

INTERNATIONAL FOLK MUSIC COUNCIL

Hon. Secretary:

Miss MAUD KARPELES

12 Clorane Gardens, London, N.W.3
England.

BULLETIN

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INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, 1951 AND FESTIVAL OF YUGOSLAV FOLK DANCE AND SONG

As announced, the Council will hold its 1951 Conference from September 8th to 14th in Zagreb, Yugoslavia, in conjunction with a Festival of Yugoslav dance and song. This is an opportunity not to be missed, for Yugoslavia is one of the few accessible countries of Europe in which a continuous and unspoiled tradition of folk dance and folk song has persisted and in which the seasonal and other ritual dances still retain their magic significance.

Further information about the Conference and Festival is given in a preliminary notice, copies of which can be obtained from the Honorary Secretary. Members are asked to do all they can to make the Festival known.

1952 FESTIVAL AND CONFERENCE

The International Folk Music (Dance and Song) Festival, which is to be held in London in 1952, at the invitation of the English Folk Dance and Song Society, will probably take place either during the week beginning July 13th or July 20th. This Festival will be held on similar lines to the London Festival of 1935, and it will doubtless vie with it in splendour and variety.

FESTIVAL CALENDAR

The Council receives frequent enquiries from intending travellers to the European Continent as to where and when dance and song festivals can be witnessed, particularly those which are held in accordance with traditional custom. The Honorary Secretary will be glad to receive, if possible, before February 10th, particulars of such festivals and if sufficient information is available, a calendar of forthcoming festivals will be printed and issued to members.

EXCHANGE OF PUBLICATIONS AND RECORDINGS

The Library of Congress, Washington, and other institutions are interested in receiving proposals for the exchange of publications and mechanical recordings. It is suggested that these should be sent in the first instance to the Honorary Secretary of the International Folk Music Council.

Exact particulars should be given of:—

- (a) The material offered; and
- (b) Any publications or recordings which are particularly desired or would be accepted in exchange.

JOURNAL

Volume III, which will contain the proceedings of the Congress held at Indiana University, together with general notices, reports from correspondents, and reviews of publications, will be issued early in April.

THE UNITED STATES—A RETROSPECT by the Honorary Secretary

To say that the Indiana Conference went "according to plan" would be an understatement. Certainly the careful organisation of our hosts, who foresaw all our needs and left nothing to chance, was largely responsible for the smooth running of the Conference, but good organisation alone does not transform a heterogeneous mass of individuals into a united community with a common purpose. To effect this, kindness and human understanding are necessary and these gifts were supplied in full measure by our American friends. The Conference was an example of true democracy, arising from respect for the individual, in which every one felt free to make his contribution and no one dominated the proceedings unduly.

For me, as for many other non-American members, the Conference was the prelude to a round of enjoyable experiences, in which the same warm-hearted friendliness was encountered. Most of us visited Washington at some time or other and were received with open-armed hospitality at the Library of Congress where we browsed to our hearts' content in the Folk Lore Archive of the Music Division.

A series of lectures on the English and Anglo-American folk song tradition and a three-and-a-half weeks' expedition to the Southern Appalachian Mountains accounted for the rest of my American visit. The purpose of my mountain excursion was to follow up my footsteps of thirty years ago, when I had collected folk songs of English origin with the late Cecil Sharp. Then, there were few roads through the mountains and the people were living self-contained lives almost completely shut off from the rest of the world. Cecil Sharp and I spent fifty weeks in the mountains and during that time we never heard a bad tune; if anyone sang at all it was a folk song. Now, roads and electricity have brought "civilisation" into the mountains. The roads have made markets accessible and the people are busy earning a living, but there is less time to enjoy life. Electricity has brought the radio, and "hill-billy" can be heard at any time of the day, but genuine folk songs which were previously so plentiful must now be patiently sought. With most of the singers memory has weakened, but the love of the old songs still lies dormant and it requires only a little encouragement for it to spring up anew. It was a great delight to many a singer to be able to re-learn a forgotten song from the printed version made from his singing of thirty years ago. Thus, a song originating in England is carried orally to America and develops there; after, perhaps, a couple of hundred years it is brought back to England in written form; thirty years later the published song is carried back to the country of its adoption and again it takes on a new lease of life. Through such vicissitudes does tradition persist.