	0
<u>Flakke Toone</u>	2
<u>Zemer Akis</u>	2
<u>Debla Kyfit.</u>	lines
<u>Maruska</u>	2
	line
	0
	2
	2x4
	will be called!

X

Bailecito (tape) 2

X

La Chacarera (tape) 2

X

Mi section / News on a Sunday? 0

A Gota. 2

X

Trelcaraspista. 3

Also Raffle

X

Troita 3

food

^

Karamfi 0

Ssulam ya'vor. 0

Polka dance.
(newspapers)

(Jacob's Ladder)

Imoygi karikazo. 0

Maszyt. 2

easy

moderate

Harder.

You may not be able to follow it

Christmas Party. 1994.



The "Egyptian?" (Jordanian) gentleman smiles approvingly at the "Japanese" lady.

Note the band setting up in the background.



Party game - Graham and Carl balancing on a folded sheet of newspaper.

Photos taken and given by Jill.

From
Annie.
28° 12° 94.



Annie went to Merida, capital of the Yucatan state of Mexico during her Christmas holiday.

The woman is wearing traditional everyday dress called a "huipile". (ee-pil)



Huipiles for sale in Merida.

28/12/94.

c/o General Delivery, Orange Walk, Belize, C.A.

Dear Rainmakers,

I'm writing this twenty four hours after arriving back from the Merida, capital of the Yucatan state of Mexico, whilst the memory of the dancing is still fresh.

.On Monday night the street in front of the town hall is closed for a dancing display. Wow. Not like Rainmakers Mexican dancing - this is a blend of Spanish and Mayan. The men wore white - panamas, a loose shirt called a Gubyara, white trousers and sandals. The women's hair was in Spanish style, scraped back in a bun and with big coloured flowers to the side. Their dresses were an elaborate version of the huipile - long loose and straight, with the underslip as heavily embroidered as the top layer, and very very deep square collars, like on a sailor suit, also heavily stitched with many coloured flowers. Unfortunately NONE of my photos of the dancing came out, but I enclose two of huipiles (pronounced eepill, I think) so you get the idea.

It is a simple white rectangle, with a square hole for the neck BUT emblazoned with the most magnificent embroidery several inches deep round the hem and the neckline, and the short sleeves. The design of the embroidery varies by district. Its all floral. Some are simply a riot of colour, orange, red, purple and vivid blue. Others are the same, but have the spaces between the flowers filled with black thread cross hatchings. Others have the spaces cut out as in broderie anglais. Some districts don't mix colours, so the flowers and leaves are all green, or all blue outlines. All of these are done in satin stitch or to blend colours, a long and short stitch but one area just uses cross stitch on a coarse cloth like Binca, like for Infants sewing, which is then attached to the white cotton garment. The dress is short, and often worn over an underskirt, the deep lace edging of which shows for six or seven inches below. This was not Sunday best, but everyday wear, and in the city the women sat selling pathetic collections of fruit and nuts wearing these and sometimes embroidering whilst they waited for customers.

Anyway, the dancers were a very polished troupe - a Ballet Folklorique. They did several straightforward (but too 'ard for Annie) dances, with a lot of intricate footwork, including foot waving movements like Jill's Ekky Tikky Tum one. Then they did a quite beautiful Maypole dance, weaving a lovely umbrella of ribbons, apparently the English aren't the only ones with Maypoles. Now, Roy and Graham especially, pay attention, and accept the challenge? They produced open, half full bottles of beer, and men and women placed these on their heads and danced - not slow stately walks either. Then they removed the bottles, and the men went off and reappeared with trays on which were four glasses of water. Bottles were put on trays, and all the company put them on their heads and we were off again - this time with lots of small circle movements ad lib. One young Mayan man near me positively gyrated. Trays off. Now on come small rostra, about nine inches high and fifteen square and they mount these and do a very stumpy dance. Climax is to repeat stumpy dance, on the rostra, with the trays, glasses and beer bottles. The challenge lies in the fact that they did NOT drink the beer!! We also had a basket-of-fruit -dance by the women, and the, I suppose inevitable, men as toreadors, women as bulls sort.

I absolutely fell in love with the dresses - bought one for me, and some silks and

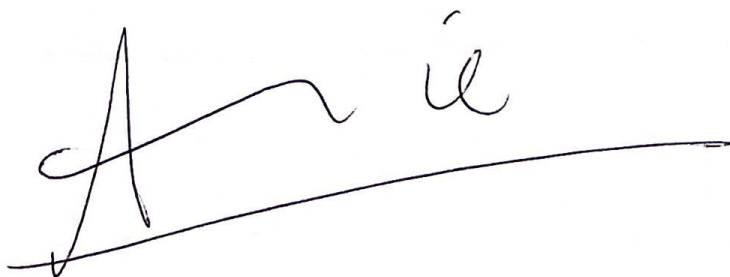
patterns to try a bit of sewing for myself

.Merida itself is a wonderful city. Bustling, lively, a visual delight and incredibly safe. The main square is defined by the monstrous church and three Spanish palaces with colonnades and courtyards and verandahs. One is now a bank, the other two the town hall and an entertainment centre - all free entry and the town hall enhanced by murals depicting Mayan life under the Spaniards. The old town looks dilapidated, peeling stucco flat fronted buildings, but huge carriage doors open onto tranquil courtyards, with these marvelous arched colonnades running round them. Old means 17th.C. Later, the Spaniards prospered by developing hennequen, a plant used for making rope and string. So in the 19th.C they built wide boulevards and enormous square houses like French "hotels". I walked for miles - its totally flat and the streets follow a very logical grid pattern - and wandering almost at random kept coming across delightful squares, each with its own 'Spanish Mission' church. There were lots of museums, art galleries, restaurants and markets selling carvings, weavings, pottery, embroidery, hammocks and Panama hats. I strongly recommend it as a holiday venue.

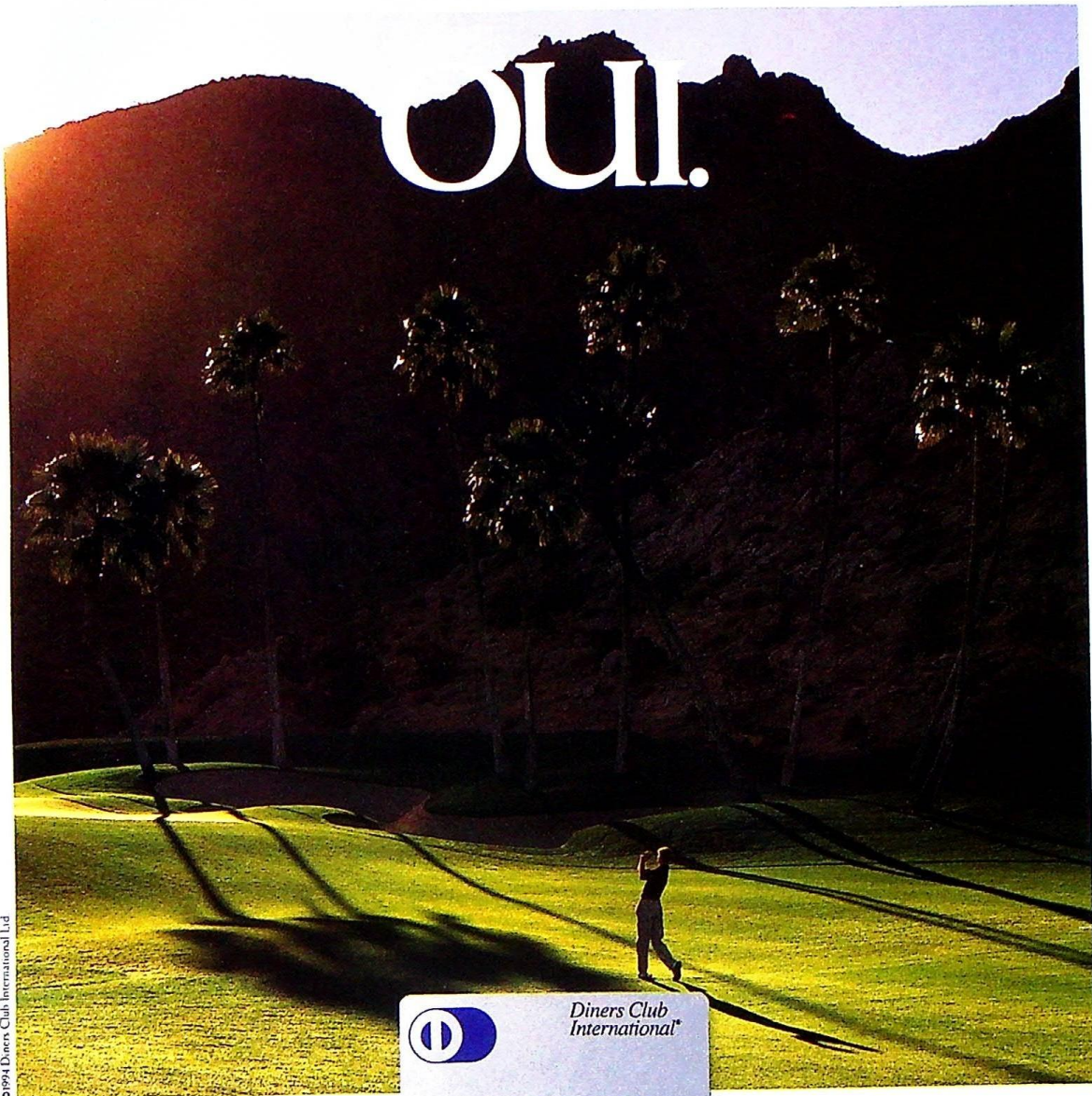
Apparently the Spanish got to this area first, but ignored it as the Mayans had no metal. They came back later and subdued them quite brutally, but discouraged intermarriage so the culture retains a strong Mayan flavour - in the dress, as I've told you, and in the housing and language - people on the buses spoke Mayan, not Spanish. Fortunately, the Spaniards did not find all the temples as the culture was already in decline and these remained unknown in the jungle/ bush to be discovered by a more appreciative age. They are stunning, with elaborate carvings, and terrifyingly steep flights of steps. When you get to the top, 91 steps up at Chichen Itza, for example, the rake is so steep that you cannot see the stairway you came up and can delude yourself that you are floating above the earth on a par with the gods. Being steeped in English and European history, I was disconcerted to find that I could not in any way 'read' the edifices - a salutary lesson in cultural humility. Even the Spanish Christian churches looked strange. They are pure Romanesque. Very stolid and forbidding looking - they have few windows and there are no crockets or finials or gargoyles or flying buttresses or pointed arches. I found them a very powerful symbol of the dominance of the conquistadors.

It was all a marvellous contrast to the relative cultural desert of Belize, and the happy reward for months of cold showers and an uninspired cuisine.

Many thanks to those who have sent cards, letters and good wishes. I love getting news from home - don't forget to look out for me on the TV on the 18th Jan.
Happy New Year,



"A week of back-to-back meetings.
Could I reward myself this weekend
without exceeding my credit limit?"



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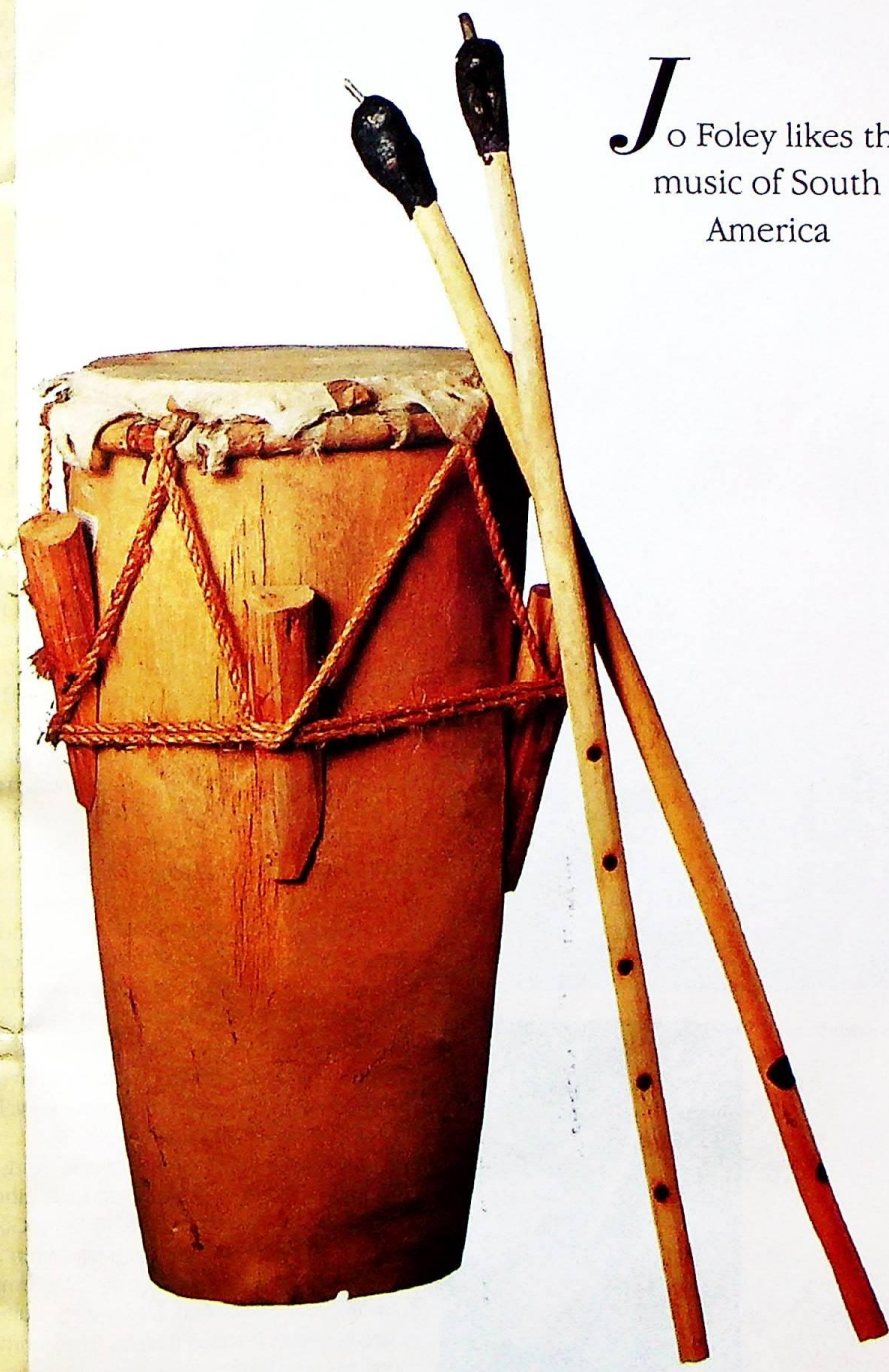


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LATIN Sounds

*J*o Foley likes the music of South America



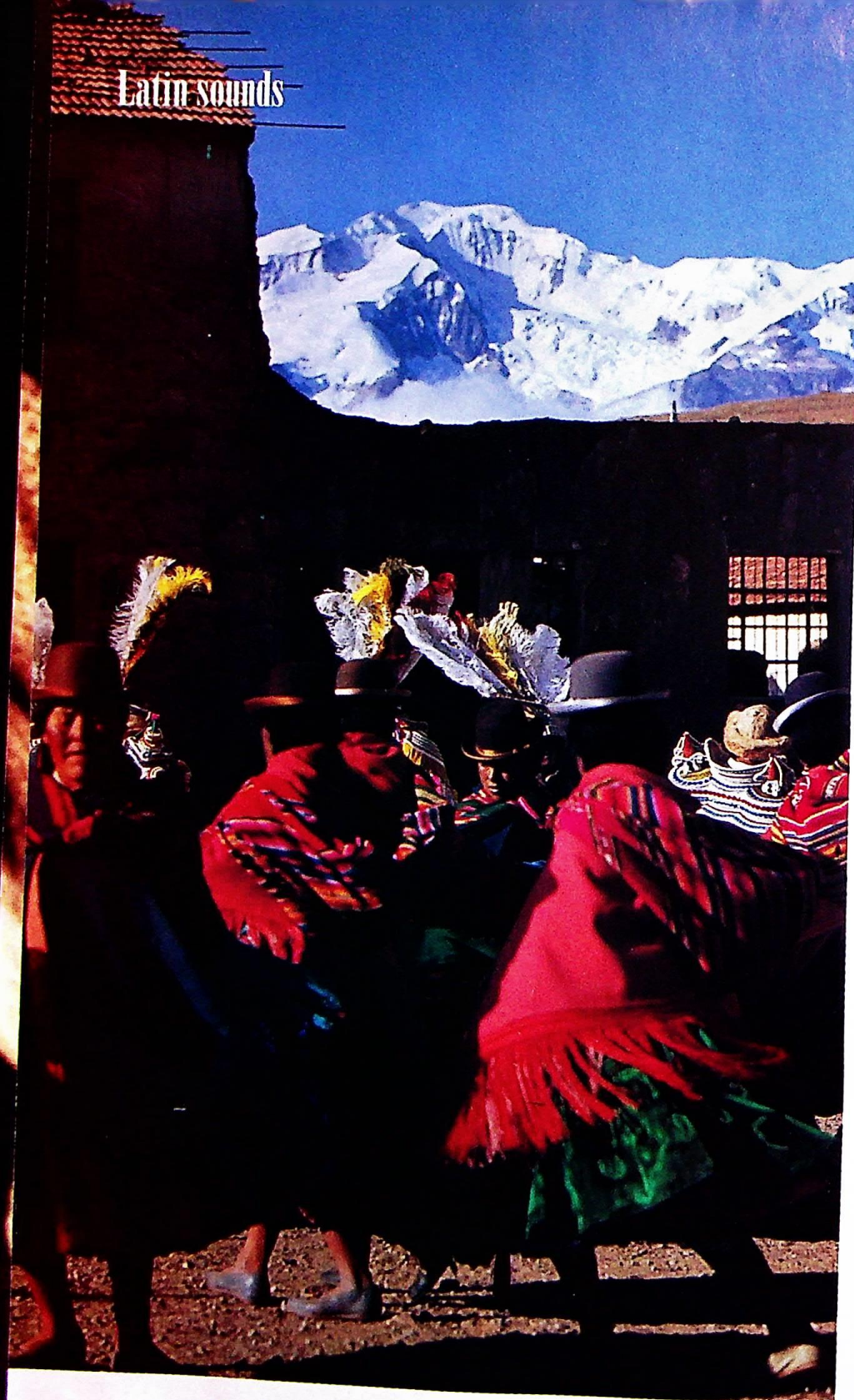
*T*hink of that vast tract of land called South America and what immediately occurs to you? For me it is vivid colours – the colours of the landscape and sky, the colours of the textiles and the textures of the country's arts and handicrafts. The paintings, the rugs, the basketry, the hangings and the glittering shades and shapes of beaten silver set with malachite, amethyst or agate.

But think again, close your eyes, concentrate and what do you hear? Music. Everywhere. From the pounding ghetto-blasters of the cities, to the rhythmic beat of the rumba and samba, from the elegant strings of the tango to the most haunting sound of all, the fine, lilting notes of the panpipes. From its sparkling coastline to the high peaks of the Andes, South America is literally a land alive with the sound of music.

And nowhere is its culture richer than in the plethora of musical instruments which bring about these sounds. For it is in its music and the instruments which make it that the entire history of the continent can be encapsulated. It is in the mixing and blending of the indigenous instruments from pre-Columbian times through to the Incas and on to the onslaught of European and African influences that both the visitor and the listener can begin to →

PHOTOS: FRANK SPOONER PICTURES

PHOTO: FROM THE ARTS AND CRAFTS OF SOUTH AMERICA BY MO FINI AND LUCY DAVIES (PUBLISHED BY THAMES & HUDSON, £12.95)



Aymara Indian fiesta; right: marraccas made from the dried fruit of the tutuma tree.



✈ understand the cultural history and traditions of South America.

Some indigenous instruments have survived almost untouched from as far back as 900 BC. The kena, for instance, or quena as it is sometimes spelt, is the notched flute which in its earliest manifestation was made from animal, bird or human bone. Later it was made from gold, silver, clay or gourd while nowadays it is more commonly made of cane. It is found in both the Peruvian and Bolivian sierra, northern Chile and in the north and north west of Argentina. It has five or six equidistant finger holes and is mostly played on its own to accompany songs and dances. In folklore Andean shepherds were said to play it to inspire love.

The much larger kena kena was first known in the early sixteenth century among the Aymara people of Lake Titicaca in Bolivia – still a most important musical centre today. Traditionally it was played to celebrate the harvest.

Other indigenous instruments include the conch shell, the pututu used by the Incas in their ceremonies. These days it is more likely to be made from a reed with an animal horn – while in Ecuador where it is known as the bocina it is made of two or more pieces of horn. Its low-timbred sound provides an evocative mix when played with the panpipes.

The Incas were particularly adept at absorbing and using many musical ideas from people and cultures they had conquered – such as the onomatopoeically-named cha'jchas, a rattle made of animal hooves emanating from the Bolivian Andes. Both the Spanish and Portuguese were an enormous musical influence on South America, bringing both the sounds and ceremonies of Europe, West Africa and the Caribbean.

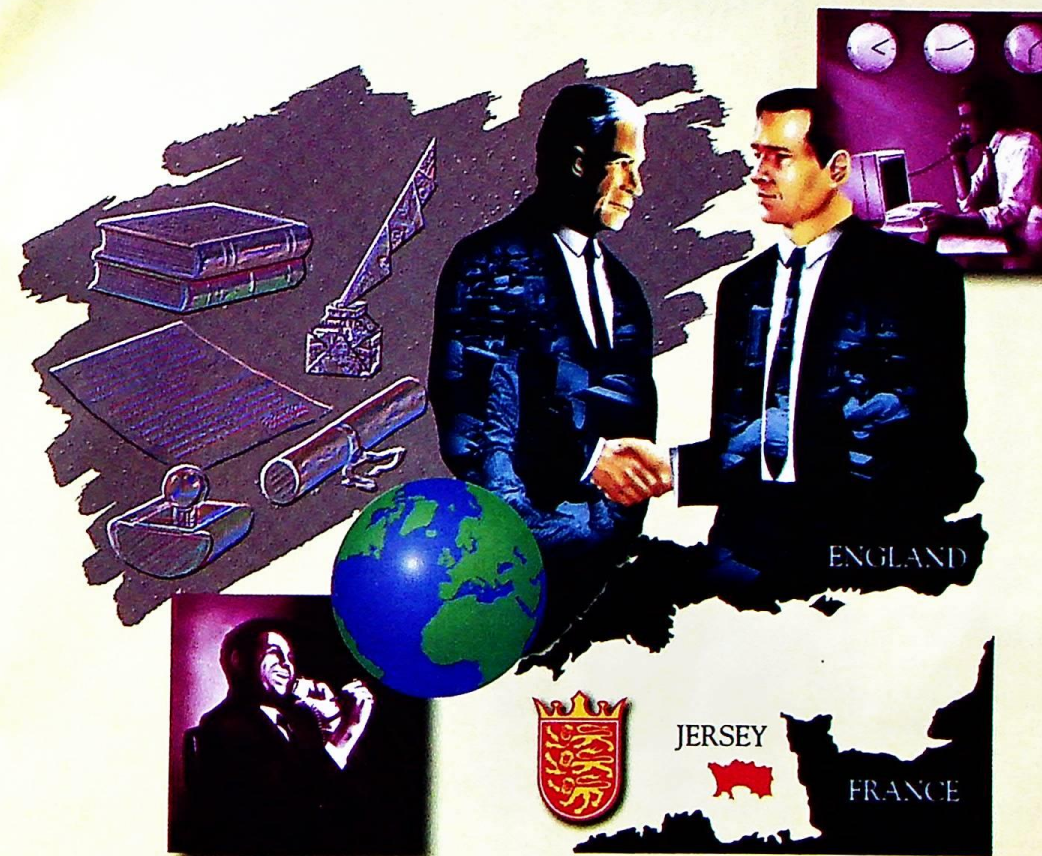
Stringed instruments are the most notable introduction from Europe. The charango is known to exist in the early eighteenth century in the Bolivian Andes. A small fretted lute shaped like a Spanish guitar but with shorter strings, it is a supreme example of the mesh of indigenous and European sounds and instruments. On the one hand it was often played in rural areas as part of animal fertility ceremonies whereas in more populated areas it provided the music for courting dances. The back of the instrument was made from anything from cedar to walnut wood as well as from gourds and armadillo shells.

Another stringed instrument is the bandurria (or mandurria) a hybrid of guitar and cittern. First found in Spain it travelled to Cuba, Guatemala, Colombia and Chile and was often part of a duo with a harp to accompany the most extraordinary berimbau. If ever three cultures sang together it was in this trio. The berimbau consists of a Brazilian bow of African origin, ✈

PHOTOS: SOUTH AMERICAN PICTURES/THAMES & HUDSON/AND FIN

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Latin sounds

✈ a stick and a small wicker basket rattle known as a *caxixi*.

What is even more extraordinary is that so many of these instruments are still made today in the same areas often by the same people and families as they have been for generations. *Gaitas* are made, for instance, by one family in southern Colombia in exactly the same way as they have for well over a hundred years. *Gaitas* are aerophones or more simply a sort of bagpipe which are made from long tubes of a cactus-like plant, with a head of beeswax and vegetal carbon which is placed at one end into which a turkey quill is inserted. This ensures that the air which is being blown through breaks quite high up in the tube giving it that rather forlorn bagpipe sound.

There are two main types of *gaita* – the *hembra*, or female, which has five finger holes, and the *macho*, which has just two finger holes. The latter is played with one hand while a *maraca* is shaken with the other – a rather more exotic version of the one-man band.

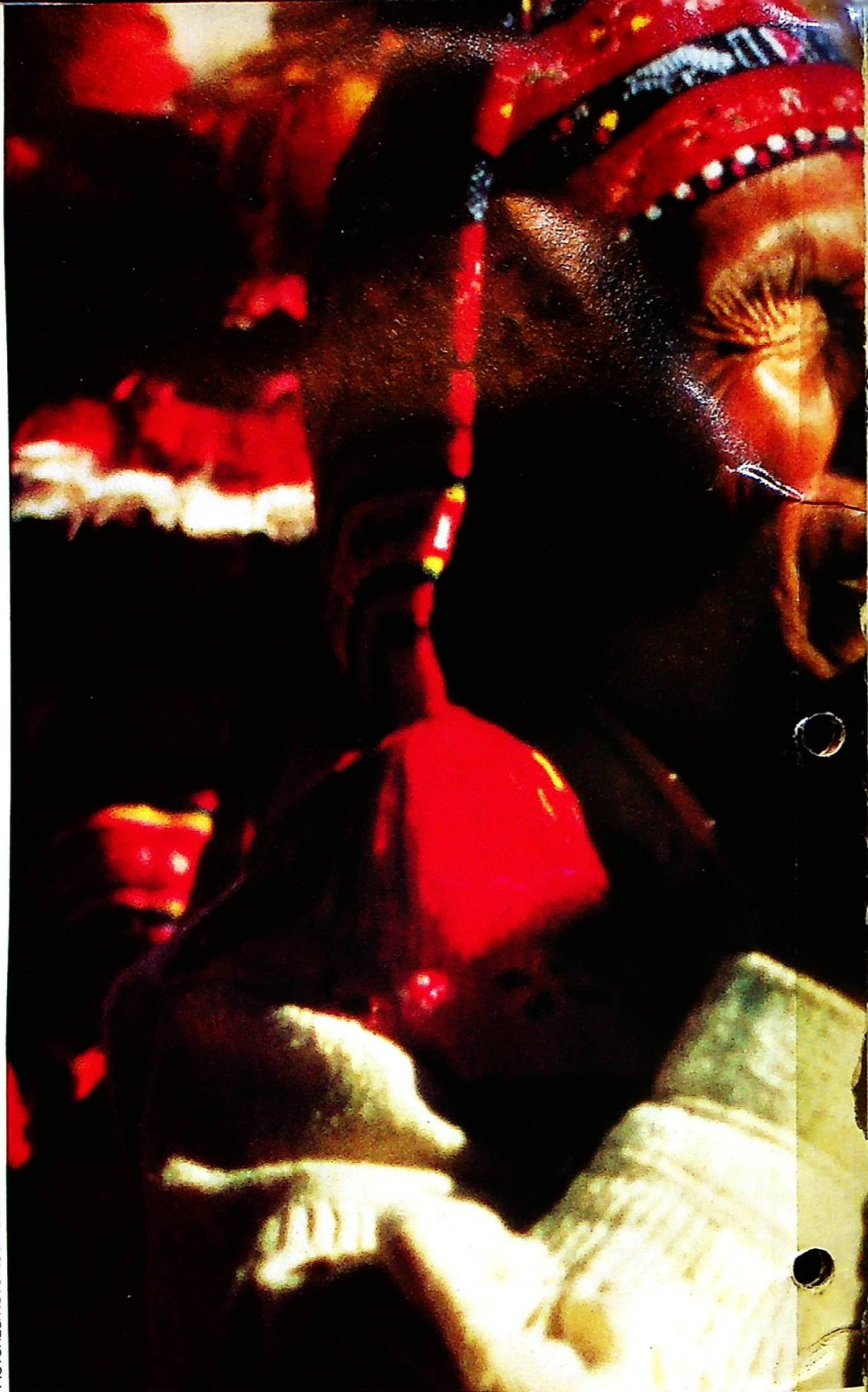
Of all South America's countries Colombia has the greatest variety of music and musical instruments. Being so geographically diverse – it takes in both Caribbean and Pacific coasts as well as mountains – it brings together many disparate influences. Experts believe that some of the best music of all comes from the Pacific coast where the *bongos* are as common as the penny whistle in other cultures.

It is also the home of the *marimba*, a group of idiophones some of which have been around since pre-Columbian times while others were introduced from Africa in the last century. Idiophones are either plucked – lamellaphones, or struck – xylophones.

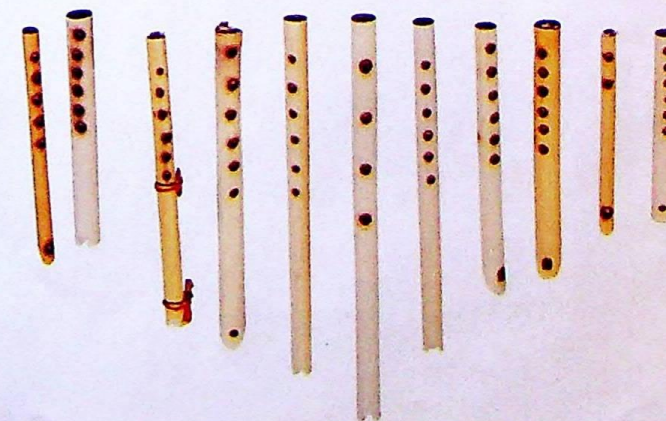
But more than anything the sound of South America to many people is that of the *antara*, the name used by the Quechua people of Peru for the Andean panpipes. They are crafted in multiples of between three and 15, all of which are individually moulded and then joined together with clay fillings. Mostly they are accompanied by the *bombo*, a double-headed drum, and the ten-stringed guitar. Panpipes have been found all along the coast of Peru while some have been discovered dating back as far as 1500 BC.

A fine and extensive collection of South American musical instruments can be seen at London's Horniman Museum. But you can still see many of them being made in workshops in the larger cities of South America as well as around Lake Titicaca where some of the very earliest clay pipes have been found, and you can watch the magic of music being made. ■

PHOTOS: THAMES & HUDSON/MO FINI/SOUTH AMERICAN PICTURES/HUTCHISON LIBRARY



Main picture: The haunting sound of the panpipes; inset top: soft music from a Colombian flute; inset centre: a larger version of the panpipes singing out over the Chacaltaya Mountains in Bolivia; inset bottom: local music bringing sound and colour to a festival at Guadeloupe. Far left: Dancing in the Peruvian highlands; left: a charango – in the past the back was sometimes made from armadillo shell. Right: traditional Andean wind instruments.





IT MIGHT BREAK DOWN



IT MIGHT FAIL



IT MIGHT SINK

SUN ALLIANCE.
THE PEOPLE BEHIND
BRITAIN'S
INDUSTRIAL MIGHT.



IT MIGHT GET STOLEN



IT MIGHT EXPLODE

RAINMAKERS INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCE GROUP - HITCHIN GATHERING 1995.

Today the Rainmakers are presenting two contrasting Italian dances. The first is a Candle Dance (FACKELTANZ) a ceremonial dance for eight couples, which comes from the South Tirol region and is traditionally danced at weddings. The second dance is the TARANTELLA SICILIANA. Tarantellas were supposed to be danced as a cure for the bite of the poisonous tarantula, a spider that lives in Southern Italy. Doctors prescribed this method for their patients since they believed that by sweating heavily, when dancing the lively dance, they would release the poison.

The Rainmakers are wearing Sicilian costumes - these were made by the group, based on costumes worn by a Sicilian group seen at The Sidmouth Festival some years ago.

The music is played by members of 'Cloudburst' led by Martin Butler.

The Rainmakers meet virtually every Friday in Letchworth to dance a variety of mainly European dances from many countries and they welcome new members.

Today they present: ITALIAN NIGHT AND DAY.

Staplers



1995

10p

Hitchin Gathering

THE 37th HITCHIN GATHERING

Saturday 4th March 1995

Welcome to our guests, audience and participants to this the Staplers Country Dance Club's 37th annual folk celebration.

We hope you will enjoy our customary mixed programme of country and ritual dancing, music and singing, together with the two mini-breaks for children's general dancing.

Our thanks go to Roger Nicholls and the Orange & Blue Band for the considerable time and effort put into preparing the many different pieces of music they will be playing this afternoon and to our compere Stan Taplin who once again will be linking the various items together.

We also thank Yvonne Limbrick for leading the children's general dancing and the 9th Hitchin Guides for providing refreshments, the St John Ambulance Brigade for being in attendance and Unicorn Sound Systems for the amplification.

Finally we thank the participants and members of the Staplers Country Dance Club for all their hard work and help in putting on this afternoon's show, also our guests and audience for coming along to make it such a worthwhile event.

(Gathering Committee 1995)

Don't forget that here this evening , from 7.30pm to 11pm ,
we present

THE GATHERING DANCE

Joe Hodgson and Pick 'n' Mix

Tickets available at the door : £5.00 including supper

Licenced Bar by the Hitchin Lions

THE GATHERING DISPLAYS

The Orange & Blue Band : Leader Roger Nicholls

Master of Ceremonies : Stan Taplin

Overture	The Orange & Blue Band
Staplers	Devils Scream
Whitethorn Morris	Garland Dance
Whitehill Country Dancers	<i>Leading Into Dancing</i> Durham Reel Pat-a-Cake Polka I Want To Be Near You Down On The Farm
Roundabouts	Honeywell Jenny Pluck Pears Shepherd's Wheel Circassian Circle
Hertfordshire Holly	<i>North West Clog Morris Dancing</i> Benskin's Polka Walton's Parade
 ***** Children's Dancing with Yvonne Limbrick ***** 	
Offley Morris	Winster (Processional) Lairds a Bunchum (Hinton in the Hedges) Shepherd's Hey (Fieldtown)
Barry Goodman & Graeme Meek	"The Witch of Conger Hill" "The Statty Fair"

Thanks to William Warder of **UNICORN SOUND SYSTEMS** for PA
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Staplers

The Mumping Maid
Miss Bedlington's Fancy

St Neots Sweeps & Milkmaids

Sweep's Delight
Past Your Eyes
The Sweep's & Milkmaid's Dance

North Herts Reel Club

Highland Dances
Shiftin' Bobbins (Reel)
The Silver Tassie (Strathspey)
Follow Me Home (Jig)

******* Children's Dancing with Yvonne Limbrick *******

Letchworth Morris

The Skirmish (Bledington)
Princess Royal (Abingdon)

Ian Robertson

"Selection of fiddle tunes from different sources"

Oaken Leaves

Thanet Trips
Sarre Hill
York Gate
Addington Fair
Cecil Square
Royal Parade

Grand Union Rapper

Grand Union Number One
Rapper dances from North East England

Rainmakers

Italian Night & Day
Fackeltanz
Tarantella Siciliana

Please join us in Circassian Circle

Music, Dances, Songs & Souvenirs THE FOLK SHOP in the Small Hall by The Hertfordshire Folk Association	Available all afternoon REFRESHMENTS in the Small Hall by the 9th Hitchin Guides
---	---

STAPLERS COUNTRY DANCE CLUB

The Gathering is organised by the Staplers. Find out more about English Country Dancing by visiting us at our Club nights : 8pm to 10pm on most Monday evenings in Bancroft Hall, Recreation Ground, Bancroft, Hitchin.

We are a lively, mixed Club with over 100 members and warmly welcome newcomers. You can find out more about us by contacting : Graham Styles (0462) 677916 or Sandra Welch (0438) 358001.

CONTACTS FOR OUR GUESTS

Barry Goodman & Graeme Meek	Hitchin (0462) 456811
Grand Union Rapper	Bob Lilley, Leighton Buzzard (01296) 661783
Hertfordshire Holly	Mrs L.Gibbs, Hertford (0992) 583173
Ian Robertson	Bath (0225) 447748
Letchworth Morris	Alan Creamer, Luton (0582) 24261
North Herts Reel Club	Mrs Jennifer Warburton, Hitchin (0462) 812691
Oaken Leaves	Mrs J.S. Waterfield, Daventry (0327) 706102
Offley Morris	Derik Gilder, Baldock (0462) 892516
Rainmakers	Mark Balaam, Hitchin (0462) 454210
Roundabouts	Mrs M. Charlton, Stev. (0438) 367750
St Neots Sweeps & Milkmaids	Mrs Patti Pitt, Bedford (0234) 376278
Whitehill Country Dancers	Miss A. Gibson, Hitchin (0462) 450997
Whitethorn Morris	Ms Pat Collins, Leighton Buzzard (0525) 376699

We look forward to seeing you at

THE 38th HITCHIN GATHERING

on Saturday 2nd March 1996

RAINMAKERS INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCE GROUP - HITCHIN GATHERING 1995.

Today the Rainmakers are presenting two contrasting Italian dances. The first is a Candle Dance (FACKELTANZ) a ceremonial dance for eight couples, which comes from the South Tirol region and is traditionally danced at weddings. The second dance is the TARANTELLA SICILIANA. Tarantellas were supposed to be danced as a cure for the bite of the poisonous tarantula, a spider that lives in Southern Italy. Doctors prescribed this method for their patients since they believed that by sweating heavily, when dancing the lively dance, they would release the poison.

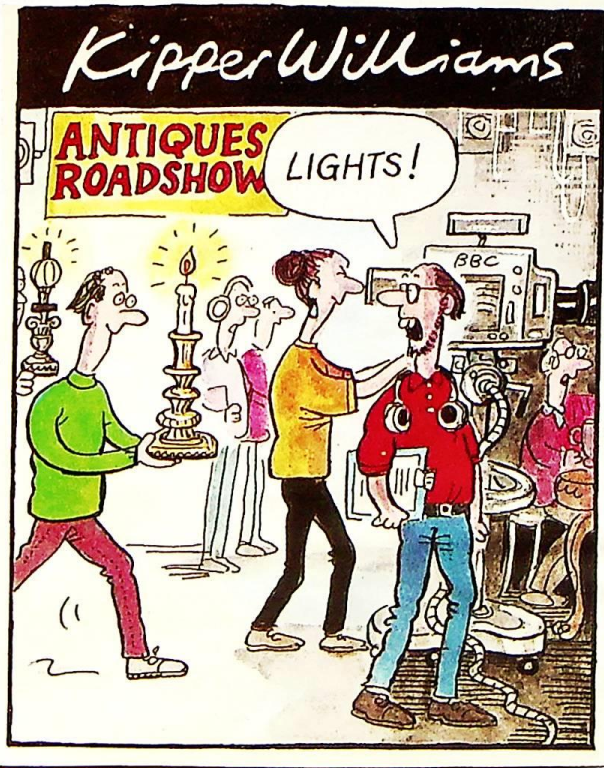
The Rainmakers are wearing Sicilian costumes - these were made by the group, based on costumes worn by a Sicilian group seen at The Sidmouth Festival some years ago.

The music is played by members of 'Cloudburst' led by Martin Butler.

The Rainmakers meet virtually every Friday in Letchworth to dance a variety of mainly European dances from many countries and they welcome new members.

Today they present: ITALIAN NIGHT AND DAY.

The 37th Hitchin Gathering.
Saturday, 4th March 1995



Radio Times
March 5th 1995.

Are they rehearsing
the candle dance?
Were the "Antiques"
dancing it?

On Friday, March 3rd a heavy fall of snow covered much of Britain, including Hertfordshire and its neighbouring counties. Straight away many Rainmakers thought of past years when such a thing happened on the eve of the Hitchin Gathering. "Would all the team be able to get to the rehearsal at Letchworth tonight?" we worried. Worse still, was the thought that members of Cloudburst Band might not appear from far flung villages where they live as we particularly wanted to practise with a band rather than ^{to} a tape. The idea that the Gathering itself might be jeopardised never entered our heads - the show always goes on! Plenty of snow was still about the next morning but snowploughs and gritting lorries had been out and the roads were

reasonable. After a successful rehearsal the night before, everyone participating was present and ready to dance at Hitchin Town Hall.

This year Jill had devised a contrasting six minute programme for the Rainmakers. She called it Italian Night and Day. It might well have also been called Italy, North and South as our first dance, Fackeltanz, comes from the Italian Alps and the second is a tarantella from Sicily. With some refurbishment (and the sewing of a few new costumes) we were able to wear our Sicilian costumes made for the Gathering in 1981. These were copies of those worn by a Sicilian team that many of us saw at the Sidmouth Folk Festival in 1980.

We were programmed last to perform in the afternoon so we were able to sit in the balcony and watch all the other teams until it was time for us to assemble in the bar. The band tuned up and Adrian lit the candles and two lanterns for Christopher and Eleanor Butler to illuminate the musicians' music. We moved to the corridor to wait our turn, heard Stan Taplin announce our dances with some explanations, almost all the lights in the hall went out and the dancers entered. The Fackeltanz is a dance for eight couples who process slowly along, with a walking step, to form lines circles, crosses, figure eights and chains. From time to time we had to stop and circle our candles. Superficially it seemed an easy dance but it took a lot of concentration

to remember the patterns, hold your candle level, at the correct height, try to align one-self precisely, remember to smile at passing dancers and all in the dark. The first time we rehearsed by candle-light I felt completely disorientated but at Hitchin there was a little more light, which helped.



Martin Butler, the leader of Cloudburst Band, had had to do a lot of work to arrange the accompaniment for the dancers as he had been given no music. He had to listen to ~~listen to~~ a tape of a Sicillian band playing tinkling pretty, imprecise music, and write down the notes. The band played beautifully and kept the pace just right for us. Counting carefully the candle dancers moved to their final semi-circle and blew out their candles.

The flashes from cameras in the audience were a bit disconcerting but it was

flattering to know that people wanted to photograph us.



Photo
- Jill

The candle dance at dress rehearsal.



Photo
- Isabel

Concentration but not enough smiles.
One candle went out on Gathering Day.



As we blew out our candles, six more Rainmaker ladies came forward to join six of the men candle dancers to perform the Sicilian Tarantella Fasola, whilst the rest of us went to the sides. In this way Jill had been able to include everyone who wanted to take part in the Gathering Show. Those who were less agile or less experienced

could be in the sedate candle dance. The Tarantella needed people who could be very agile, energetic and lively as it was very fast and included a lot of jumping and turning. The two dances made a good contrast for each other. As Jill had stated in the Chairman's introductory remarks "By sweating heavily the dancers would release the poison from the bite of the tarantula and so be cured."



Photos
given by
Jill.

Sicilian Tarantella Fasola at the Dress Rehearsal.

The lights went up and the Rainmaker tarantella dancers leapt into action and only one hat flew off.



To warm applause from the audience the Rainmakers skipped off at the end of a very enjoyable afternoon.

Several complimentary remarks came our way at the evening dance. People watching from the balcony particularly appreciated the patterns in the candle dance and everyone enjoyed the lively tarantella.



Italian Night and Day dancers at the Dress Rehearsal — plus Band of course. Two more musicians joined us on March 4th.



The Candle Dance being performed at Hitchin Gathering 1995.

Requests for Post Gathering Party. 10-3-95.
Programme.

SSulam Ya'akov	Israel	(0) ^{circle}
lublin Polka	Poland	(2s)
Appenzeller Klatschwalzer	Switzerland	(2s)
Shiru Hashiv	Israel	(short lines no partners)
L'Oferta	Mallorca	(2s facing 2s)
Tamnis Sturgis	Latvia	(2 x 4 square)
Erev Shabbat	Israel	(0)
Djatcho Kolo	Former Yugoslavia	(lines)
Trip to Bavaria	Scotland/England	(2 x 4 longways)
Hora 'n doua Parti	Romania	(0 open circle)
Joc de League	Romania	(lines no partners)
Bailecito	South America	(2s)
Levi Jackson's Rag	England	(2 x 5)
Jesusita en Chihuahua	Mexico	(2s)
Hora Miresii	Romania	(lines no partners)
Ba Pordess	Israel	(0 no partners)

Thereafter Jill will put on her International
 Pot-Pourri Tape. (Eastbourne 1993)

Friday, March 10th 1995.

Rainmakers' Post-Gathering Party - 8.00 - 11.00 p.m.

It has become the custom for the club to hold a Post-Gathering Party instead of the usual club evening on the Friday following the Hitchin Gathering. Last Friday was no exception so most of us donned a variety of folk costumes and took our offerings of food along to St. Michael's hall.

Till devised a programme of popular dances for us. These were interspersed with specially requested dances, which we hoped everyone else would enjoy. Some of them had not been danced on a club evening for a long time so there was a bit of head scratching going on to remember them.

Besides the usual break for refreshments, (which included a marvelous nutty cake, covered in crystallised fruits made by Maria from a Swiss recipe) we had no fewer than three pauses for entertainments. I thought these were all excellent, in fact some of the best we have ever had at a Rainmaker party. First of all Graham recited a Stanley Holloway monologue called "Three Halfpence a Foot" about Noah building his ark. Graham put it over very well and gave us a laugh, especially as we have had wet weather recently.

Katka had the misfortune to twist her ankle badly on Wednesday. She had to be brought in hobbling on two sticks. Though she could not dance her injury did not prevent her singing

so she sang several Czech songs to us very beautifully, in her native language, and one Czech song in English to the tune of "Roll Out the Barrel".

The third cabaret act was a surprise as Jill did not know that Sheila and John were willing to perform until the Interval. Dressed in Hungarian costume (embroidered shirts, black breeches/skirt and boots) they danced an intricate couple dance from Transylvania that went on for ten minutes. John said that at a Hungarian Tanz-Haus the couples would keep dancing for a quarter of an hour or longer, non-stop with the man deciding on the moves as he went along, twirling his partner more and more. Sheila and John danced very well indeed and it was a delight to watch them.

It was a pity that only twenty-four people came to the party as attendance on Fridays since last September has been increasing, often up to forty people. Those members who were absent on March 10th missed some treats.



THE RAINMAKERS INTERNATIONAL FOLKDANCE GROUP



NEWSLETTER No. 10

March 1995

Rainmakers is a club that exists to enjoy folkdancing from all over the world.

We meet most Fridays in St. Michael's Church Hall, Letchworth, Hertfordshire, at 20.00 hrs.

For further information contact: Belinda (Chair.) 01462 455711
or Mark (Sec.) 01462 454210

Calendar of Events

RAINMAKERS

DISPLAYS

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| Sat. 1st April | All Fools Ceildh , <i>Letchworth. Run by Letchworth Morris.</i> |
| Sat. 9th Sept. | International Dance at Harlington Village Hall
Caller : Jill Bransby, Music: Cloudburst, Display: Rainmakers! |
| Sat. 3rd Sept | SIFD / CCPR |
| Tues. 14th Mar. | Rehearsal at Radwell Village Hall |

DANCES

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Sat. 22nd July
19.30-23.00 | <i>Jill and Peter's 30th Wedding Anniversary Dance</i> at Ickleford Village Hall ,Music by Cloudburst, please bring food and drink |
| Sat. 14th Oct. | Club Anniversary Dance |
| Sun. 3rd Dec. | SIFD Dance hosted by the Rainmakers |

PARTY

Fri. 10th Mar.
20.00 - 23.00 Post Gathering Party -- St. Michael's Hall, Letchworth
please bring food and booze

DAY COURSES

Sat. 8th April
11.00 - 16.00 French Day Course at St. Michael's Hall , Letchworth
please bring your own refreshments, Tutors : Simon and
Joan Guest Cost £5.00 (£3.00 half day)

Sat. 21st Oct.
11.00 - 16.00 General day course at Central Methodist Church Hall,
Letchworth Tutor : Janet Woolbar

BEGINNERS WORKSHOPS

Tues. 25th April
20.00- 22.00 Ickleford Village Hall
cost : £1.00 per evening

Tues. 16th May ,, ,,

Tues. 16th June ,, ,,

SIFD Functions

Sun. 12th Mar.
11.00 - 16.30 Manx Day Course with Woodfidley at Studio 10, The Place,
17 Dukes Road, London WC1(near Euston Station)

Sat. 18th Mar.
20.00 - 23.00 Beginners Plus Dance at Cecil Sharp House (Trefusis)
Band: Jacobs Ladder, Callers: Anne Leach, Maggie O'Regan

Sun. 2nd April
19.00 - 22.00 Allcomers Dance at C.S.H.
for all levels!

Sun. 1st Oct.
19.00 - 22.00 as above

Fri. 7th July to
10th July Milton Keynes International Folk Festival
Full details later

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT IN *BLUNHAM*

Whilst reading a biography of Emma Lady Hamilton by Flora Fraser recently I came upon this quotation from an account by the Comte d'Espinhal of the entertainment following a dinner party he attended in Naples.

" After an excellent repast there was dancing till the theatre began. I much enjoyed watching a very free and voluptuous dance , having something of the Spanish fandango about it , called the Tarantella.

The Misses Amici , Neapolitan bourgeoises , and extremely pretty , danced it marvellously , but Mme. Hart (Emma) added a volupte , a grace which would set on fire the coldest and most insensible man." (He should have seen the Rainmakers at the Gathering !! Ed.)

Flora Fraser goes on to describe the Tarantella , a peasants' dance of Sicilian origin, as a heady , intoxicating experience for performers and audience alike.

Janet

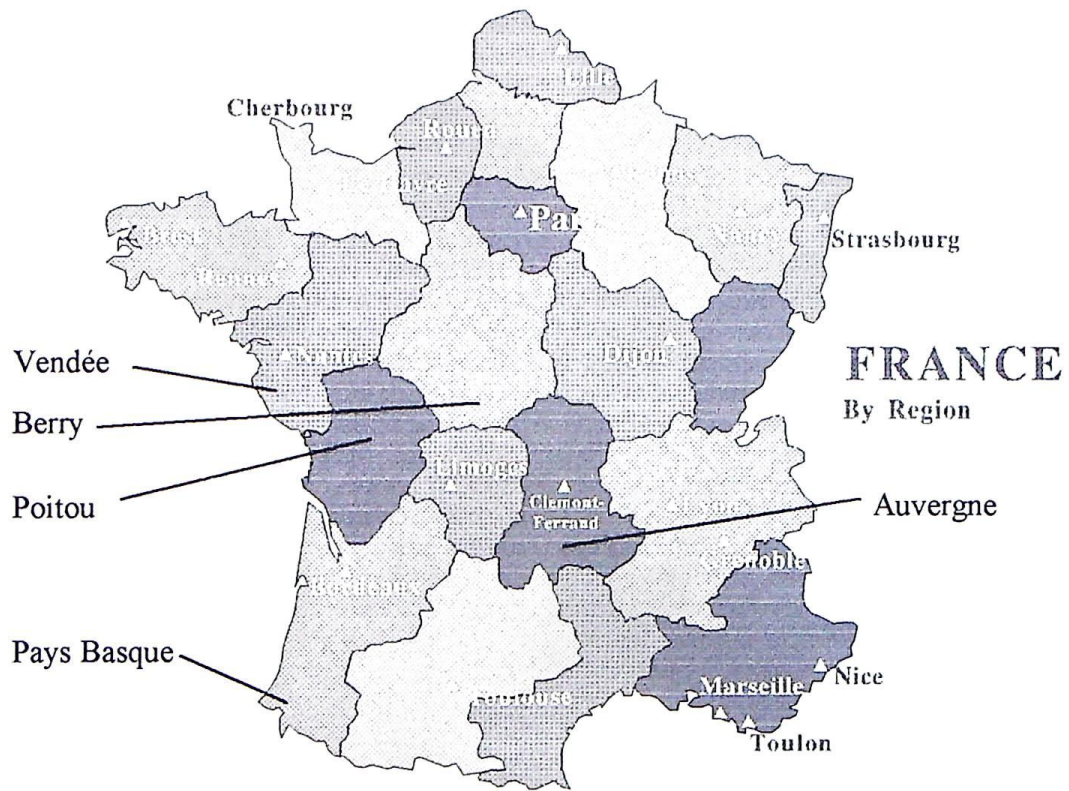
SONGS-PLUS (Otherwise known as the "Gutterls Fuller"
Group)

We meet on the first Monday of each month at Red Gables , Benslow Path , The Avenue , Hitchin at 20.00 hrs. The original intention was to practice the words of Hora Mireseii to sing at the 18th Anniversary Dance .

We are now building up a dossier of international songs and will be leading a Song Session at the Eastbourne Folk Festival on the 1st May.

Our next meeting may not be the 1st Monday so check with Jill (01462 457791) or Katka (01462 685645).

Day of French Dance



8th April 1995

Presented by Joan and Simon Guest

for

Rainmakers International Folk Dance Group

Rainmakers International Folk Dance Group

Day of French Dance - 8th April 1995

A programme of revision and of dances believed to be new to the group will be chosen from the following list :-

Dance	Music	Notes
Le Rond d'Argenton	Local cassette	Appended <i>Revision</i>
La Bourrée Tournante des \Grandes Poteries	Cassette No. 6	Cassette No. 6 <i>Revision</i>
La Montagnarde de St. Chartier	Cassette No. 6	Appended
L'Étoile	Cassette No. 6	Cassette No. 6
L'Avant Deux	Local Cassette	Appended
La Bourré Droite du Pays Fort	Cassette No. 6	Cassette No. 6 } <i>Not</i>
La Bourrée Carrée Croisée du Val de Loire	Cassette No. 6	Cassette No. 6 } <i>taught.</i>
La Crousado	Local Cassette	Appended
La Bourrée à Sept Sauts	Cassette No. 6	Cassette No. 6
La Bourrée d'Aurillac	Local Cassette	Appended
Deux, Deux, Deux	Local Cassette	- <i>Revision</i>

Day of French Dance.

Saturday, 8th April 1995. 11.00 a.m. - 4.00 p.m.

Joan and Simon Guest, S.I.F.D. teachers, made a return visit to the Rainmakers' club at Letchworth on Saturday last to teach French dances. They are known in the Society as experts in this field having travelled frequently to all the regions of France over many years to learn the dances and to perform them in the correct style. Their enthusiasm is obvious and they do their best to convey it to other dancers.

With them they had brought large pictures of French dancers wearing traditional costumes, many albums of photographs, a map of the regions of France and a list of eleven dances which they hoped to teach us.

Unfortunately not many of our members were able or ~~wished~~ to participate on 8th April. In the morning there were eleven Rainmakers three visitors ^{plus} Joan and Simon in the room. At lunch time three of us had to leave so that left a small band to dance in the afternoon.

Simon taught nine dances of which only two were not new to most people present. They included some lovely dances. I found L'Etoile particularly memorable.

It was a taxing day, physically and mentally, but very enjoyable. We appreciated Simon and Joan's pleasant manner and their choice of dances.

What a pity that more Rainmakers were not there.

Tuesday, April 25th 1995. 8.00 - 10.00 p.m.
Beginners' Night at Ickleford.

Tonight was the first of three so-called "Beginners' Nights" to be held this term at Ickleford Village Hall. The idea is that new (or newish) members of the club have the opportunity to learn basic steps and core dances in the club's repertoire as they can be taught more slowly and in a detailed way than can be managed on a Friday club evening.

It is also a chance for established Rainmakers to refresh their memories or to learn a dance that they missed at its first teaching. It is surprising how one can forget points of style such as the placing of hands, positioning of body or head in a familiar dance. It is a fun evening, therefore, and useful for all Rainmakers and people who might be thinking of joining.

At eight o'clock only eight people had arrived, none of them Beginners, so Jill began her programme.

At eight-thirty Martin Butler and Hazel Glass of Cloudburst Band arrived to play for us and to practise dances they will be playing at Eastbourne. It was very nice to have the live music and, at times, to hear Martin singing along lustily.

Programme:—

Hodoroga	~ Romania
Atta Man Engel	~ Finland
Zemer Atik	~ Israel
Hora Zemer	~ Israel
Debka Kafrit	~ Debka Kafrit
A Ja Taka	~ Czech Republic
A Hawat Hadasa	~ Israel

General Delivery, Orange Walk, BELIZE. C.A
Sunday, May 21, 1995

Dear Betty - you are a marvellous letter writer and I count myself very fortunate that you seem to have elected yourself Club Correspondent. I've only had one other letter - from Barbara. But lots of people do write to me which really helps to keep the blues away.

Thank-you for the club photo - I could name everyone in it bar one - I assume a musician, kneeling in front of Isabel. I was so pleased to see you in there yourself - and very glad that you were able to take part. I associate everyone at the Club with a different dance or tune, so looking carefully at the picture revived a lot of memories and took quite a long time!

The only part of your letter that was difficult was your description of your Christmas trip to Prague - sheer torture for me. Music! Concerts! Museums! Not to mention a negative temperature - we've had a constant 90+ here for weeks. I have a growing collection of tapes - mostly sent by my daughter, but nothing like what's available through Radio 3 and Classic FM. This afternoon I listened to Haydn quartets whilst stitching an Ehrmann tapestry of a pheasant. Mind you I had to be within three feet of the fan to be anywhere near comfortable! I don't think Belize would suit your holiday plans - though Guatemala or Mexico might. Best to do it in December or January when it's down to 70. The problem with Belize is the food, and the state of the roads - you have to go on dirt tracks for miles to see anything interesting. Mind you, it is interesting when you get there!

I had my daughter Ellie over for two weeks at Easter, and there follows a general purpose description of some of the things we did - edited in to all my letters at the moment, thanks to the glorious word processor.

At the start we took a boat trip down New River from Orange Walk to the Lammanai Ruins - an old Mayan site in the jungle. New River is very wide, and slow and winding. The banks are lined with water lilies and little moorhen type birds with vivid red and yellow markings potted about on the leaves - known locally as Jesus birds because they appear to walk on the water. It was an ornithologist's delight - lots of herons and kites and hawks extremely elegant whether flying, fishing or just standing. Sometimes the course was through 'jungle' and bright yellow orchids and scarlet bromeliads adorned the trees, and sometimes through what should be swamp land, but fairly dry at the moment. There were quite a few Indians out fishing in dug-out canoes, getting in a stock for Good Friday, later in the week - the fish are stored in sort of lidded orange crates so that they will be live and fresh when needed. There were turtles too, and tarpon fish jumping out of the water - but no crocodiles.

The river then opened out into a lagoon and we landed at Lammanai. Up in the trees were a troupe of howler monkeys - totally crashed out, just flopped over the branches. After lunch we followed the guide through the jungle, mercifully dry underfoot to see the ruins. Belize sites are relatively undeveloped so you don't see them as the Mayan's would have known them, but more as the 19th and

early twentieth century adventurers did. Very Rider Haggard. We were very tired on the way back. The lilies had all closed up, and every four hundred yards or so a bird sat on a high branch like sentinels or a well spaced guard of honour.

The next day we travelled by bus and taxi to Flores in Guatemala. The journey took eight hours - but felt longer. Guatemala was a shock - we were in the Peten, the poorest region. As soon as we crossed the border things were different. Very poor. Mostly Indian population living in pole and palm thatch huts. Lots of horses - many being ridden by quite tiny boys, and given the state of the roads, clearly the best means of transport. Flores itself was a magic place. There is an enormous lake - the Peten Itza and Flores town is on a tiny ex island now linked to the mainland by a causeway. Although its the regional capital and the the place o stay to visit the major Maya site of Tikal, its not yet fully tourist developed.

We were there for Good Friday and saw the processions. Very clearly being done for and by the local populace, not as a tourist attraction. We watched a local family spend literally hours creating a 'floor-al' out of coloured sawdust - an orangey brown base, a border of vines and grape bunches in purple white and green, and the centre filled with beautifully woven blankets. Then the procession came, led by a priest - but in amice and alb, rather than rich vestments. There were four 'floats' - not on vehicles but carried on huge pallets - about twenty people to each. The first had a more than life size Christ carrying the Cross, borne by the men. The others were Mary (the women), Mary Magdalene (young women) and John (youths). There was also an amazing brass band, with huge old battered instruments playing solemn dirges, and an escort of little girls carrying pictures of the Stations of the Cross. Altars had been erected at intervals, and the the Stations were recited round the town. The flooral was destroyed in seconds !

In the late afternoon it was totally recreated, but this time the central weavings were all black and white and candles were lit. The procession reappeared, Christ now laid out in the tomb, watched over by a huge dove effigy representing the Holy Spirit. It was by now dark, so the floats were illuminated - and the rear of the procession brought up by two men trundling wheelbarrows, in which reposed the generators ! We discovered later that the whole main street had had even bigger and more elaborate sawdust designs - but were so entranced by watching the one adjacent to the hotel that we never saw the others.

All this had been an unexpected bonus as we had really gone there for the Tikal trip. Tikal is an enormous Mayan site, partly restored and with enticing jungle walkways between the structures. The main plazas were just too big to comprehend, and full of picnicking locals - but as we wandered about we found ourselves the sole visitors to some of the temple/towers - just us and the monkeys . It was all too much to describe.

But I was fascinated by the locals. The women had come out in their best - and the best is very elaborate. In the Yucatan, where I was at Christmas the dresses are very simple and, I found , very attractive. Simple white shifts with lots of embroidery at neck and hem. But the Guatelaman Mayan dress is really too much. There is a skirt,waist to ankle, made of a strip of cloth woven on a back

loom and just wound round . The pattern is broken stripes of many hues. Its held up by an embroidered sash and there may be an embroidered pinny on top too, with frills and lace edgings and pom poms. The blouse is satiny, with a self pattern on top of which is elaborate thick hand embroidery, a riot of flowers and butterflies. It seems that every colour, and every bit of space must be used - and the total effect is somewhat shambolic to my untutored eye. The ladies had shiny patent leather type high heels on too - but by the afternoon, these were abandoned in favour of their husbands' trainers - large and incongruous. The husbands nobly walked about in stockinged feet.

We also went into the mountain area of Belize itself - waterfalls, caves, ruins, swimmable rivers but set in mile after mile of natural pine forest which is just as boring to travel through as the forestry Commission ones in Scotland. we had more fun out on the Cayes, the tiny coral island which lie along the whole coast of Belize, forming part of the barrier reef. Ellie was enchanted and re-discovered her primary school swimming skills and was rewarded by the sight of a shark, as well as of the more usual corals and brightly coloured fish.

The summer term, so far, has been very mixed. There have been the usual spate of Bank Holidays, and an extra one peculiar to schools, called Teacher's Day. In theory its an opportunity for celebrating ' the profession' . but in really an excuse for a beano on the beach ! There have also been a lot of odd closures due to holding of Nation Elocution Contests and Spelling Bees which entailed a lot of practising, school selection contests, zonal contests, area contests etc. Oh I wanted a video or at least a tape recorder. The 'elocution' was dire ! Costumes, props, scenery and 'extras' on the stage, so that they could be pointed to dramatically as they were referred to in the Pome. Fortissimo delivery , and every contestant stepped forward a pace and pointed Kitchener like at the audience every time the word **YOU** cropped up. The fact that the event was held in a cavernous, wall-less Sports Stadium with a dodgy PA system didn't help either. The concept of the Spelling Bee is a curious one. The Ministry issues the list of words three weeks in advance so that the spellers can learn them. Not surprisingly, after four rounds no-one has been eliminated ! its only then that they go on to the "reserve" list of unseen words - at which point students get eliminated PDQ. Crazy.

Well, Betty I hope this has entertained you and Henry a little - and others too where appropriate. please tell Barbara that I would love to hear about her trip to Zimbabwe - I write to a VSO who works in Bulawayo. His life is very different to mine and I would be interested to compare his description with hers.

I hope you had a good time on Crete. Ancient civilisations are fascinating as is the process of uncovering their meaning. Others have told me how beautiful the land is - especially in May when you should have seen lots of wild flowers. Oh - i do miss Europe ! Still, the flamboyant trees are in flower, and mangoes are in season, so I shouldn't complain.

Again my thanks to you for your lovely letter and my best wishes to all at Rainmakers.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized, cursive name followed by a horizontal line underneath.

Photographs enclosed in Annie's letter of
May 21st 1995.



Dance of the "Old Men", Chan Pine Ridge. May '95



Using a Back Loom
April 1995
Flores in Guatemala.



The floral carpet for the
Good Friday procession,
April 1995.
Flores.

Milton Keynes International Festival of
Folk Art.
Friday, Saturday, Sunday, 7-9 July 1995.

I would recommend this event to anybody interested in folk dancing and to their friends who would enjoy a spectacular show with lively music. It is also quite inexpensive - see accompanying leaflet.

Henny and I went on the Friday evening, taking with us an elderly guest. We saw "Carnica", a large ^{dancing} group from Slovakia with a superb, prize winning accompanying band; "Ciudad de Oviedo" from the Northern province of Asturias in Spain who danced to the playing of pipes and drums; "Stone Monkey", an excellent Rapper sword side from (Nottingham?) and Stoney Stratford Morris men who won the Sidmouth Festival Morris Dancing Competition 1993. One of their members did a solo, prize winning broom dance. The show lasted almost three hours with only a short interval.

Some Rainmakers went on Sunday, part of a packed house, to see all the foreign teams. They were equally enthusiastic. The dancers and bands were of a very high standard and they wore several changes of authentic costumes.

If you want to be a participant, several workshops took place as well.

A similar festival is planned for the same weekend next year.



THE
1995

MILTON KEYNES INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL FOLK ART

Dance workshops at Shenley Leisure Centre

Sunday 9 July

- Bulgarian - 10.30 to 12.00
- Slovak - 12.15 to 1.45
- Spanish - 2.45 to 4.15

The workshops will provide the opportunity for you to learn some of dance-styles of these countries. Basic tuition will be given by members of the visiting ensembles. It should also be possible to cater for more experienced dancers if there is sufficient demand.

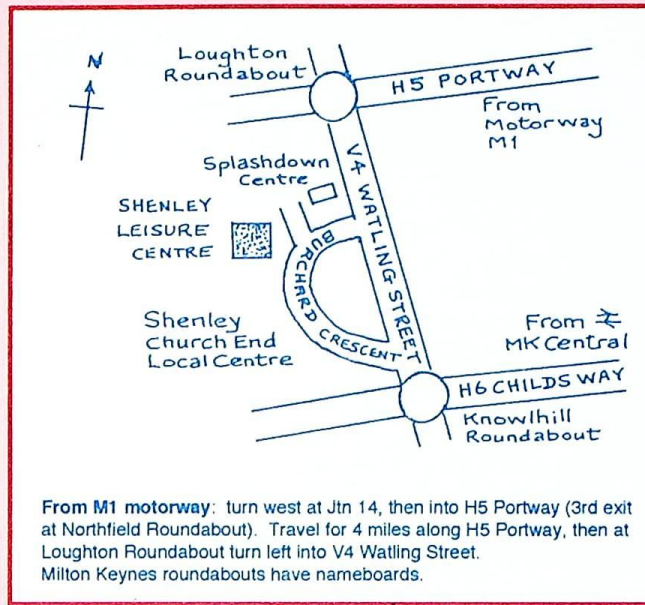
Outside performances around Milton Keynes

Keep your eyes peeled!

During the festival you can see the overseas groups in and around Milton Keynes. 'Carnice', 'Lyulyache', and 'Ciudad de Oviedo' will each tour the area accompanied by one or more of the UK groups.

The tours will include performances in Stony Stratford High Street on Saturday at 10.30 am, and at the Brewer's Fayre, Wolverton Mill, Wolverton on Saturday at 3.00 pm.

For full details of the tours contact Derek Gibbons on 01908 565653, or 0973 317801.



From M1 motorway: turn west at Jtn 14, then into H5 Portway (3rd exit at Northfield Roundabout). Travel for 4 miles along H5 Portway, then at Loughton Roundabout turn left into V4 Watling Street. Milton Keynes roundabouts have nameboards.

If you want further information about the Milton Keynes International Festival of Folk Arts please telephone:
01908 610564

We are grateful to the following organisations for funding and assistance:



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Financial assistance is acknowledged from Milton Keynes Arts Association.

MILTON KEYNES INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL FOLK ART

Friday Saturday Sunday
7 - 9 JULY 1995



Programme of events

Here in Milton Keynes for your entertainment

Top quality dance groups

From SLOVAKIA **"Carnica"**

From BULGARIA **"Lyulyache"**

From SPAIN **"Ciudad de Oviedo"**

plus

a variety of UK artists and groups

"Carnica"

If you enjoyed seeing "Vagonar" in Milton Keynes 4 years ago, you cannot miss this. Now independent from the Czech Republic, the Slovaks are proud of their tremendous inheritance of folk dance, costume and song.

This is Carnica's first visit to England.

They come from the city of Kosice, in the eastern corner of Slovakia. This is an area rich in the most exciting forms of Slovak dance, with influences from nearby Ukraine, Hungary and Poland.

'Goral' mountain dance and costume. Fast 'Zemplin' dances featuring intricate men's solo and team work.



"Ciudad de Oviedo"

From the Principality of Asturias.

Asturias is a mountainous region in north west Spain which has struggled to maintain a level of local autonomy. Consequently the Asturian folk culture is greatly cherished and has been well preserved.

This prize-winning group has performed at many folk festivals both within Spain and internationally.

Music is on pipes and drums. Listen out for a unique type of bagpipe with a single drone.



"Lyulyache"

The Bulgarian group were a great success at our 1992 festival, and we are very pleased to welcome this 40 strong children's dance ensemble from the village of Lovech.

The dancers are aged up to 16 and are accompanied by an adult musical group.

Their complex musical rhythms will delight you and remain in your memory for days.

The dance style is light but fiery and these children perform it with an enthusiasm which has won the hearts of audiences in many countries.



UK artists and groups include:

Windsor Morris
Seven Champions
Stone Monkey

The Beskydy Musicians
Out of the Wood

Main Concerts at Shenley Leisure Centre

Friday 7 July, 7.30 pm

Slovak Night featuring

Carnica - extended performance
supported by
Ciudad de Oviedo from Spain, and
Stone Monkey rapper sword

Saturday 8 July, 7.00 pm

Bulgarian Night featuring

Lyulyache - extended performance
supported by
Ciudad de Oviedo from Spain
Seven Champions English Molly, and
Windsor Morris

followed by special late-night international ceilidh

Sunday 9 July 7.30 pm

Gala Night featuring

Lyulyache from Bulgaria
Carnica from Slovakia
Ciudad de Oviedo from Spain

MKIFFA reserve the right to alter the programme if necessary

Late-night International Ceilidh

at Shenley Leisure Centre

Saturday 8 July, 9.30 pm

After the evening concert, let your hair down to the music of Jackie Rawlinson (*Token Women, Kitchen Girls, Dave Whetstone Band*), Carly Rose (*Token Women, TAPS*) and Heather Vigar (*Token Women, Old Swan Band*). Caller Bob Adams.

Our three overseas groups will be present and will lead some social dances from each of their countries.

Tickets	Full	Concessions
One concert	£6	£4.50
Two concerts	£11	£8.50
All three concerts	£15	£11.50
Saturday late-night ceilidh	£4.50	£3.50
One workshop	£3	£2.25
Two workshops	£6	£4.50
Three workshops	£8	£6

Available from: MK Box Office (01908 234466)

and from: Shenley Leisure Centre (01908 502488)

Living Archive Project (01908 322568)

OR -

Buy a Season Ticket to gain admission to every event. Cost £20 (concessions £15). From Living Archive 01908 322568.

Thursday, 20th July 1995. 3.00 - 4.00 p.m.

Display at Central Methodist Church, Letchworth.

Ten Rainmakers went along to the Central Methodist Church Hall, Letchworth to give a dancing display. We went at the invitation of the Ladies' Meeting (who include Claire's next door neighbour) who entertain some disabled and very elderly people at their meetings.

It was a very hot afternoon and we wondered whether there would be a small audience but the room was full.

Till had planned a programme of mostly gentle, simple dances for the sake of the dancers in the heat and because some of the Methodist ladies had intimated that they would like to join in a few of the dances.

The display went well, even though we were upstaged at times by Belinda's children, Jessie and Rosie giving a little performance of their own. The onlookers loved the little girls.

During tea (and cakes) afterwards it was plain that our audience had enjoyed the afternoon very much indeed. They made delighted comments on the dancing, the music and our costumes. One lady in a wheelchair said to me "If only I could have a go."

We made very complimentary remarks about their hall. It has a lovely floor for dancing. I am glad to note that it has been booked for the next Day Course in the Autumn.

Programme:

- ① Neopolitan Tarantella. Richard and Claire
Henry and Jill
Sue and Moya
Terry and Barbara.
- ② Bourrée de la Chapelotte
Betty Henry Moya
Claire Richard Sue
Belinda Terry Isobel
- ③ Setnja - All. Join in.
- ④ Horlepief
Sides Isabel Terry Belinda Sue
Henry Jill Claire Richard Sides
- ⑤ Zemer Atik - (pairs)
- ⑥ Girls' Dance from Kalosca. (Women)
- ⑦ Mellionen
Richard Sue
Jill Claire
Terry Belinda
Moya Isobel
Henry Betty
- ⑧ Parson's Farewell.
Richard & Sue
Henry & Jill
- ⑨ Russian Lyrical (Pairs)

⑩ Kreuz König

Terry
Belinda

Richard
Sue.

⑪ Enev Bah.

Alle.



Franz and Gretl Selepa with a congratulations Telemessage from the Queen

War couple celebrate – sixty years on

SHE was sweet 16 when they met in Vienna before the Second World War had even started – and Franz and Gretl Selepa are still together, recently celebrating 60 years of wedded bliss.

The couple, of Hungarian and Czechoslovakian origin, have never looked back since they moved to the North Herts area at the start of the war.

They have lived in the same house in Ridge Road, Letchworth, since 1948 where they brought up their three daughters, Kitty 53, Christine, 48, and Anne, 43. The couple also have six grandchildren aged between ten and 28.

Gretl, 79, and Franz, 86, enjoyed a meal at the Jester in Ashwell with all their family for their diamond wedding anniversary which their 28-year-old granddaughter, Phiona, who lives in Germany, attended.

Gretl commented: "It is something I will never ever forget. We thought we were just having a meal but all of our family and our friends were at the restaurant. It was so nice."

Gretl Selepa and her husband Franz celebrate their 60th wedding Anniversary.

Gretl was, for some years, a regular member of Rainmakers.



The Rose Hip Fairy

Letter of thanks to Rainmakers from Gretl, for our card.



Franz and Gretl Selepa with a congratulations Telemessage from the Queen

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Gretl Selepa
and her
husband Franz
celebrate their
60th Wedding
Anniversary.

Gretl was, for
some years, a
regular member
of Rainmakers.

the family came. With
us we are now 15 as
deal, our grandson, has
a wife. The 5 from
Scotland (one from Ger-
many) took us in a 7
seater car to Langrith,
Dumfriesshire, where they
have an Hotel. We stayed
6 days. First holiday for
Franzi since his heart-
attack. – Best wishes & love
Gretl

30.7.95,

Dear Sue,

Please will you
convey our thanks to
all who signed the
pretty card. And a
special thank you
for bringing it.

We had an un-
forgettable time on the
6th 7.95. Our girls
arranged it. All

Letter of thanks
to Rainmakers
from Gretl, for
our card.

SIFD Audio CDs

The following audio CDs have been produced from the SIFD audio cassettes and reorganised by country. Please note that the quality is that of the audio cassettes. They have, however, all the other advantages of CDs : track selection, durability, no more tape manglers. Each CD costs £14. Half the profit goes to SIFD. The CDs can be ordered from :

Edinburgh Multimedia
3 Hayfield
Edinburgh EH12 8UJ
Scotland

You can pay by cheque, Eurocheque, or American Express card.
Please use the enclosed order form
Tel & fax 0131 339 5374 (24 hours)
e-mail k.gourlay@bbenc.org.uk



CENTRAL & EASTERN EUROPEAN FOLKDANCES

1	Alunelul	Rumania
2	Djatchko Kolo	Yugoslavia
3	Doudlebska Polka	Czechoslovakia
4	Farkas Jatok	Hungary
5	Hopak	Ukraine
6	Jooksu Polka	Estonia
7	Kalamies	Estonia
8	Kalvelis	Lithuania
9	Karapyet	Russia
10	Kiigadi Kaagadi	Estonia
11	Kivi Kasukas	Estonia
12	Kohanochka	Russia
13	Kokotek	Poland
14	Kolomeyka	Carpathia
15	Laura	Poland
16	Maruszka	Poland
17	Mazurka	Czechoslovakia
18	Sadala Polka	Estonia
19	Somogyi Karikazo	Hungary
20	Viru Vals	Estonia
21	Wrona Gapa	Poland
22	Zagrodnik	Poland

FRENCH FOLKDANCES

1	La Bourree de la Brande d'Ardenes
2	La Bourree de la Chapelotte
3	La Bourree Carree de St. Chartier
4	L'Etoile
5	La Bourree a Huit
6	La Bourree Droite d'Issoudun
7	La Bourree Carree Cr. du Val de Loire
8	Les Moutons
9	La Bourree Pastourelle
10	La Bourree Droite du Pays Fort
11	La Bourree a Sept Sauts
12	La Bourree Tournante de St. Severe
13	La Vezi la Vezon
14	La Vrie



GERMAN FOLKDANCES

- 1 Dance of the Hammersmiths
- 2 Gamboliner Holzschuhtanz
- 3 Kleiner Schottisch
- 4 Kreuz Koenig
- 5 Sanftenberger
- 6 Schwarzwaldter Mazurka
- 7 Windmill



AUSTRIAN FOLKDANCES

- 8 Boarischer
- 9 Die Woaf
- 10 Haxenschmeisser
- 11 Hiatamdl
- 12 Kreuz Polka
- 13 Siebenschnitt
- 14 Stottera Pascher
- 15 Veitscher Masur
- 16 Waldjager



ISRAELI FOLKDANCES

- 1 Ahavat Hadassa
- 2 Bona Habanot
- 3 Cherkessia Kfula
- 4 Debka Dayagim
- 5 Debka Halel
- 6 Debka Uria
- 7 Erev Bah
- 8 Haroa Haktana
- 9 Hen Yeronan
- 10 Hoi Harmonica
- 11 Hora Neurim
- 12 Hora Nirkoda
- 13 Kol Dodi
- 14 Kuma Echa
- 15 Le'or Chiyuchech
- 16 Mayim Mayim
- 17 Palestinian Hora
- 18 Shibolet Basadeh
- 19 Vayiven Uziahou



DANISH FOLKDANCES

- 1 Familie Sekstur
- 2 Schottische



FINNISH FOLKDANCE

- 3 Fist Polka



NORWEGIAN FOLKDANCES

- 4 Attetur med Mylne
- 5 Firetur
- 6 Gammel Reinlender
- 7 Tretur fra Hordaland



SWEDISH FOLKDANCES

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| 8 Fjallnas Polka | 13 Schottische |
| 9 Fyrmannadans | 14 Snurrebocken |
| 10 Fyrmanna Schottische | 15 Trekarlspolska |
| 11 Kadrijl fran Ovraby | 16 Vava Vadmal |
| 12 Ostgotapolska | 17 Vingakersdans |



OTHER EUROPEAN FOLKDANCES

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| 1 Appenzeller Klatschwalzer | Switzerland |
| 2 De Kolom | Belgium |
| 3 Erva Cidera | Portugal |
| 4 Gota | Portugal |
| 5 Hakke Toone | Netherlands |
| 6 Ketten Galopp | Switzerland |
| 7 Meitschi Putz-di | Switzerland |
| 8 Neapolitan Tarantella | Italy |
| 9 Nottingham Swing | England |
| 10 L'Oferta | Spain |
| 11 Senhor da Serra | Portugal |
| 12 Sicilian Tarantella | Italy |
| 13 Siege of Ennis | Ireland |
| 14 Verde Gaio | Portugal |



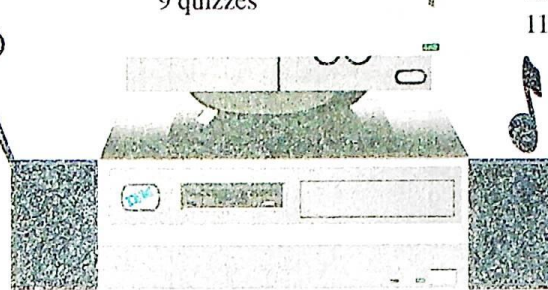
E.C. FOLK CULTURE on CD-ROM



74 music sheets
24 songs
67 dance descriptions
40 video clips
134 dress images
200 festivals, 700 contacts
9 quizzes

98 music clips
11 instrument clips

24 songs



The diagram above gives some idea of the content of our interactive, multimedia CD-ROM on *European Community* folk culture. The content is from Belgium, Denmark, England, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Scotland, and Spain. The interactive quizzes ask questions about country, instrument, dance, and dress and provide hints. There is a random play facility which is useful for hands-off demonstrations and for getting a quick impression of the content. There is also an on-screen help menu.

The CD-ROM was developed under a cost sharing contract with the *European Commission* under the *Impact 2* programme. Folk contributors earn 50% of the profit pro-rata per CD-ROM, including 5% to UNICEF.

Minimum system requirements : multimedia *IBM*-compatible computer, 486, 25MHz, with CD-ROM drive (and soundcard and speakers if you want to hear the music), *Windows 3.1* with *Microsoft* multimedia extensions.

The CD-ROM can be used as follows :

Education / fun!

Explore the rich diversity of EC folk culture then test your knowledge with 9 quizzes.

Musicians

Learn the music by listening and reading the music sheet. The music sheets can be printed. View images of folk instruments and listen to instrumental clips. Contact folk festivals, agents and other musicians.

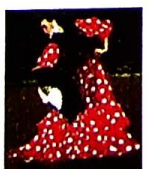
Dancers

Learn the dances by listening to the music, reading the dance description, and watching the video clips. The dance descriptions can be printed. Contact folk festivals, agents and other dancers continued...

EDINBURGH MULTIMEDIA
3 Hayfield
Edinburgh EH12 8UJ
SCOTLAND



Member of *The Multimedia Association*
The International Interactive Communications Society
The Scottish Multimedia Group
Tel & fax +44 (0)131 339 5374 (preferably 9-12am, but 24 hrs)
e-mail k.gourlay@bbcnc.org.uk



E.C. FOLK CULTURE on CD-ROM



Singers

Learn the songs by listening and reading the text in an EC language and English. The text can be printed. Contact folk festivals, agents and other singers.

Folk dress enthusiasts

Look at original dresses and read associated text. Contact dress contributors and dress makers.

Folk festival organisers and agents

Listen to examples of an artiste's work, see an image and/or video of the artiste. Contact musicians, singers, dancers and other folk festival organisers and agents.



Marketing folk material, instruments etc.

Contact folk magazines, associations, clubs, groups etc.



Children

For each EC country there is a drawing of a boy and a girl in folk dress which can be printed, coloured, and used to dress a model. The drawings can also be coloured using the *Windows Paintbrush* program. 9 of the 40 video clips are of children dancing. 2 of the 9 quizzes are specially designed for children.



Press comment

European : "Everything you ever wanted to know about the folk music, dances, and costumes of the European Community folk heritage."

Financial Times Newsletter : "..assembles a wealth of folk song and dance sources.."

Multimedia Ventures : "*EC Folk Culture on multimedia CD-ROM* marries modern technology with the very roots of European culture to record folk songs, dances, instruments and costumes on an interactive compact disc. Through CD-ROM, the programme brings together a wide range of resources which hitherto represented stacks of video-tapes, audio recordings, sheet music, photographs, textbooks and directories....the design of the disc is highly interactive...The potential of this disc as a teaching and learning aid is clear."

Evening News : "Designed for enthusiasts as well as education"



To see the CD-ROM demonstrated contact :

England : SIFD, 124 Ray Mill Road East, Maidenhead, Berks SL6 8TW Tel. 01628 39526

France : European Fineware, 18 rue Lapepe, 13004 Marseille Tel.91 08 94 45,fax 91 64 56 69

Italy : Marina Dossena, via Tadini 17, 24126 Bergamo, Tel. 035 319233, marina@ibguniv.earn

Scotland : Edinburgh Multimedia (contact details below)

We have 3 presences on the WorldWide Web : <http://www.phy.hw.ac.uk/~phyjgc/>

<http://www.echo.lu/impact/projects/imm/en/ecfolk1.html>

<http://www.scotborders.co.uk/mmf/directory/smg/smg8/html>

To order

The CD-ROM costs £50. We accept official education and government order forms. Audio CDs, audio and video cassettes (with full-length tracks of the source material) and dance and music books can also be ordered.



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3 Hayfield
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The International Interactive Communications Society

The Scottish Multimedia Group

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FOLK CATALOGUE, PRICE LIST & ORDER FORM

	GROUP	TITLE	CONTENT	ITEMS	FORMAT	£	£
1	Edin.Multimedia	EC folk culture on CD-ROM	Music,song,dress,video	500 Mb	CD-ROM	£50	
2	Annasach	Scottish dance music	Scottish dance music	16	CD	£14	
3	Dennis Music Int.	Dutch folkdances	Music	25	CD	£14	
4	Giuliano Cameli	Balli e canti della tradizione Piceno	Italian folk music & songs	14	Tape	£7	
5	Giuliano Cameli	L'organetto di Giuliano Cameli	Italian folk music & songs	10	Tape	£7	
6	Lismor	International Ceilidh Band Comp	Scottish dances & songs	13	CD	£14	
7	Moira	The Dutchman over the border	Irish folk music & songs	12	CD	£14	
8	Picett del Grenta	Gruppo Folk Valgrehentino	Italian folk music & songs	14	Tape	£7	
9	SIFD	Austrian & German folkdances		16	CD	£14	
10	SIFD	Central & E.European folkdances		22	CD	£14	
11	SIFD	French folkdances		14	CD	£14	
12	SIFD	Scandinavian folkdances	DK,Finland,Nor,Sweden	17	CD	£14	
13	SIFD	Other European folkdances	Italy,Portugal,Spain,Switz	14	CD	£14	
14	SIFD	Israeli folkdances		19	CD	£14	
15	T. Mavroudis	Rhythms of Greece	Greek music	21	CD	£14	
16	Stock Music Inter.	durch Volkstanz	International folkdances	24	CD	£14	
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RAINMAKERS

You are invited to
Ickleford Village Hall
on Saturday, 22nd July
7.30 - 11.00 p.m.
to celebrate

Peter and Jill's 30th Wedding Anniversary

at an informal *INTERNATIONAL DANCE* to the music of

CLOUDBURST

To keep the event simple to organise, please could you bring a plate of food and some drink to share, but no presents thank you.

Costumes - International or historic (1965-1995!) may be worn.



Saturday, July 22nd 1995.

Peter and Jill's Anniversary Dance.

Ickleford Village Hall, 7.30 - 11.00 p.m.

Band - Cloudburst.

Way back, around Easter time, a photograph of Jill and Peter Bransby on their wedding day appeared on the club's noticeboard. It headed an invitation to all Rainmakers to attend an International Folk Dance that they were giving to celebrate their 30th wedding anniversary on July 22nd 1995. We were only too pleased to write the date in our diaries and we looked forward to the event very much.

When we arrived at the hall it was to find the band setting up and Jill and Peter, hard at work decorating the room. Their daughter, Hilda, who belonged to Rainmakers when she was a schoolgirl, was blowing up blue and white balloons (to represent "pearls") with P or J on them. Jill and Peter had attended the Doctorate ceremony of their son Fraser in Cambridge that afternoon so they were having an exceptionally exciting, busy day. Peter was fixing on the walls, pictures, with captions of themselves and events in their lives together, which went back more than thirty years. With the help of dancers as they arrived, in kitchen and dance hall, everything was soon done and the dance began at 7.30 p.m.

About fifty people attended. This included almost the full complement of Rainmakers (one or two had already gone on holiday) and several other of Peter and Jill's folk dancing friends. Almost everyone wore an International costume so the effect was colourful.

Jill had prepared a varied programme of favourite, well known dances so, without ~~and~~ reminders or walking through, the dance would be announced and off we went. The band, Cloudburst, had obviously been rehearsing all these unfamiliar (to them) difficult tunes and they played splendidly. There was hardly time to go round and look at Peter's pictures.

Then Belinda intervened and said that to give some people a little breather, there would be a surprise entertainment. A group of Rainmakers were to dance The Anniversary Waltz - with a difference! To the familiar tune, Belinda had devised a suite of international waltzes, suitably adapted to fit the music. These were Moeizyt, Ys Wals and Erev Shabat. She had done it very cleverly but we, the dancers, had a terrible time learning the new versions and fitting them to the Anniversary Waltz tune. To start with we only had a tape of Max Bygraves singing it. He varied his speed (as he was obviously not intending his song to accompany a dance) and was sometimes very slow. It

was much better when Martin Butler provided us with a tape of him^{self} playing his accordion. Jill and Peter had asked for a performance of the Candle Dance (as given at the Hitchin Gathering but without them dancing) and Jill began to wonder why we were needing so many rehearsals for it! In fact on one Friday at 10 o'clock we had to more or less push her out of the door! However, the final performance went off more or less as intended, with a few lapses of memory especially in Ezer Shabat. Thank goodness Katka had been willing to sing with us at the last minute even though she had never heard of the song before. It seemed to be enjoyed - there were a good many smiles from the audience anyway.

After a few more dances it was time for the interval so we all repaired to the adjoining room and tucked into the delicious food and drink spread out in there. Peter made a speech in which he recalled salient events, milestones (kilometre stones?!) in thirty years of married life with Jill. I think Jill wondered what was coming but she need not have worried - it has obviously been a happy though eventful time. Peter mentioned that for over eighteen of those thirty years they had been very involved with the Rainmakers so they wanted to share their anniversary with us. We responded with appreciative applause and then drank a toast to them both.

Till had made a lovely cake which she then cut and distributed. After more conversation we returned to the dancing.

To our surprise, after a few more dances Till and Peter sprang a surprise on us. Till said "Now we will do our party piece". They donned Cloudburst waistcoats, went to the centre of the floor, put on a tape and gave us a delightful performance of a Manx Dance called "Return the Blow". As is inferred by the title, it is a fighting dance and it caused much amusement.

We had been asked to bring no presents but we had a little surprise in store and Belinda chose this moment to present an envelope containing theatre tokens and a plant to our hosts in appreciation of all the pleasure they have given to us over the years.

From the programme you will see that we gave the Candle Dance demonstration after it was dark, just before the end of the evening. The dancers were lined up in the porch - tail end of line in the Gents loo, with candles lighted, when there was an SOS from the platform "Where was the tape of the music?" It was with us in the porch! Slight pause - music began and we all moved forward. All went well except that the last couple, Martin and I, were almost shut out as the double doors swung to on us! We tried hard to keep

our lines straight and to form our patterns properly as Peter and Jill were watching from the platform and we wanted to put on a really good show for them.

The dance was due to finish at 11.30 p.m. and by the end of the Candle Dance it was well past this time. Jill was determined to finish her programme - only Bailecito had had to be missed out much to the regret of some people - so we hurried on and all danced Hora Mirescii and Shir Ha'Chatuna (Wedding Song) which was an appropriate finish.

With all hands helping, decorations were removed, everything cleared up and we were out of the hall by midnight after a marvellous evening for which the guests were most grateful.

Betty.



Dorset Four-hand Reel.

The Anniversary Waltz Suite.



Maiezyt.



Dancing Erev Shabat

RAINMAKERS INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCE GROUP

The Anniversary Waltz

Tell me I may always dance, The Anniversary Waltz with you
Tell me this is real romance, an anniversary dream come true
Let this be the anthem to all future years, for millions of smiles and a few little tears
May I always listen to The Anniversary Waltz with you

Maiezyt

Chorus: Hold inside hands
1-4 Hold inside hands, balance away and together, lady turns under mans right arm
5-8 Ballroom hold, 2 waltz steps (1 turn), lady turns under mans left arm

Verse 2:

1-4 Face, hold both hands across, step and hop, step and hop, both turn away 2 waltz steps
5-8 Repeat 1-4
9-12 Holding right hands balance along l.o.d. and back, lady turns under mans right arm
13-16 Buss up, 2 waltz steps around each other, 2 waltz steps back to place

Chorus: As above

Ys Wals

1-8 Butterfly hold, 4 zig-zag waltz steps forwards, 4 zig-zag waltz steps backwards
9-16 Crosshand hold, 4 zig-zag waltz steps into middle of circle (men starting LEFT foot),
4 zig-zag waltz steps out of circle
17-24 Push away along l.o.d. 4 waltz steps, push away against l.o.d. 4 waltz steps
(ladies hands on hips, men hands in pockets)
25-28 Hold inside hands, balance away and together, both turn away 2 waltz steps
29-32 Balroom hold, 4 waltz steps (2 turns)

Erev Shabat

Circle, starting right foot along l.o.d.

1-2 2 waltz steps
3-4 Step right forward, left back and pause, step right back, left to side and brush right
5-6 2 cherkesia steps starting with right foot
7-8 1 waltz step turning to right, 1 waltz step moving backwards along l.o.d.
9-10 2 waltz steps
11-12 Step right forward, left back and pause, step right back, left to side (turning to face against
l.o.d. and lift right foot behind left calf)
13-14 Moving into circle with right shoulder facing to centre, step right to side, left behind right,
right to side, left in front of right (small pause), right in place and left to side
15-16 2 waltz steps turning out to left
17-18 Surge into centre 2 waltz steps
19-20 2 yemenite steps starting to right, lift arms over heads on 2nd yemenite
21-22 2 rock steps (right, left, touch right)
23-24 2 small waltz steps turning to face out and dropping hands
25-26 Mini-surge out of circle 2 waltz steps
27-30 As 19-22
31-32 2 large waltz steps out of circle finishing facing in
33-34 1 large step into circle, bend knees and wiggle fingers

Can we really do all this and sing as well? Of course we can, we're Rainmakers!



Peter and Jill's party piece - a Manx dance
"Return the Blow".



Pictures taken by Janet.

Henry & Betty



The end of Erev Shabat - with variations!

Programme. Jill + Peter's Dance. 22/7/85.

Alkamelul

Hora Zemer

Appenzeller Klatschwalzer

La Bastringe

Horlepiep

Ys Wals

Debka Kafrit

Zemer Atik

Pariser Polka

Neopolitan Tarantella

Kulsko (Tape)

La Boussee Pastourelle

Jesusita en Chihuahua (Tape)
Jarabe Tapatio (Mexican Hat Dance) (Tape)

Joc de Leagane (Tape)
Kevi Czardas (Tape)

Polonez (This will come before the Interval
which may be later in the programme)

Walenki
Swedish Schottische

Ba Pardess
Rav Brachot

Hambo
Mari Mariko (Tape)

Parson's Farewell
Dorset Four-hand Reel

Tarantella Fasola
Karamfil

Musica Nisheret (Tape)
Bailecito (Tape)
Jota Tapatia

Hora Hadera
Vleegert

Fackeltanz (Candle Dance demonstration)

Hora Miresei
Shir Ha'Chatuna (Wedding Song)



POSSIBLE ORIGINS OF THE HIGHLAND FLING...

July 24th
1995.

Thankyou all very much for the Anniversary Waltz sequence; the Candle Dance; the card; the plant; your good wishes; the theatre tokens; for bringing food and drink; for helping in many ways and for coming and dancing with us to make the occasion special.

Till and Peter

To:- The Rainmakers Song and Dance Group.

Rainmakers' Garden Evenings, 1995.

Like the Windmill Theatre "We Never Close!" After the last official club night on July 21st no fewer than five Garden Evenings were held at the homes of our members.

These were:-

July 28th Claire's. Letchworth.

August 5th. Jill's & Peter's. Hitchin.

August 12th. Belinda & Martin's. Ickleford.

August 19th. Janet's. Blunham.

August 26th. Sue and Adrian's. Hitchin.

They were all well attended and much enjoyed. The prolonged dry, warm weather enabled us to stay in the gardens until quite late - 10.00 p.m. + - dancing, chatting and eating.

Many thanks to our kind, generous hosts and hostesses.

The new club term begins on Friday, September 1st, when some of our members will be in Bingen, Germany, dancing with the Staplers English Dancing Club, Hitchin.



**FREE
GRAND FINALE
TICKETS FOR
100th/200th/300th
etc SALES!**

Slovakia



Local bus company Devon General is operating a Festival Shuttle bus service between the main Arena Car Park and Port Royal on the seafront for the first time this year. Devon General's 52 service operates regularly between Exeter Bus Station, Clist St. Mary, Newton Poppleford and Sidmouth. Their 53 service links Sidford and Sidmouth. For full details of services pick up a leaflet from the Devon General Travel Shop, Paris Street Bus Station, Exeter or call the new Devon General Information Hotline on 01392 427711.

SIDMOUTH FESTIVAL

41st INTERNATIONAL FOLK ARTS

4-11 August 1995



The Souvenir Programme will be on sale at the Sidmouth Tourist Information Office, JKL Videos, Sidmouth Town Council and many other outlets in Sidmouth from July 1st at £2.

BOX OFFICE: 01296 433669
Festival Office, PO Box 296, Aylesbury, Bucks HP19 3TL

A Global Fiesta of Music, Dance and Song

The seaside holiday town of Sidmouth becomes vibrant with sounds and colour as international musicians and dancers come to East Devon for this famous week long festival. Twice daily international shows take place on the Knowle Arena Showground Stage.

- Performers to be seen throughout the week:**
- Stars of 1987's Festival, Folk Dance Group Siverko from Arkhangelsk on the Arctic Circle in **Russia**.
 - The return of **Canterini Della Riviera Jonica** from **Sicily**, featuring the popular jug thrower!
 - The spectacular **Gymnik** from Bratislava in **Slovakia**
 - The authentic **Groupement des Artistes Rodriguais** from **Mauritius** in the Indian Ocean
 - The dynamic and vibrant **Demb Ak Tay** from **Senegal**, West Africa
 - The entertaining **Ma-Wai Hakona Maori Assoc** from **New Zealand**
 - **Plus Special Edition Appalachian Cloggers** from Atlanta, Georgia **USA** (Fri-Tues)
 - **Plus UK groups** including Jugnu Bhangra Group, Shropshire Bedlams & Martha Rhoden's Tuppenny Dish, Winster Morris Dancers, Horwich Prize Medal Morris Men, Jackstraws Morris, Chequered Flag.



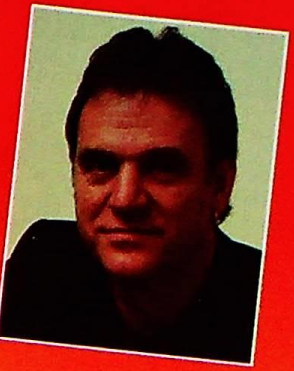
Senegal



Slovakia

The Ralph McTell Band

featuring the master singer/songwriter of 25 years standing in the music business, perform in concert on the Arena Stage on Monday night. Ralph's classic song Streets of London has been recorded by a host of musical stars including Bruce Springsteen, Aretha Franklin and Cilla Black! With years of live performance, and 20 albums released, Ralph is a master of his profession - not to be missed!



Family entertainment

The Knowle Arena Showground features daily entertainment from 11.30am-7.30pm.

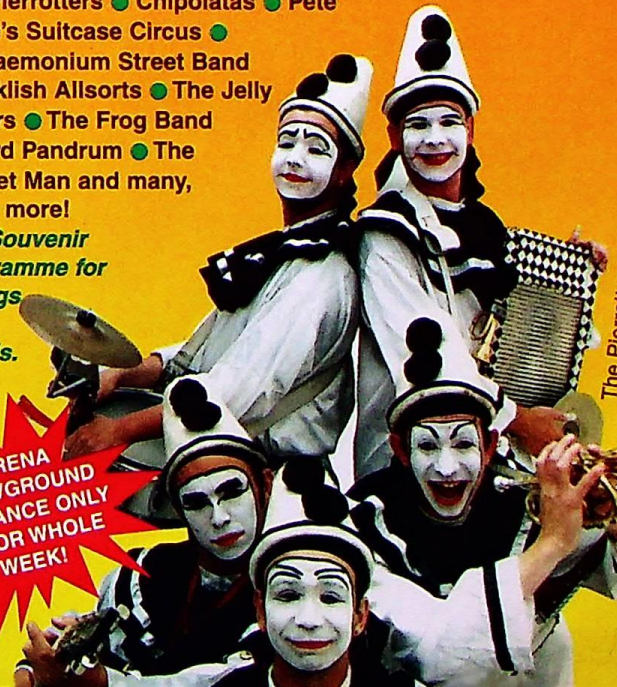
- Dance Displays ● Bands ● Clowns ● Street Theatre
- Jugglers ● Stilt Walkers ● Facepainters ● Storytellers
- Children's Craft Activities ● Children's Entertainers
- Punch & Judy ● Jesters ● Parachute Games ● Craft Stalls ● Bars ● Refreshments

Featured artists on the Arena Showground extra stages include:

- The Pierrotters ● Chipolatas ● Pete White's Suitcase Circus ● Pandaemonium Street Band ● Ticklish Allsorts ● The Jelly Rollers ● The Frog Band ● Lord Pandrum ● The Puppet Man and many, many more!

See Souvenir Programme for timings and details.

ARENA SHOWGROUND ENTRANCE ONLY £1 FOR WHOLE WEEK!



The Pierrotters

BOX OFFICE: 01296 433669
Festival Office, PO Box 296, Aylesbury, Bucks HP19 3TL

Evening Arena Shows at 8pm

Admission: Friday 4th-Sunday 6th August & Wednesday 9th-Thursdays 10th August £7 (£5 in advance). Monday 7th, Tuesday 8th & Friday 11th August £9 (£6 in advance). Children (5-17) half price. Covered and uncovered seats £2.

Friday 4th August

International Premiere

featuring seven overseas groups, whetting appetites for a week of glorious diversity and spectacle from around the world.

Saturday 5th August

A Sense of Sicily

featuring Canterini della Riviera Jonica plus Russia, Senegal, USA, plus Winster Morris, Horwich Prize Medal Morris Men.

Sunday 6th August

Gymnik of Slovakia

plus Mauritius, New Zealand, Jackstraws Morris, Shropshire Bedlams & Martha Rhoden's Tuppenny Dish.

Monday 7th August

The Ralph McTell Band

plus Kate Rusby & Kathryn Roberts.

Tuesday 8th August

Siverko of Arkhangelsk

A dedicated night of spectacular dancing, music and song from this superb Russian group.

Wednesday 9th August

Demb Ak Tay of Senegal

plus Sicily, New Zealand, Winster Morris, Shropshire Bedlams & Martha Rhoden's Tuppenny Dish.

Thursday 10th August

From The Arctic to The Tropics

featuring Jugnu Bhangra Group, Siverko of Arkhangelsk, Groupement des Artistes Rodriguais (Mauritius) plus Slovakia, Jackstraws Morris, Horwich Prize Medal Morris Men.

Friday 11th August

Grand Finale

with Russia, Slovakia, New Zealand, Mauritius, Senegal, Sicily, Jugnu Bhangra Group, Shropshire Bedlams & Martha Rhoden's Tuppenny Dish, Horwich Prize Medal Morris Men, Jackstraws Morris, Winster Morris, Chequered Flag.

International Shows at 3pm

Admission £5 (£4 in advance). Children (5-17) £1. Covered and uncovered seats £2.

Saturday 5th August

Slovakia, New Zealand, Mauritius, USA, Jackstraws Morris, Shropshire Bedlams & Martha Rhoden's Tuppenny Dish.

Sunday 6th August

Russia, New Zealand, Senegal, Sicily, USA, Horwich Prize Medal Morris Men, Winster Morris.

Monday 7th August

Russia, New Zealand, Senegal, USA, Mauritius, Slovakia.

Tuesday 8th August

USA, Mauritius, Sicily, Shropshire Bedlams & Martha Rhoden's Tuppenny Dish.

Wednesday 9th August

Slovakia, Sicily, Jugnu Bhangra Group, Jackstraws Morris, Horwich Prize Medal Morris Men, Chequered Flag.

Thursday 10th August

Sicily, New Zealand, Senegal, Shropshire Bedlams & Martha Rhoden's Tuppenny Dish, Winster Morris, Chequered Flag.

Friday 11th August

Shikisha - Zulu Drumming, Dancing & Singing - plus Senegal, Jugnu Bhangra Group, Mauritius, Russia, Jackstraws Morris, Horwich Prize Medal Morris Men.

Lunchtime Specials

12.30pm on the Arena Stage

Admission £4. Children (5-17) £1. No advance booking. Seats are free.

Monday 7th August

A Chance to Meet Groupement des Artistes Rodriguais from Mauritius. Experience at first hand the Sega folklore of Mauritius.

Tuesday 8th August

A Chance to Dance with The Kitchen Girls - from Appalachian to Cajun.

Wednesday 9th August

Lunchtime Laughter with The Old Rope String Band, Chipolatas and Pete White's Suitcase Circus.

Thursday 10th August

No Borders Dancing with Bayou Seco and The Delta Sisters - traditional sounds of the South West States - Cajun, New Mexican and much more.

Friday 11th August

A Chance to Meet Jugnu Bhangra Group - a closer look at the traditional Punjabi folk dances from Northern India.

How to book!

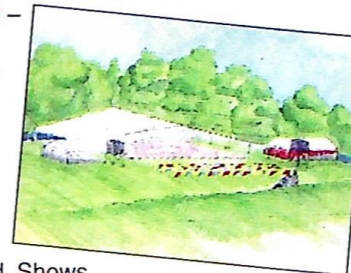
☑ FESTIVAL OFFICE, PO Box 296, Aylesbury, Bucks HP19 3TL

☎ WITH ACCESS/VISA on (01296) 433669 (24 hrs)

IN PERSON from The Booking Office, Tourist Information Centre, Ham Lane, Sidmouth, Devon. Open from 10am-5pm, all week until Sunday 23rd July, and thereafter from The Festival Information Office in the Ham Car Park.

ARENA SHOW BOOKINGS -

If you buy an Arena Show ticket you gain access to the Arena Showground and the Arena Stage to sit on the grass to see the show. In addition you can book a deck chair or seat in the side stands. The Arena Dance Stage is now covered. Shows will NOT be cancelled due to poor weather. Side stand seating will also be covered. (See illustration above). ARENA SHOWGROUND ENTRY - You can also gain access just to the Arena Showground area. A ticket allowing you access to this site (not the main stage shows) and its programmed entertainment costs £1 for adults for the whole week and is available on the Site Gates. If you have an Arena Show ticket in advance or buy one on the day, the Arena Showground entrance is free. Children/concessions free.



General Information

ACCESS FOR DISABLED PERSONS - We are currently working on a policy to make the Festival more accommodating for people with mobility problems. Wheelchair access is available at most venues and our volunteer stewards are always ready to assist with any special needs. Toilet facilities are available at most venues and along the seafront. For further information please contact the Festival Office on (01296) 393293. We would like to help if we can.

CAR PARKING is available for Festival visitors in Broadway, 360 metres from the Arena entrance, with incline in both directions. Price £2 per car before 6pm, £1 after 6pm.

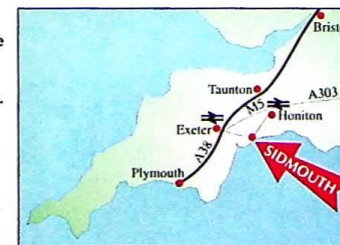
OTHER FESTIVAL EVENTS, concerts, workshops, dances, etc are covered in a separate leaflet available from the Festival Office. Please call if you require further information.

DOGS are not admitted to the Arena by order of East Devon District Council. Dogs may be admitted to other venues at the discretion of the volunteer stewards but must be kept on a lead at all times.

The SOUVENIR PROGRAMME, containing colour pictures and full details of the overseas groups, fuller programme details and artist information, will be available from July 1st from the Festival office at £2.

PARTY DISCOUNTS are available to groups of twenty and over for all shows except the Grand Finale. Please contact the Festival Office for further details. Coach parties are welcome and special coach parking is available. REFUNDS We regret refunds will not be given on any tickets.

The management gives no warranty that artistes named will perform at any particular time, or at all, but every effort will be made to carry out the programme as advertised.



FREE parking for a cars with four advance Arena ticket holders!

Sidmouth Festival Booking Form

Please fill in the following form and return to:
FESTIVAL OFFICE, PO BOX 296, AYLESBURY, BUCKS HP19 3TL
TELEPHONE BOOKINGS (01296) 433669 FAX (01296) 392300

3pm Arena International Show Tickets

Day/Date	Price	No	Uncovered Deck Chairs		Covered Side Seats		Total Cost
			Price	No	Price	No	
			£2		£2		
			£2		£2		
			£2		£2		
			£2		£2		
			£2		£2		

8pm Arena International Show Tickets

Day/Date	Price	No	Uncovered Deck Chairs		Covered Side Seats		Total Cost
			Price	No	Price	No	
			£2		£2		
			£2		£2		
			£2		£2		
			£2		£2		
			£2		£2		

SOUVENIR PROGRAMMES @ £2 inc p&p No

VISA Access All prices include VAT at 17.5% where applicable

TOTAL COST

Please note Access/Visa card minimum is £5.
Please enclose a DL (220mm x 110mm) s.a.e. Thank you very much.

Name

Address

Tel (w) Tel (h)

I enclose cheque/PO for £ payable to Sidmouth International Festival or please debit my Access/Visa card number:

Signature Expiry Date

If you have a friend who would like to be on the Sidmouth Festival mailing list please fill in their details. Thank you.

Where did you obtain this form?
OFFICE USE ONLY Enquiry Date Taken by
Date Processed By
Attach yellow credit card slip to the back of this form

I liked this photograph - so I put it in the Scrapbook!

THE BACK PAGE



REAR VIEW

● Summertime knees-up: with temperatures reaching record highs, the beer gardens of Britain are full. Most of us are quite happy just to sit back and slake our thirst, moving as few muscles as possible. But you can't keep a good Morris dancer in his seat for long. This shot — featuring the Abingdon Morris Men of Oxford — shows that they are still light on their feet, performing traditional jigs including the Leap Frog, Bean Setting and Laudnum Bunches. Similarly energetic displays can probably be seen at a pub near you — the heat does funny things to people.

Picture:
ROB JUDGES

More lovely letters from Annie with these enclosed photographs. July 31st and August 26th 1995. She went to Antigua in Guatemala from Belize to learn Spanish and again on holiday.

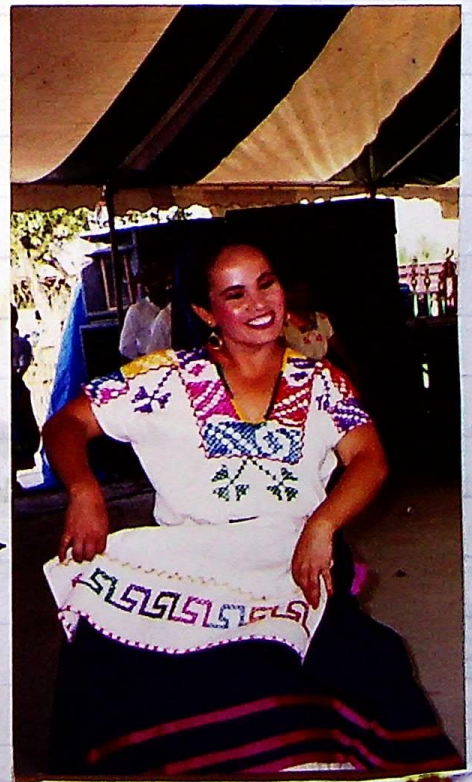


Girl sellers in park in Antigua - but it is their normal dress.



← Pefen Maya embroidered blouse :

Yucatee Mayan huipile. →





Ceremonial huipile on sale in street in Antigua — I could not afford it!



Mexican music group. The girl on the left has a rain stick.



Orange Walk, Belize. Modern Mestizos,
The more lace and frills the better!



Classroom realities, Unfinished walls
and windows.

(Annie visits schools to advise and help
teachers and head-teachers.)



Mayan temple at Altun tea, about
30 miles from Orange Walk.

VSO sent me there for two weeks to learn some basic Spanish. The journey, both there and back, is a drag. As relations between Belize and Guatemala are fraught, you have to do two flights, one to El Salvador and then on to Guatemala. On the return, you have to leave Antigua at 4.a.m. and there are no airport facilities open for breakfast. Yuk. The flights are short – no meals, and the waits interminable – but I am getting better at air travel and no longer need to clutch the arm rests and help the plane up.

Antigua was the second capital the Conquistadors made in Guatemala – the first got buried in a post-volcanic mud slide – and it too got battered by earthquakes and volcanoes, so they abandoned it in the late C18th. It still has earthquakes and volcanic eruptions – the last in 1976, which I vaguely remember. The location is fantastic – a small flat plain encircled by volcanic hills. The streets are on a grid pattern and wherever you look the horizon is abruptly cut off by a green mountain with lovely cloud patterns hovering on and around it. One night, the city was dry and clear and quiet – but lightning played about the hills which were visible in silhouette in a peculiar greenish orange light.

The houses look dull from the outside – one storey only with great wooden doors – but these open onto lovely courtyards and the rooms are placed round about. It's very green and everything seems to grow there – from pomegranates and fuschias to dandelions and clover. Every block in the old city contains a ruin. Huge Spanish structures with rounded arches and extravagant mouldings – but generally only little bits of the facades remain – the rest are smashed and crumbling. You wonder how what is left still stands. I also marvelled at the power and arrogance of the builders.

Unfortunately, it's a tourist Mecca and palls after a while – it's like being in a gigantic souvenir shopping mall. The Americans dominate – so there are wonderful cake shops – apple and blackberry pie, strawberry cheesecake, carrot cake so light you have to eat it quickly before it floats away – And right on ethical restaurants where no animal products are used – and lots of ethnic restaurants too – my best place to eat was Austrian – spinach dumplings with fresh veg. in a bright yellow mustard sauce. But every nationality is there flocking in for the town's main industry – the language schools – one on every corner.

Luckily 'los indigenos' – the Maya descendants – are there as well. Dozens in the streets selling embroidery and carvings and ornaments. They are not just a pose though. The vast majority of women wear huipile (blouse) and corta (skirt) in wild designs and colours. The cloth is woven in narrow strips on a back loom in lengths about two feet wide. Sometimes it's a plain cloth, but mostly striped or checked. The pieces are sewn together in rectangles, without any shaping, so the huipile is simply a rectangle with a head hole, and may or may not be stitched at the sides. Then it is smothered in embroidery, each design indicating the village of origin. You literally cannot see the cloth. The skirts are made of a very very long rectangle joined into a circle. The seams, horizontal and vertical, are highlighted again with embroidery. You step into the skirt and wrap it round till it fits, then hold it up with an embroidered pom pommed sash. THEN you add an apron – preferably scalloped, and trimmed with lace or lurex and emblazoned with motifs in gingham, ric rac braid, or anything else you can think of. Not finished yet. You need a carrying shawl – striped differently to your skirt, sash and apron, which are all different to each other anyway – and into this you sling baby/toddler and or the shopping. Finally your head gear – another embroidered cloth strip is plaited into your long uncut black hair and the lot wound round your head, where it not only looks decorative but provides a nice cushioned surface for balancing your bundle or basket. The baskets are about a metre across and eighteen inches deep and contain the shopping – or the goods you are going to sell.

I was mesmerised by Antigua market. About twice the size of Hitchin market and just packed with barefoot women dressed as above selling flowers – chrysanthus, gypsophila, gladioli, carnations, roses – in such abundance – and fruit and veg – apples, strawberries, blackberries, broccoli, green beans etc. etc. or herbs and spices. They sit on the floor and the baskets of stuff are spread around them. There is also a covered section with meat stalls, modern underwear, lots of shoes, watches, toiletries etc.

I bought a huipile and corta (how could I resist) from an upmarket shop selling used i.e. genuine clothing. The huipile is black cloth but both front and back is smothered with emerald green quetzals (the sacred bird), white doves and rabbits, scarlet strawberries and carnations,

purple grapes, yellow and orange wheat ears – to name but a few. The corita ls black with fine white lines making a large check pattern, and the seams highlighted with yellow lowers and white doves. The clothes were labelled as coming from the village of Santa Maria de Jesus – so I decided to check it out.

I found the bus behind the market – dozens of them, ex US school buses painted in bright reds and blues – and got on. The luggage racks were heaped with cloth bundles and sheaves of flowers. The big baskets, the chickens and the bicycles were on the roof. It slowly filled up – with women wearing YES my huipile and more modernly dressed men who sat to the back. I was the only non-villager.

Whilst we waited for the off a man got on – white shirt, unusual, and began to address us. I soon realised that he was a quack medicine man – and actor. His bottles would cure all known complaints and he did graphic lightning sketches of someone too weak to get up in the morning, or pale with fatigue and headaches, or troubled with stomach ache and loss of appetite. He went on for ages and was really entertaining. And he had a special offer – two for the price of one ! He sold four lots.

When the bus was full we set off for the village – the last one accessible by bus up the sides of the Agua Volcano. I shared my newspaper with the man sitting next to me – to his delight, and we oohed and aahed in unison over villages cut off by flooding in the south, and the death in a road accident of an ex-mayor of Antigua. The road wound up the mountainside through coffee fincas (i.e. plantations) – very bendy and of course a dirt road. The Journey had no stops, took forty minutes and cost 1 quetzal – 30cents Belize, or 10p UK.

The village would be a town by Belize standards – oh and very poor. There was a marketplace – with the women sitting on the ground in those lovely costumes. A huge church where a wedding was taking place – the women this time wearing their best shawls, not their carrying ones – but the bride had a white veil over all this.

I was there at lunch time, and as I wandered about looking for a good viewpoint to snap the volcano, again, the men and boys and some old women were coming home from the fields. One or two had laden ponies – but most were carrying huge loads of firewood or hay or produce – string sacks of radishes, for example, suspended from their head bands. They were bowed down and almost invisible from the rear.

Children, the girls all in native dress, giggled and ran off when I approached – but many adults spoke to me kindly. The children too were often carrying loads – either from the head strap, or the girls, water jars on their heads. I actually felt a bit of a prat walking round with my camera – sort of human zoo feeling.

You will gather from this account that, after two weeks, I felt fairly confident in my Spanish. Good oh for the school – but it was a killer. Six hours a day, one to one with two different teachers. It wasn't just the new language – but having to talk that much that was wearing – and about serious topics. That was one huge difference. Town Guatemalans are much more aware of the world than Belizeans – even though in the village one lady said she had never heard of England. The other difference was the quiet – no barking dogs, no raucous music.

I don't know what to make of the country. The press was impressive. Several papers a day covering a wide range of issues – local, international and cultural. One day, for example, one paper had articles on why Freud and Jung split, the latest discoveries on black holes and big bang theory and the Salzburg Music Festival. The big political story whilst I was there was the turning down of General Rios Montt as a candidate in the forthcoming presidential elections. He is debarred, apparently because he was part of a triumvirate which, in the past, took power by forceful means. The searches for bodies and perpetrators of the violence of the eighties seemed to be widely and freely reported.

Yet, the majority of children don't go to school. They were clearly visible working from an early age on the streets and on the farms and even in the restaurants. I met a widow with eight children who had come to Antigua to try to get her children into the orphanage – but they turned her away and she was sleeping out with them. There were also several elderly and younger psychiatric patients on the streets – but that's like England now, isn't it ?

Annie.

c/o General Deliveries. Orange Walk. BELIZE C.A.
Saturday, August 26, 1995

delantul means

"pinajere."

or
"apron"

K3121
delantul

Q. 20.00

Dear Betty,

I hope you have had my newsletter from Guatemala via Oxford. It must have seemed a rather impersonal response to your wonderful letter to me - about your trip to Crete, amongst other things, but I was just circulating generally and in a hurry. I now enclose some photos to illuminate the text - and an odd souvenir in the form of a genuine, because its second hand and old, Guatemalan pinny just to give you some idea of the colours and elaborateness. I hope you'll enjoy adding it to your costume collection when its had a dunk in Lux !

Every one of my correspondents has written about your hot Summer - and its even been in the Guardian Weekly. I visualise the '76 one which occurred when we were living in Newbury. I had a huge patch of saxifrage - yards across, it must have been years old, and it just burnt up when we were on holiday. We had drought herein Belize earlier in the year - virtually three months without significant rain. The rivers and lagoons fell very low - but the grass and foliage somehow stayed green. In April I was in a town called San Ignacio in the hills where three rivers meet - and locals were saying the waters had fallen too low even to launch canoes. Last Saturday, I was there again, and overnight the rivers rose twenty feet - flooding the park by the river so that only the tops of swings stood out, but within three days the waters had fallen back to normal levels.

I was travelling round with my friend Barbara - another Herts H.T., slightly older than me. Transport was a big feature of the holiday - we used everything - a four seater plane, workers' bus, luxury bus with loos and video, speed boats, a cane truck-standing up in the back, mountain bikes and a canoe. We had a conflict of interest - I had been looking forward to two weeks of middle-aged middle class luxury, Barbara wanted life as it really is and regarded taxis as politically incorrect. The mountain bike ride really was just that - a twelve mile round trip on rutted stony tracks. Admittedly I did a lot of walking on the worst bits (its all relative) - but must be fitter than I thought as I had not an ache or a twinge the next day. It was salutary to be overtaken on one rocky downhill stretch by two young Belizean women, free wheeling on ordinary bikes, one with a baby on the crossbar.

It was lovely in the hills - but very noisy with industrial grade crickets by day and heavy duty tree frogs drumming rather than croaking at night. The ecologically run lodge in which we stayed did not use electricity for lighting, so at night we had a natural display - the Milky Way and the clearest stars you can imagine, electrical storms flashing round the hills and millions of fireflies glittering in the grass. just magic. We left the place by canoe, rather than taxi and were paddled down river for two hours seeing no-one except the women washing clothes at the one village we passed. There were iguanas of various colours and sizes snoozing on the overhanging branches, and occasionally falling in. On the shdy side there were steep

cliffs hung with bats which fluttered deliriously when we drew near. We heard, but didn't see toucans, and there were lots of swallows and cormorants.

Your letter describing the dance for Peter and Jill's anniversary made me all homesick again - so I played my Rainmaker tapes and had my own party. Lovely - I can dance with whom I please and never tread on anybody's toes! I wonder what kinds of dances Henry learned at the Mexican workshop - there seems to be quite a bit of regional variation. Almost all the dances I have seen belong to the Yucatan Peninsula and some are beginning to become familiar though I do not have an opportunity of learning them as my nearest 'cultural group' is in a village which only has daytime transport.

Oh I was so envious of your trip to Crete! I have not made it there yet and it's on my 'must do' list. Although I went round the main Mayan ruins here again with my friend, my understanding is still limited. What I like about the European buildings is the sense of continuity from one culture to the next just as you describe in your exploration of the town you stayed in. People here are shocked when I say that in Southern Europe the roads are bad and people farm with donkeys - they assume all Europe is rich. Your letter reminded me of walking holidays in Sicily and on Samos - I too found the flowers a delight - especially the tiny natural marigolds like daisies and the absolute profusion of anemones and asphodel. Mind you, I think Barbara and I saw better butterflies on our mountain trip - so many it was hard to keep your mind on cycling. Such extraordinary colours and patterns that you would raise an eyebrow if a child drew them.

Well, it's back to work again now though I am not sure how this next term will work out. Special Ed. is supposed to have been re-organised with a new, qualified, line manager and a clearer structure. There still isn't any money for travelling to village schools, but I am going to have a go. This is mainly to follow-up teachers I have met on my courses. I am also going to try visiting house bound children - but I am not sure to what purpose beyond building up a more complete picture of what is happening here. Summer is a time of 'general post' and teachers are switched schools and classes apparently at random. There is no such thing as a job advertisement or a job description - you go where your manager tells you. The Education Office has been packed all Summer with parents buying the listed school books. It's costly for them and I find it a bit sad. This is a largely Indian area, especially in the villages, and all the set reading texts are Caribbean based and feature West Indian children living a sea-side life. What these little Spanish speaking children who live in a palm thatch village in the midst of flat swamp land make of it I can't imagine.

I go to Guyana for a week on the 10th. September for a conference - so I am looking forward to a whole load of new insights and impressions from that.

I hope you all have fun at the Club Anniversary Dance - late September isn't it?
Best Wishes.

Aie