

# Hoppin'

Cover Price:

£2, \$4, SEK26, DM8

## Lindy Hoppers Sweep the Jive Joint



The winners, Maxine Green and Warren Heyes, and their Jiving Lindy Hop. Photo sent in by Simon Selmon.

"It was heaving", said Hoppers who were at the first Capital Gold "Open" Jive Competition, on 15 November at the 100 Club in London. More to the point, Lindy Hoppers dominated the dance floor and took the top two prizes! Louise Thwaite of the London Swing Dance Society and its performing group, the Sugarfoot Stompers, reports.

The 100 Club never looked so glamorous. Opened originally in the 1930s as a dance hall, it has been the shrine of British jazz since 1942 when it became home of the Feldman Swing Club. Later it became the London Jazz Club, then the Humphrey Lyttelton Club, and finally in 1965, drawing on its extremely congenial address (100 Oxford Street) the 100 Club. Its well-trodden dance floor and dark red walls, smothered in photographs of the jazz greats of fifty years, are much loved by dancers in London and beyond.

The Club is open 7 days a

week, on Monday night hosting *Stompin'* run by the London Swing Dance Society. This particular Monday, streamers and balloons hung in their hundreds from the ceiling and rose from the streamer-covered tables. Running wild on stage was one of the best bands in the land, King Pleasure and the Biscuit Boys. When the club opened at 7:30 pm the queue to get in was half way down the Street; by 9 pm as the competition was about to start the already hot and excited, 400-strong crowd gave room for no more and the doors were closed.

The competition was an Open, meaning that any dancer could enter, professional or amateur. With £1000 prize money to be won there was plenty of incentive. The contest was jointly sponsored by the LSDS and Capital Gold, a London-based radio station, and couples came from as far afield as Scotland to take part. Fifteen couples competed in five heats of three

couples on the floor at one time, then eight couples went through to the final. The music for the competition was '50s rock 'n roll, and the cramped conditions just enhanced the atmosphere, with many different styles visible from flying Lindy Hop to Rock 'n Roll to Ballroom Jive.

If prizes were awarded on enthusiasm, the judges could never have made a decision. What judges were asked to look for was timing and rhythm, body coordination, styling, variety and originality, musical interpretation, lead and follow, teamwork, showmanship, and costume.

A special prize was given to the couple who showed the most enthusiasm and greatest sense of fun. This couple could be chosen by the judges from any of the heats, so couples who didn't make the final also had a chance to win. This prize went to Brigid Kirst and Tim Flach, along with £100, for their lively, entertaining performance.

Third prize and £150 went to Margaret Kilkardy and Michael Grimshaw, a professional couple from Scotland who did a very polished, ballroom-style Jive, full of fast spins and acrobatics. Second place and £250 went to Sing Lim and Ron Lesley, two of London's finest non-professional Lindy Hoppers, who wowed the crowd with their great show-manship and acrobatic style.

Finally, the judges unanimously awarded first place and £500 to Maxine Green and Warren Heyes, a professional couple

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### Capital Gold "Open" Jive Championship Winners

**First**  
Warren Heyes & Maxine Green

**Second**  
Ron Lesley & Sing Lim

**Third**  
Michael Grimshaw & Margaret Kirkaldy

**Greatest Sense of Fun**  
Brigid Kirst & Tim Flach

### The Judges

Freddie Haugan, Dance Institute Director, Norway

Amelia Hill, '88 Rock 'n Roll Champ, UK

Randall Lee Rose, Capital Gold DJ, USA

Stuart Coleman, Capital Gold DJ, UK

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# Hoppin'

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## Advertising:

Accepted for worldwide Lindy-related products, events, venues, organisations. Editorial calendar, rates, and deadlines available on request from *Hoppin'* (see *Submissions above*).

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## It's Hoppin' !

Welcome to the second issue of *Hoppin'*. So many of you out there have sent positive feedback and contributions, I feel comfortable saying the first issue has been a success!

However, I would like to address an issue that concerns us all, like it or not - money.

Perhaps because of the professional look of *Hoppin'* some people may think this a money-making operation. Let me say here it is not, and is unlikely to be for a year or two, if ever. We fortunately had some capital to start us off, but many people have contributed many unpaid hours to make this newsletter possible.

As the first issue had such a warm response, we'll now mount a concerted drive for subscriptions, the Swedish pilot for which was most successful. This issue's printing costs were covered through the cover price, subscriptions, and advertising. Not covered are costs like international (groan!) telephone bills to gather information, postage, production materials, and the hours of time spent to write, create and produce this. Writers are unpaid.

It really is up to you, the Lindy Hop community. If you like this newsletter (many thanks to those who've said you do), please, subscribe, contribute, and it will continue!

The people who distribute *Hoppin'* at your local clubs and collect the money for us are also unpaid. I'd like to take this opportunity to

thank all those who helped distribute the first issue - the endlessly energetic Lennart Westerlund in Sweden; *Hoppin'*'s roving ambassadors, Rob van Haaren, Simon Bell, and Chris Batchelor; Erin Stevens, Leslie Coombs, Maria Barry, Craig Hutchinson in the US; Freddie Haugan and Anita Helen Johannessen in Norway; and Caroline Cole and Tim of Hellzapoppin' in London. Two new US distributors, Patricia Brennan and Steve Cullinan have just signed on, and Nancy Sandburg in Santa Barbara has agreed to handle US circulation.

Thanks to Sing Lim, Fred Hunt, and Beckie Menckhoff for letting me gather names at the Jam, and to Sing again for letting me sell the newsletter at Jitterbugs in London. Many thanks to the very talented writers and other professionals on the masthead (I hope I remembered everyone!) who contributed their skills to make this the calibre it is.

And a very special thanks to Floyd Striegel in CA for all his great ideas, long phone conversations (oh, our aching phone bills!) and support in getting *Hoppin'* off the ground. There are a lot of wonderful people in this dance community of ours - long may we all keep dancing!



## Frankie's Having A Birthday!

*Virginia Lawrence, newly a swing dance enthusiastic, is helping with the Can't Top the Lindy Hop! weekend, lives in New York, and sends the following preliminary information:*

On May 26, 1994, Frankie Manning, one of Lindy's living legends will celebrate his 80th birthday. The New York Swing Dance Society invites the international *Hoppin'* community to our city to a 4-day extravaganza in honour of Frankie's 80th swinging year. CAN'T TOP THE LINDY HOP!, 27 to 30 May, is an opportunity to connect with living Lindy history.

Daily workshops, from novice to advanced, will be taught by the best Lindy Hoppers in the world today, including Margaret Batiuchok (US), Ryan Francois, Jiving Lindy Hoppers, Simon Selmon & Louise Thwaite (UK), Steve Mitchell (Germany), Rhythm Hot Shots (Sweden), Erin Stevens, Sylvia Sykes & Jonathan Bixby, and Rob van Haaren (US).

There will be parties throughout the weekend, culminating in a Birthday Bash for Frankie on Sunday night with foot-stompin' performances by our guests from around the world and dancing to the big band sound of Clark Eno's Band. Monday night we take the A train uptown to dine and dance in Harlem.

There will be a lecture/demonstration given

by Cynthia Millman on the history and evolution of the Lindy, and Bob Crease will lead a panel discussion (supplemented by Ernie Smith's rare vintage film footage), featuring reminiscences by musicians and hostesses who were at the Savoy Ballroom in Harlem during the 1930s.

Your CAN'T TOP THE LINDY HOP! "Lindy Passport" admits you to all workshops, parties, and activities, except the Monday night trip to Harlem. The NYSDS are working hard to line up inexpensive hotels and group rates, and members have already volunteered luxury sofa and floor space in their homes.

At his birthday party, we will be presenting a commemorative journal to Frankie, with personalized greetings from the Lindy Hop community. You or your group can place a greeting in this journal for a reasonable donation. In keeping with our mission to help preserve this great African-American dance form, we have kept the entrance fee at a minimum. Revenues from the journal will help defray the costs of the weekend, which the low price of admission will not cover. Deadline for journal entries is end of April. Please give generously!

We hope you are as excited about this weekend as we are. See you in May!

## International Swing Dance Festival



Organiser Rob van Haaren and partner Jann Olsen take it to the streets.

--"It don't mean a thing if it ain't got that swing..."

--Duke Ellington

...and swing they did in the first annual International Swing Dance Festival, June 26-27 in Santa Barbara, exciting Southern Californians with Lindy Hop!

There are few places more pleasant to be in summer than under the sway of both palm trees and swing as taught by Rob van Haaren (Santa Barbara), Ryan Francois (London), and the Rhythm Hot Shots (Stockholm).

Cooled by sea breezes, 100 pairs of happy feet danced through the weekend, in a smorgasbord of classes in Charleston, Shag, Tap, Aerials, Shim Sham, Black Bottom, and, of course, Lindy Hop. People full of energy

and enthusiasm radiated smiles - particularly those enjoying their first taste of Lindy Hop after years of experience in other swing dances. Daily classes increased participant's appetites for the Saturday night dance and show.

On a cultural note, there was a great high-energy show by members of the Rhythm Hot Shots and Ryan Francois, but Californians were mystified by the concomitant ceremonies conducted in the late summer night hours by the seemingly reserved Swedes, involving the consumption of liquids blessed with the word "skoal!", boisterous singing, and hopping frog imitations. Science is not cognizant of whether this tradition contributes

to better performances, but the results were stupendous. The multi-talented Hot Shots presented classic Tap and Jazz routines of the '20s to '40s, Swedish comedy, and a Josephine Baker number that caused audience eyes to bug. Eyes widened further at the troupe's exciting acrobatics.

In addition, the Upbeat Lindy Hoppers showcased van Haaren's choreography, followed by a fresh young group of Hip Hop performers, cheered by the crowd. (Did you know that Hip Hop dancers search for "new" moves from Lindy Hop?) The audience danced with fervour before and after these events, and spirited Sing Lim and smoothtoed Jann Olsen jumped in to jam with partners Francois and van Haaren.

Santa Barbara provides not only a vacation experience for

tourists, movie stars, and Presidents, but is also located conveniently close to Hollywood, home of many celluloid toe-tapping greats. When Rob van Haaren presented film clips of the legendary Nicholas brothers for the audience, the Rhythm Hot Shots were the last to expect Fayard Nicholas himself to emerge from behind the screen!

The last day ended with a walk to the beach for aerials under the sunshine. What better way to conclude a weekend of workshops? From this fledgling beginning plans arc underway for a larger event to sizzle your socks in April. And Santa Barbara is sublime in Spring...

©Nancy Sandburg, California. Santa Barbara is a Hoppin' place for Lindy, with at least two other Swing organisations active in the area (see Listings). Check it out!



Beach bums Ryan Francois and Sing Lim show off their style. Photos this page courtesy of Jann Olsen.

## Washington's Wild Week

Washington State in the US was the scene of a wild week of fun and dancing as the 4th annual Winter Wild Week dance camp took place 26 December to 1 January in Port Townsend, Washington (two hours north of Seattle). The site of an old military camp (for film buffs, the location for the filming of *An Officer and a Gentleman*), Fort Worden's dormitories and outlying buildings provided comfortable accommodations for the 130 people attending this year.

Although the weather was for the most part relentlessly grey, occasional breathtaking glimpses of the snowy mountain ranges of the Olympic peninsula were visible, and it was a short walk

from the dormitory to the beach where the wind whipped waves of the Pacific ocean. Various dance forms were taught at the camp, including Lindy with Margaret Batiuchok (New York) and Balboa, Shag, and Lindy Hop with Rob van Haaren (Santa Barbara). Other classes included Tango with Rebecca Shulman and Daniel Trenner (New York) and Body Percussion (using the body as a percussive instrument, tapping, clapping, slapping, etc.) with Sandy Silva (Seattle).

Live bands played at four of the nightly dances, with taped music the other two nights. A big party was held New Year's Eve, and '94 was greeted with cheers, hugs, and kisses all around. Then as the band played, dancers

began to weave around the floor holding hands; soon, virtually the entire crowd was whipping around the room in a giant snake dance that became increasingly intricate. At 1 am the live music was over, but not the party - it moved to another building, where the festivities went on until 4 am.

The Northwest corner of the US (with Seattle as its center) has seen its dance scene in general and Lindy Hop scene in particular grow by leaps and bounds. Dancers at this camp represented thirteen states and two Canadian provinces. Two dancers - Eva Gredenord and Godehard Poettker - travelled all the way from Germany to attend. Their presence added a welcome international flavour, and the dance

community here hopes to see even more countries represented next year. After all, the Northwest is a great place, and wild in more ways than one: the beautiful scenery, the enthusiasm evident for Lindy Hop, and most of all, its crazy dance community. As Rob van Haaren noted about Seattle (which provided the bulk of the camp's dancers), "It's one of the happiest places I've ever visited."

Viola Spencer lives in Seattle and caught Lindy Hop fever last year when Steve Mitchell was in Washington. She has since travelled to Sweden (Herräng '93) to learn more Lindy, and is currently a member of the Savoy Swing Club & Dance Troupe. When not dancing she teaches and writes.

## Stories from the Life of Norma Miller

Many thanks to **Bob Crease** for permission to reprint excerpts from his article on Norma Miller, originally printed in *New York's Village Voice* in August 1987. Bob is current chairman of the New York Swing Dance Society, and has interviewed many of the original Lindy Hoppers in New York.

Norma Miller probably holds some sort of record for uncredited appearances in shows, movies, revues, cabarets, musicals, and film shorts. She's worked the Apollo stage - first as a dancer, then as a comedian - for over a half-century. Her picture is among those adorning the walls of the star dressing room on the first floor.

In the '30s and '40s, Miller danced with Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, which operated out of Harlem's Savoy Ballroom backing up acts such as those of Lena Horne, Ella Fitzgerald, and Ethel Waters. She toured with the bands of Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Cab Calloway and others. Wherever jazz happened in those years, Norma was there too. But, as Norma says, "In the performance business, dancers are lowest on the totem pole. They get treated as ornaments to singers." Though the Lindy Hoppers were an omnipresent part of the jazz world, none are listed in books such as *The Encyclopedia of Jazz Performers*. None have received the tributes or medals or accolades given jazz musicians. Theirs is one of the untold stories of jazz.

Norma's mother, Alma, a native of Barbados, arrived in Harlem in 1915; she married Norman Miller the next year. Dot, their first child, was born in 1917. Norman died while Alma was eight months pregnant with her second, whom she named in his memory.

"Mama couldn't get a real job because she was a foreigner," Norma says, "but she was a survivor. If there were any free services given out, my mother made sure we received them. She worked as a maid, and we'd move every month when the rent was due." In 1930, Alma finally settled down at 65 West 140th Street. Eleven-year-old Norma could not believe her luck; they were right in back of the Savoy, to her, a fairyland. "My friends and I hung out on the sidewalk in front of the Savoy, near the huge marquee, wishing we were inside. We'd cut up, and dance around like the couples we saw through the windows, and people passing by would throw money because, hell, we were good!"

Norma attended Textile High, but her gang often played hooky to hang out at the Apollo Theater. "New shows always opened Friday mornings at 11," she says. "When someone like Louis Armstrong came to town, you can rest assured that the school was empty. It got so that the truant officer knew to go straight to the box office to wait for us." After classes, Norma practiced the Lindy with her partner,

Sonny Ashby. One day the two decided to enter the Apollo's weekly Thursday night Lindy contest. Competing couples met beforehand in the Apollo rehearsal hall in the theater basement.

"As soon as we stepped in the room, we realized we were way over our heads," Norma says. "We were both 14, and all the other dancers were mostly adults from the Savoy - the best in Harlem. We retreated to a corner and Sonny kept mumbling to me, 'Shit, Norma, let's get out of here.'"

"But there's a saying in show business: 'Never go up on stage against kids or dogs.' Well, we were the kids."

Norma and Sonny won \$25, more than her mother made in a week. This was the one and only time, however, that she performed as a free agent. The next morning, while her mother was at a church function, Norma answered a knock on the door. There stood a stocky man, six feet tall, and about 40, in a well-pressed suit. When he removed his hat, Norma saw that his short, curly black hair was divided by a two-inch-wide white streak. He smiled nicely. But he was also flanked by two ominous-looking men.

"Good evening," the stocky man said. "I'm Whitey."

Norma didn't know him, and said so.

"Herbert White. I thought you danced very well last night at the Apollo."

Norma thought so, too. Whitey explained that he had organized a group of young dancers at the Savoy whom he placed in talent contests in and out of the ballroom. Everyone pooled their winnings. After Whitey took his cut, they shared what was left.

"I'd rather you worked with us than against us," he said. "I think you'd prefer that, too."

Norma glanced at the two huge men on either side of him, wondered briefly what mother would think, and nodded. She didn't care what he was up to. He had said the magic word: *Savoy*.

Behind Herbert White's charm, elegant suits, and easy smile was a street fighter who'd been born in the roughest section of East Harlem. He'd been an amateur fighter as a teenager; then hung up his gloves and got work as a dancing waiter. He organized a gang - nominally a social club - and in 1926, when the Savoy opened on his turf, he got himself appointed bouncer.

Whitey had mastered the Lindy Hop - like most of the first generation Lindy Hoppers, he often claimed to have invented it. Whitey realized that the Lindy was not just another dance step, but a potential show itself. As floor manager in the early 1930s he'd prowled the Savoy, sizing up the dancers. He'd select those who were young, energetic, and could swing, invite them to join his group, and train them in the northeast corner of the ballroom,

just to the right of the house bandstand.

"How could we kids turn him down?"

Norma says. "To us, it was like getting selected by Ziegfeld. What were we going to say when the man said he was going to pay us to do what we ordinarily did free? When we were going to get more money a week than our parents?"

Saturday night was the highlight of the week at the Savoy, when Whitey's Lindy Hoppers competed against each other - and anyone else who dared - for the weekly Lindy Hop prize. The place was packed to the rafters while the eight or nine best teams competed for \$10. "We'd go off in a corner and come up with something that nobody'd done before. We'd do *anything* outrageous to win. We did what we had to to get the audience on our side - throw our partners *into* the crowd if we thought it would break up the house. That's how many of the basic Lindy steps developed. They weren't made up in no rehearsal hall - they were invented for contest time. We worked like hell for that \$5. Once I won 12 weeks in a row, 'cus I bought a coat at \$2 a week for 12 weeks."

In August of 1935, Whitey consolidated his grip on the Lindy Hop thanks to the Harvest Moon Ball, a dance contest sponsored by the Daily News. The News originally intended the ball to be restricted to the traditional ballroom dances; the Lindy was added only after the persuasions of Whitey and Savoy manager Charles Buchanan.

"We were apprehensive," Norma says. "Until then, we had only danced in Harlem, where the audience knew what to look for. But at the Harvest Moon, there were rules. We'd never heard of dancing to *rules*. We couldn't be away from our partner and had to keep our feet on the floor. And the crowd didn't decide the winner - they had all white judges and a *point system*!"

Couples competing in the Waltz, Fox Trot, Tango, and Rumba went first. "You couldn't imagine a bigger contrast with the Lindy Hoppers," says Norma. "First of all, the clothes: They had tuxes and evening dresses, and we were in sneakers and short skirts. Then there was the noise. The ballroom people danced silently, maybe swishing their gowns a little. But there's no such thing as a quiet Lindy Hop - we grunted and screamed like martial arts people do today. We'd never seen people dance quiet before."

The top three prizes in the contest were taken by Whitey's kids. The Harvest Moon Ball brought fame to the Savoy dancers; clubs uptown and downtown began to call Whitey for Lindy Hoppers. When a European promoter wanted four dancers to tour, one of the dancers Whitey sent was Norma.

(continued, page 7)

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# Lindy Hop - Defined?

*What is it about the Lindy Hop which makes its fans, few as we might be, so passionate about its pursuit? The following, intentionally anecdotal rather than academically exhaustive, are Deborah Huisken's thoughts on what "expresses the essential nature of" Lindy Hop.*

Is it possible to define - what Webster's Dictionary calls "the action...of describing, explaining, or making definite and clear" - the Lindy Hop? To put hard and fast rules around something as expressive of individual personality and style as this social dance form? Friends, family, and colleagues have asked me "what is this Lindy Hop you do, anyway?" Were they willing to stand in one place long enough, this would be part of my answer.

Most dancers would likely agree that there are basic elements which one tries to master to have a foundation on which to build their version of Lindy. In term of steps, these include the 6-beat basic (with or without triple steps but ending on the rock step back) the Lindy turn, and at least in some classes in London a move that separates the intermediates from the wannabees, the swing out. The stance is typically bent low for the leader, upright for the follower.

There are travelling steps where dancers can cross the entire dance floor (great fun on a large floor!) in eight beats, and contrast moves where rapid movements are followed by a freeze or break. Kick steps, including but by no means limited to variations of the Charleston kicks with which the origins of the dance are linked, are common.

The more advanced, acrobatic, and/or stably-partnered among us may then add air steps or aerials, where typically the follower's (but occasionally - and originally - the leader's) feet leave the floor and a body flies through the air in defiance of gravity.

There are attitude steps, and imitation-of-life steps, and new steps which are as yet undiscovered or unnamed, because another characteristic of Lindy is that it is a dance of improvisation, a dance of discovery. Talking with original Lindy Hoppers one hears of experiments tried, of a new idea used to achieve an aim - win a contest, impress an audience, awe other dancers - of art used to imitate or mimic life.

But beyond that, it is its history which defines Lindy Hop. Roots firmly based in African "folk" dance, Lindy developed in New York's Harlem in the 1920s. It is a partner dance with elements of both European ballroom style (usually satirised) and of the free-flowing Charleston, Texas Tommy, and Black Bottom, among others, that preceded it.

Although the origins of the dance were in the '20s and earlier, it "arrived" as a national and world-wide phenomenon in the '30s and

'40s, when Harlem drew people by the bus-load as they discovered the intoxicating energy of its clubs and dance halls. At this time, popular films and stage shows around the world began to showcase Swing music and Swing dancing (in particular Lindy Hop), so thoroughly had it captured the public's fascination.

Some of the original Lindy Hoppers have spoken of Lindy as one of the first integrated social activities. These same people were "treated" to the indignities of segregation and prejudice while traveling with major acts like Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Ethel Waters, where, infuriatingly, they were deemed fit to entertain huge white audiences but not fit to eat in the same restaurant or use the same toilet. One of the few places the superiority of these people was acknowledged outside their own community was on the dance floor. Yet those I have met have risen above this mistreatment, and manifest a joy, a generosity of spirit too often missing in other realms in

which I have moved.

Which brings us to the touchy question, is it possible for anyone else to dance this dance as well as black people do? A Trinidadian friend says that, when dancing, people of African heritage do what comes naturally, continually creating new dances, whereas Europeans (and I would add Americans) are more interested in learning techniques in established traditions. This embodies for me the difference between the majority of the community dancing today and the original dancers. The originals did (and do) what the music calls them to do, creating their own dance, communicating from their spirit.

There is a communication between dancers and the musicians who play for them. They feed off each other. Musicians that dancers most love watch what the dancers are doing and provide them solos and riffs with which to improvise; a clear, easily-followed, not-too-fast beat; and songs that are not too long (Lindy is energetic enough to start with!). Dancers that musicians most love must, in turn, be those who listen to both the underlying structure and the surface variations in the music and mirror those elements in their dance.

Lindy evolved from a social dance into a performance vehicle partially because people like Frankie Manning innovated concepts like air steps and synchronised dancing. He himself talks of the difference between performance and social dance. The communication between partners that is inherent in good social dancing, particularly necessary in a dance as fast and complex as Lindy, is a skill in itself, perhaps the most important.

My favourite partners are those, courteous and considerate, who relax and move with the music, less concerned with exact steps than with the dance we are creating, playful, each of us contributing, laughing and working together, covering potential missteps with improvisation (pet peeves - partners who stop moving when they make a "mistake", disrupting the flow of the dance, or those who, unasked, insist on lecturing me on my "mistakes"). For improvisation is another fundamental characteristic of Lindy. In my opinion, there are no mistakes in Lindy, simply opportunities to explore new steps, or new ways of doing old steps - preferably, although not necessarily always, in time to the music!

When I was a teenager with my first dancing date at a Ramada Inn in Lynnfield, Massachusetts (we all have to start somewhere!), we agreed that you can tell a lot about a person by the way they dance. I was struck that night by what the dancers I was watching communicated about themselves, and to this day I enjoy (and learn) as much or more watching other dancers as dancing myself.

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## Jiving Lindy Hoppers at the Lincoln Centre!



*Jiving Lindy Hoppers and friends backstage at the Lincoln Centre. Front, (l to r) Karen Cadogan, Hughie Davies, Carolene Hinds, Eileen Feeney, Terry Monaghan. Back (l to r) Justin Saunders, Warren Heyes, Panama Francis, Frankie Manning, Russell Sargeant, Chazz Young, Maxine Green, Ernie Smith, Harriet Bernstein. Photo supplied by Eileen Feeney.*

**Terry Monaghan, Research and Planning Director of the Jiving Lindy Hoppers, dance enthusiast and dance historian, writes this review of their recent NY show.**

The enthusiastic yelling of 9,000 New York school kids still rings in our ears. The event was the 23rd Community Holiday Festival sponsored by Con Edison which

enabled 3rd to 5th-grade school children from all the city's boroughs to get to close quarters with the Lindy Hop. The dates were December 13-17th 1993; the location, Alice Tully Hall in the Lincoln Centre.

From the outset JLH has been dedicated to turning people on to the Lindy Hop, but during the preparations we wondered if this time we had taken on too big a challenge. The 1000+ eager and raucous audience of New York kids was awesome despite their being "only" 9-12 year olds.

We had been warned that other acts had died out there, but our first show was a hit right from the beginning. JLH dancers ensured they merited the "P" work permit in their passport, reserved for artists of outstanding ability. The shrill rather than thunderous applause - they were

a young audience, after all - was piercing at times. Their sentiments were endorsed more soberly by the string of special guests who came to see the show: Frankie Manning, Chazz Young, Pepsi Bethel, three of Mama Lu Parks's dancers lead by Richard Harris. Mercedes Ellington, legendary Savoy band leader Panama Francis, past acting MD for the Count Basic Orchestra Dennis Wilson, and Ernie Smith, who has been in the fore of supporting and encouraging the Lindy Hop revival.

The JLH has reached big audiences before - 5000+ in major outdoor UK bookings, tens of thousands in Japan, and 8000 over two nights in New York. But these young NY audiences were special - they are the future. The kids liked us but, more important, they loved the Lindy!

## Norma Miller

*(continued from page 4)*

After classes at Textile High one Friday that October. Norma packed a suitcase and left at midnight on the S.S. Berengaria. In the midst of the Depression, 15-year-old Norma Miller from Harlem watched the changing of the guard in Buckingham Palace, roamed the palace at Versailles, climbed the Eiffel Tower, and backed up black musicians self-exiled to Europe who had found the work there steadier and more remunerative.

By the time Norma returned to the States in the summer of 1936 Whitey had three separate teams of three couples each. Frankie Manning, who had become Whitey's right-hand man, was in one; a second, including Billy Ricker, played at the Harlem Uproar; the third, with Norma, Leon James, George Greenwich, and Willamae Ricker, was sent out on tour with Ethel Waters to the west coast. This last team brought Whitey his first movie. At the Paramount in Los Angeles they were spotted by someone involved with the Marx Brother's *Day at the Races*. The movie was already shot, but Whitey was contacted and asked to arrange

a scene with his dancers.

"That was the hardest work I had ever done," Norma says. "We rehearsed at six in the morning, and stayed on the set all day. At night we went to the club Alabam, where we also worked, and slept there on the benches between shows. Then back to the set again in the morning. We had the routine down, but someone like Judy Garland would show up, and Whitey would say, "OK, kids, let's try it again!"

By 1936, Swing was the reigning style of jazz, and tour buses now stopped at the Savoy. Celebrities dropped in, and millionaire playboys from Park Avenue. All visitors were welcome - even the groups of white kids who tried, sometimes successfully, to convince Whitey's dancers to tutor them. "The Savoy was *ours*," Norma says. "We thought of it as our territory, and we were proud of it. We didn't mind that people came from downtown to watch us. No white kids could ever cut us up on the ballroom floor, but we liked it that they tried. If they came close, we just asked the band to up the tempo."

The Savoy was a peculiar environment for a Harlem girl, not yet 20 who received special treatment on the road and special

treatment at home. "I didn't even know about segregation. From the time I started going to the Savoy I always saw white people there. It never dawned on me that there were places where black people couldn't go. There was Roseland, but, hell, who wanted to go there when we had the Savoy? I didn't know we *couldn't* go there."

They accompanied big bands on tour. "Every band that went out of the Savoy went out with a team of Whitey's Lindy Hoppers. And you did not have a show without Lindy Hoppers in those days.

However, things changed in 1942. While negotiating for another film, Whitey got an offer for six weeks in Rio, and gave it to the group which had made *Hellzapoppin'* - Norma, Ann Johnson, Al Minns, Frank Manning, Billy & Willamae Ricker. They sailed on the S.S. Argentina, arrived on December 6, and learned about Pearl Harbour two days later. They weren't able to leave for six months, when they boarded a blackout plane that flew overland to Miami. They arrived broke.

"That was the first time I met racism," Norma says. Manning spent days going around to white nightclubs looking for work, but was turned down everywhere.

They played in black clubs for

several weeks until they scraped together enough for a ticket home.

The moment they hit New York, Whitey demanded money. When Manning told him there was none left, Whitey accused him of stealing. By this time, after years of turning over most of what they earned to Whitey, all the Lindy Hoppers were bitter enough to back Manning, and Whitey stormed away. The dream was over - the Lindy Hoppers disbanded in a single afternoon. The men were drafted; Norma left for California. She created and managed a succession of jazz troupes, then turned comedienne in the 1960s when she could no longer dance with the required agility. "It took me about 10 years to learn to stop dancing and start talking. That's a transition - baby, it don't just happen!"

*Since the above article was written, Norma has moved from New York where she was a regular at the New York Swing Dance Society's Cat Club dances and a vital presence on the dance camp scene. She now lives in Las Vegas, where she has a tap and comedy revue which includes Frankie Manning's son, Chazz Young, tap dancer and Lindy Hopper par excellence and favourite at the Herräng dance camps in Sweden..*

# Hoping in Paris...

In the last issue we asked "Do they Lindy Hop in Paris?" Armed with a list from Monica Coe's recent sojourn there, **Port Smith** and partner **Judy Martin** explored for themselves and brought back these answers.

Paris is an ideal city for walking to the best dancing clubs in the world, but locations and variety seem to change as much as the English weather. Unfortunately there are no swing clubs, but there are places to dance - lots of them. However, you have to choose carefully.

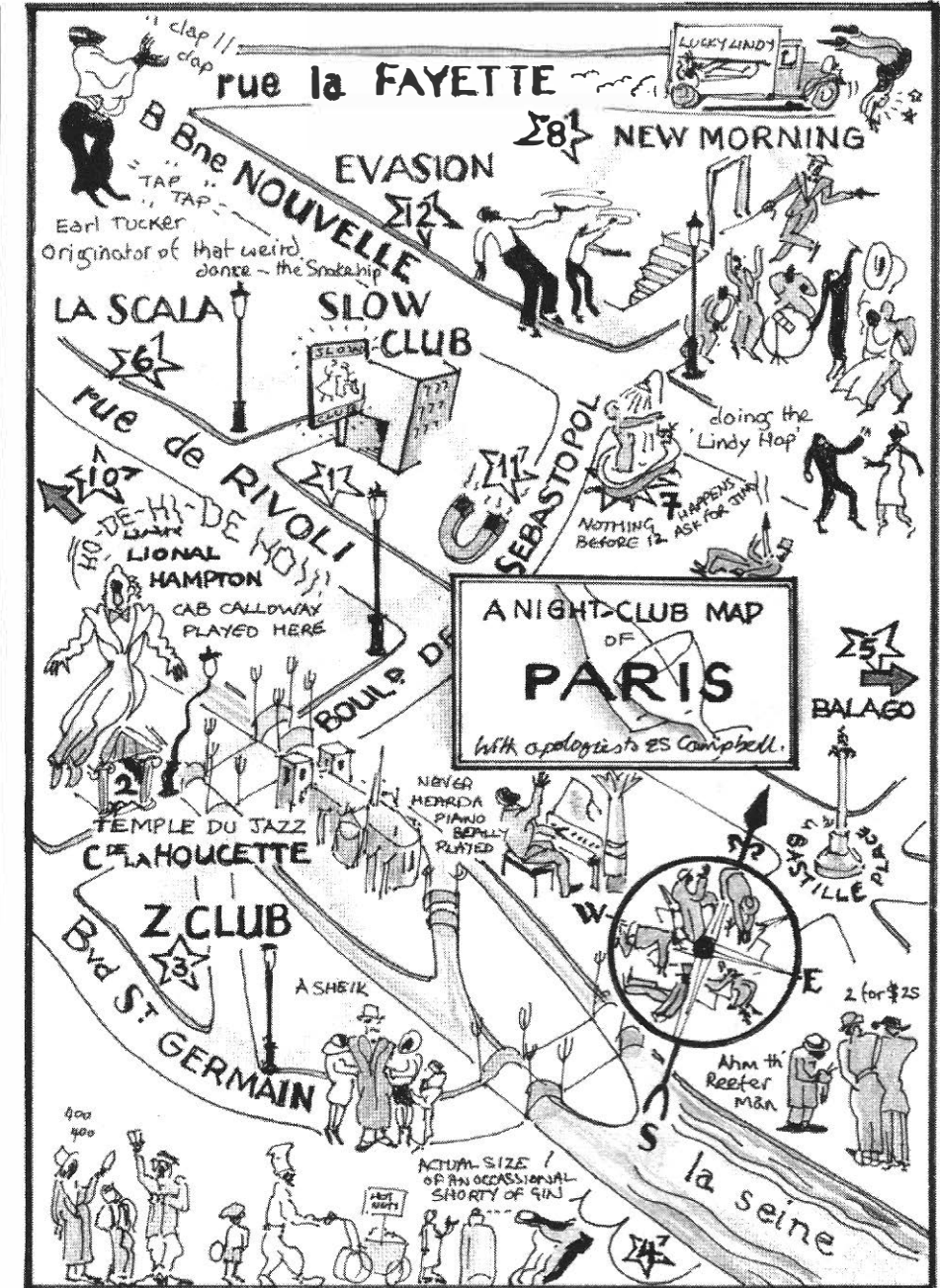
For a short visit it is best to check the listings in the weeklies and phone around if you want to find live music. Most clubs are closed Mondays (exceptions are noted in the listings); Wednesday through Saturday nights are most active. Clubs start late and finish late so you have to budget for cabs as well as entrance fees, which can be expensive but typically include a drink. You have to dress to impress so leave the Union Jack shorts behind.

The inspiration behind the Jazz Age architecture and music of Paris in the 30s seems to have been diluted by the French thirst for independence, resulting in a perfect blend of the lowest common denominator - Europop. Parisians typically move with the times and rarely look back.

However, the temples of Jazz around rue de la Huchette are small pockets of resistance, still pulling some of the great Swing legends. If you Lindy Hop at these places, you will be appreciated for your syncopation.

Hopefully we can lead by example and inspire the revival of Swing dancing which is just waiting to happen here - after all, French jive is only a few steps from Lindy wherever you are.

(ed. note: There are currently three very enthusiastic **Hoppin'** subscribers in France, one of whom lives in Paris. Franck Balbin a 10-year veteran of tap and Rock 'n Roll, formed the French Swing Dance Society - honorary president Rob van Haaren of California! - after attending the Swing Masters Jam in London and holds monthly



Here's how Hoppers get around Paris! Drawing by Port Smith, based on a 1932 map of Holland by E. S. Campbell from *Of Minnie the Moocher and Me* by Cab Calloway, and Bryant Rollins, Crowell: NY 1976.

workshops. He says "I found a new motivation with Lindy". In addition, Frankie Manning has taught in Lyons at their biannual festival, so this is very fertile ground for Lindy. If you hear of more, let us know!

**Port Smith** has been Lindy Hopping for about two years, and performs with the *Sugarfoot Stompers* in London.

### Places to Dance:

**Slow Club** 130 rue de Rivoli/rue du Pont Neuf (1st arr). Live bands. phone +33 1 42 33 84 30

**Caveau de la Huchette**, 5 rue de la Huchette (5th arr). Live bands. Panama Francis plays here. Best (only?) place to Lindy in Paris. phone +33 1 43 26 65 05.

**Zed Club**, rue des Anglais/Blvd St. Germain (5th arr). Yuppie French jive.

**Quay St. Bernard**. Open-air dancing (or opportuning) in a small amphitheatre in a park beside the river. Choose your season; summer's most popular.

**Balago**, 9 rue de Lappe (11th arr). Open Mondays (rare in



## Hoping in Paris...

Paris). Large old theater converted for dancing. 50s - 70s music. phone +33 1 47 00 07 87.

*La Scala*, 180 bis, rue de Rivoli (1st arr). Free entrance for women, except Fridays. Regular night club ideal for French jive. phone +33 1 42 61 64 00.

*Les Bains Douches*, 7 rue de Bourg l'Abée. Great building, very expensive. Consider wearing leather. phone +33 1 48 87 01 80.

*New Morning*, 7 rue de Petites Ecuries (10th arr). 400-seat Jazz club, for the larger show. Prince jammed here w/ dad John Nelson phone +33 1 45 23 91 41.

*5th Avenue*, 2 Avenue Foch (16th arr). Three dance floors, cabaret, tango. Free breakfast! phone +33 1 45 00 00 13.

*Bar Lionel Hampton*, Hotel Méridien, 81 Blvd. Gouvion-St-Cyr (17th arr). Well-organized Jazz. Try Sunday brunch. phone+33 1 47 58 12 30.

*Magnetic Terrace*, 12 rue de la Cossonerie (1st arr). New club in a converted church. Great acoustics! phone +33 1 42 36 26 44.

*Evasion Thé Dansant*, Blvd. de Bonne Nouvelle/Blvd St. Denis (2nd arr). A friendly, late-50s tea dance in the best sense of the words.

### Places to Learn:

*Caveau de la Huchette* (see above). "Slim Dance" dance class, similar to German-style Boogie Woogie/Bebop (similar to rock) both rhythmic and acrobatic. phone +33 1 42 33 84 30.

*Espace Vit'Halles*. Jazz dance.

*Maison des Jeunes et de la Culture*. Rock 'n Roll dance class. M.J.C. St. Michel.

*Centre Danse du Marais*. Jazz, African, Tap dance classes.



The author and partner, starting on their way to suss out Paris. Photo by Deborah Huisken.

## Lindy Hoppers Sweep...

(cont. from page 1)

from London's Jiving Lindy Hoppers who impressed everyone with their inventiveness, immaculate timing and beautifully crisp air steps. Along with the prize money they took home very smart art deco-style neon radios, and all competitors received Capitol Gold t-shirts and flowers.

So, the competition was over, the prizes given, but this was by no means the end of the evening. As the crowd moved back onto the dance floor to King Pleasure and his Boys, before long the winners took to the floor in a spontaneous jam session, first Warren and Maxine, next Ron and Sing, then Michael and Margaret. As a finale, to the absolute delight of the crowd, Warren took Sing onto the floor as Ron swung out with Maxine. No one could have asked for a better end to the evening.

Advertisement

## London's Ladybugs!



Just some of London's Ladybugs, the world's only all-female Lindy revue! (l to r): Malvina Dunne, Deborah Huisken, Angela (Cookie) Andrew, Nafisa Kalmwalla, Sing Lim (mgr), Tayo Ajibade, Beckie Crane, Sheelagh Williams, and Anesta Logan (kneeling). Not pictured: Monica Coe, Tricia Darnell, Beckie Menckhoff, Julie Oram, Tina Persin. Photo courtesy of Mal Dunne.

For Ladybugs fans, here's their recipe for **The Big Apple**: Start with 2 stompoffs, break to 4 rock steps, boogie forward and back twice with attitude. Add three perfect Apple Jacks, kick-ball-change to gaze afar (honey, where have you gone?). Love those Susie **Os** - bung in three - fall off the log (gracefully,

natch), two singles two doubles, one more time for good measure then turn, break, and freeze (brrrr). Add Charleston kicks - one in place, one with a turn, another in place (that'll wow 'em), then two kicks. shu shu shu cross slide hop back flick-ball-change cross jump turn (whew) and then...start again!

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## SPOTLIGHT ON:

## The Rhythm Hot Shots

*What draws a group of 20 to 30-something year olds, in a country where original Lindy Hopper Al Minns reportedly said he felt like "a raisin in a bowl of milk", to a street dance from Harlem in the 1920s?*

*Here we focus on Sweden's Rhythm Hot Shots. In addition to being one of the oldest Lindy companies around today, they run the annual Herräng dance camp.*

The Rhythm Hot Shots was started in the mid '80s by members of the Swedish Swing Society. Prior to that time, most people were dancing what in Sweden they called the Jitterbug, although it didn't look like what one sees in Bill Haley movies. It was, however, related to the 50s dance style. Many people were competing - there had been a boom in this type of dancing as a famous Swedish orchestra started to play 50s music which generated new interest in Jitterbug where previously there had been little.

Late in 1982 or early 1983, Anders Lind found the book *Jazz Dance* by Marshall Stearns in the Dance Museum in Stockholm and became very interested. Before that, few people in Sweden understood that Jitterbug had not started in the 50s, but earlier. After reading the book, Anders realised it had not only started earlier, it was a black dance from America.

Lennart Westerlund says "I was one of the first people Anders got interested in it, and we started to work together. We didn't have much to work with, but we started listening to jazz music, and saw as many as possible of the films listed in the book. Early in 1984 *Day at the Races* was shown at a Stockholm cinema, and a few months later, *Hellzapoppin'*. After seeing those two movies, we decided to try to do something with this type of dancing because we thought it was great. We were particularly amazed after having seen *Hellzapoppin'*.

(A reliable source tells of our boys hiding a video camera in their clothes and going back

to the cinema hoping to tape the dance bits, but getting home to find nothing visible on the tape.)

"In late May '84 Anders, Henning Sörensen, and I booked tickets for New York City. We had been collecting films for about a year, so had some knowledge of the dance. We knew from *Jazz Dance* of two of the dancers from the 30s, Al Minns and Leon James. Asking around, we found that Leon James had died but that Al Minns was working at Sandra

Cameron dance studio.

"We met Al at a memorial concert for Count Basie. We watched him closely, because we knew he was one of the great dancers from that period. He appeared from his clothes to be quite poor, and perhaps to live in a bad neighbourhood, although we were never there. The next day we interviewed him. They were very basic questions because we knew so little about the dance at that time, but he was very friendly and we invited him to Sweden for the autumn of '84. Few people in New York at that time were interested in the stuff he was doing, so he was quite amazed and very happy about the invitation.

"Al came to Sweden in September '84, and stayed for about a month. He was teaching for the Swedish Swing Society, with which he made a TV program. All of us that later on were to start the Rhythm Hot Shots were part of the SSS at that time. Al made a great impression on most of the dancers, but very few of them really took the whole thing to heart, I would say. Most just took a couple of steps and movements and put them into their dancing.

"Anders and I were very interested, but realised that we must start from the basics. We tried to forget the things we had been doing before and really get what Al was teaching, his relaxed, swinging feel for the music. We worked in front of the mirror hour by hour, and practised every day or at least all the time we had. It was just the two of us in the beginning, with our partners. Later on a few more people became interested, like Eddie and Eva.

"But there were also problems because of Al's visit. While we decided to really make something out of it, the rest of the SSS wanted to stay with the old dances and music. So there were two groups now - a small minority which was to become the Rhythm Hot Shots and the rest of the Society. Very few people realised the potential of this dance at the time,

so we were quite isolated.

"We continued to work and in June 1985 formed the Company. At that time we were quite strict Lindy dancers, with a little bit of Jazz. In fact our first job was with the Harlem Blues and Jazz Band at a jazz festival in Stockholm, which to us was starting at the top. We had always before danced to taped music. It was totally different with a live band, and exciting to be working with some of the original musicians from the old days.

"We didn't start the company with plans to make money - it was more inspiration and a dedication to Lindy. *Hellzapoppin'* was the best thing we had ever seen and was our goal.

"In early '86 our Lindy started to look quite good. We'd been working hard, and '86 was the start of something that we felt might be good for the future. We started to get some jobs, but then we realised we couldn't just do Lindy on stage as it was too exhausting at the 75 beats/minute we were dancing at that time, the tempo of *Hellzapoppin'*. We expanded our repertoire, practising more Jazz, Tap dancing and other things close to Lindy, and a few years later were able to perform them. We were definitely not good at tap dancing, but we did it on stage anyway.

"We saw Frankie Manning when we first were in New York in '84, but we didn't know about him because no one mentioned him and he wasn't mentioned in *Jazz Dance*. But Al mentioned Frankie when he was in Sweden, and we had heard of him from Erin Stevens and others. So

although

**Original RHS Members:**

Frankie had said he didn't dance any more ("all that was a long time ago," he

Eddie Jansson  
Eva Lagerqvist  
Anders Lind  
Catrine Ljunggren  
Lena Ramberg  
Lennart Westerlund

said), in late '86 I called him and in February I saw him dance in New York with the New York Swing Dance Society. I got the feeling he had a lot of knowhow in Lindy.

"He came to Sweden the first time in the summer of '87 and practised with the company for a week or so in Herräng, future home of the famous dance camp. We put in hours of work, and Frankie really gave us a feeling for the atmosphere of the dance, the heart and experience that is hard to get learning from tapes.

"It's light in Sweden at night in summer, and Frankie woke up at 4 am one morning. He saw the sun and thought "oh boy, it's 4 in the afternoon". He got dressed and went downstairs... to find Anders practising (they never sleep in Sweden!). Anders told him it really was 4 am, so Frankie went back to bed.

"Being so influenced by *Hellzapoppin'*, we tried to perform at the fast tempo of the movie. This gave us problems, but was also quite good because we had to get that much better to keep up. There were a lot of aeri-



The Rhythm Hot Shots (l to right), Eddie Jansson, Eva Lagerqvist, Martin Wedby, Catrine Ljunggren, Lennart Westerlund, Ewa Staremo. Not pictured - Anita Kankimäki. Photo provided by the Rhythm Hot Shots.

in *Hellzapoppin'*, which we tried to master, successfully for the most part.

"Now we have reduced our Lindy tempo and relaxed, thanks to the influence of people like Frankie and Ryan Francois. We have tried to stay close to the Afro-American tradition so we don't do modern dancing, although we have moved beyond our original fascination with *Hellzapoppin'* to tap, vocal, comedy, and other things related to this Afro-American tradition.

"After that summer of '87 we started to get more jobs. Anders left in '88 and is now a saxophonist. In '89 we started the Herräng dance camp. About 200 people came for two weeks that first year. We were all Swedes except one American guy, from Boston as I remember. At this time more SSS members became interested in what we were doing. Many members in the Stockholm area had seen us perform and decided that the things we were doing were better than the 50s way of dancing the SSS was teaching at the time. [Anita Kankimäki, for instance, says that seeing Frankie in Herräng made her want to change her dancing style, she was so impressed with his smoothness.] So a lot of members of the SSS came to the camp, which was important to spread the dance in Sweden.

"We decided to continue with the camps every year, which we are doing to this day. It will be four weeks in '94, and international. Last year we had people from about ten different countries, and hope to have more next year. It is good to see so many different people in different places interested in doing Lindy and dances related to the Lindy. I think the best thing about camp is the atmosphere. We try to bring the best teachers in this kind of dance, as we feel that if people are exposed to the best, it will generate more interest. We do videos of the camps each

year, to preserve what happens there which we believe will be of interest in 50 years.

"In '94, in addition to the wonderful teachers we've had in the past, we'll also have Warren Heyes and Maxine Green, Ivan and Elisabet Berggren, and Maria Weber and Michael Johansson, plus hopefully some surprise guests from the remaining group of original Lindy Hoppers. In the beginning camp was just something we did, but it is more and more part of the company. In the rest of the year we don't teach so much - a few of us teach private lessons, but we concentrate mostly on performances.

"We did a lot of performances in '90 and '91 and I think the company can be considered as quite established now. We have toured different countries, including England, Germany, Finland, Norway, Holland, and the USA to perform and teach.

"Perhaps most memorable was our appearance at the Apollo Theatre during our first trip to America in October '92, where we joined a competition. The audience was very special for us because it was almost entirely black people, and they really tell you what they think about your performance. It wasn't like a Swedish audience, anyway. Most of the audience liked what we did and we won that competition, which is really something that I will cherish forever.

"During that trip we also made a documentary on Frankie and his life in Harlem during the 30s, plus a little on what he's doing today. We travelled around Harlem with Frankie, and he showed us all the places and introduced us to some people up there. It gave us knowhow of where the dance originally came from."

A common thread in conversation with RHS members is their feeling of responsibility for carrying Lindy on and sharing what they've

learned from working with original dancers like Al and Frankie. They dig deeper, into what Martin Wedby calls "the mysterious things about dancing" - self-expression, the insertion of one's own personality. Martin cites the pressure of performing professionally as forcing them to try to understand what's behind the dance, which perhaps explains their rich appreciation for the history of the dance and the original dancers, for Frankie in particular and Lindy in general. Martin says now that he knows Al was trying to teach him things that he didn't yet have the experience to understand, things that, as Frankie says, "Well, you don't understand? You will".

"A few things about what's happening with RHS today. October through December we were working in Norrköping, two hours from Stockholm, with a famous Swedish comedian. We did four shows per week on the same stage each night, which was a good job as we knew what to expect when we went on. We did vocal and a little comedy. Next we start a musical, "Hello Dolly", also in Norrköping. It's a big job, with the opportunity to do vocals, acting, and choreography plus dances like the Cakewalk. It's our first musical, and will run for two and a half months. The story takes place at the turn of the century, so the Afro-American style will work fine here. Then we have jobs in Germany, New York in May for Frankie's birthday, and the camp in summer. We also have a couple of "normal" jobs - discotheques, company parties, etc.

"The company is almost 9 years old now, and we've been lucky with one thing - most of us have been with the company for about seven years or from virtually the beginning.

Eddie, Eva, Cathy, and myself were part of the company when it started and W joined quite soon after

#### Current RHS Members:

Eddie Jansson  
Anita Kankimäki (1991)  
Eva Lagerqvist  
Catrine Ljunggren  
Ewa Staremo (1986)  
Martin Wedby (1990)  
Lennart Westerlund

that. We've got people who are very dedicated to this kind of dance. Other Lindy companies have more general dancers who could dance probably anything that you asked of them. In this company we're mostly interested in the Afro-American tradition and I definitely think as long as the company exists we will stay with that. It has nothing to do with money - it's hard to make a living out of this type of dancing. Dedication has been the most important thing. For people in the company, this type of dancing is a way of life.

Compiled by Deborah Huiskens from material provided by Lennart Westerlund, with contributions from Anita Kankimäki and Martin Wedby.

# The Munich Scene



Marcus Koch and Bärbl Kaufer - Munich's World Champions '93 thanks to their unique Lindy/Boogie dance style. Photo by Deborah Huiskens

The BoogieBären's Eva-Maria Schmid sends this review of what's Hoppin' in Munich.

Picture Munich, stronghold of Boogie Woogie, in Spring 1989: For the first time at the European Championship in Boogie Woogie, Swedish couples also danced. Next to the splendid rustling petticoats and glittering cocktail jackets of the other couples, they made a rather modest impression in the simple clothes of the 30s - baggy trousers with broad braces\*. And their dance style! To many people, their steps gave an impression of simplicity, danced in a plodding manner.

Only 2 or 3 Boogie dancers were fascinated - they knew this style of dancing from the old movies of the 20s and 30s. They had especially admired the dance scenes in *Hellzapoppin'* for a long time. Excitedly they asked the Swedish dancers and found out that for some years there had been a Lindy Hop summer camp in a small village near Stockholm.

In Summer 1991, the first four couples from Munich and surroundings visited the Rhythm Hot Shots' summer camp in Herräng. Although the figures looked easy and effortless, they proved quite difficult to learn because the "8-count" steps and insertion of Tap dance steps were unusual for their champions. There in Herräng they also got acquainted with Frankie Manning, who inspired them with his knowledge and charm. After they returned, it was not easy for their friends in Munich hearing the fanatic,

mysterious stories again and again. Their friends were still skeptical towards Lindy.

Marcus Koch, best dancer and member of the Boogie-Bären board, was more deeply impressed from his time in Sweden than the others. He recognised the value of Lindy and was able to convince the committee of the annual Boogie-Bären Whitsun Camp in Landsberg, Germany. At the camp in 1992 the 400 participants were offered not only Boogie but also Lindy lessons given by none other than Frankie Manning himself. Steven Mitchell, Erin Stevens, Simon Selmon and Rob van Haaren also taught. The overwhelming enthusiasm of most participants rewarded Marcus's good nose!

Inspired by what he had learnt in both Sweden and Landsberg, Marcus integrated Lindy Hop elements in his competition dance style as well as in the choreography of the Boogie-Bären routine. Audience and jury needed time to get used to the "Flying Charleston", "Swing Out", and "Lindy Circle", but his increasing success, leading him together with his partner Bärbl Kaufer step by step towards the top, is a proof of the growing interest in Lindy Hop. At the World Championship held in Switzerland in Autumn 1993 they danced a unique combination of Boogie and Lindy, inspired by the swing beat of their song in the final round, and were awarded the title 1993 World Champions.

In competitions around Munich more and more couples have

## Lindy Hop - Defined?

(cont. from page 6)

One night in London, still an inexperienced dancer and feeling wholly inadequate to ever pick up this complicated Lindy stuff, I spoke of my doubts to Simon Selmon, who tut tutted, then helped me see what I can do by leading me in a very clear Lindy that helped me find my feet and my self-confidence.

In his lessons, Ryan Francois emphasizes that it isn't the steps which make a good dancer, but the ability to feel the music, to feel your partners' movements and work with them, to stay loose and ready to respond to a lead.

These experiences and more have been an exploration of

myself, finding places where I stiffly hold back and learning to release them; finding my "voice", physically as well as verbally; letting my feelings flow; my body find new ways to move to the music as well as to my own and my partner's rhythms; finding my confidence.

Lindy to me is a dance of self-awareness and self-discovery. It evolved in the hearts and souls (soles?) of its originators, not formally taught but drawn from within. In my opinion, the best practitioners today carry that tradition on, continually exploring new ways to add to and improve their dance. It is this about Lindy which makes me passionate in its pursuit.

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integrated Lindy steps - lately even Shag has been seen. If you make a pub call through Munich's Boogie scene, you can see more "Charleston" and "Swing Out" than before. Munich's Boogie stronghold, the

Max-Emanuel-Brauerei, reacted immediately. Every second Tuesday a month there's an evening of swing, because it depends on the music what happens to your feet. To rock 'n roll, the feet Boogie; to swing they Lindy Hop.

\*suspenders to Americans!

## Lindy Bits

The International Dance Organisation of Italy presented a lifetime achievement award to **Frankie Manning** in November for his contributions to the dance world. The ceremony was held in Danaújváros, Hungary, an hour out of Budapest. Lindy Hoppers from Oslo, Norway, and Hungary attended, and hosted Frankie during his subsequent explorations of Budapest.

In related news, we are very pleased to report that, only a little over four months after his hip operation, Frankie's back to dancing and working with the Big Apple Lindy Hoppers. You can't keep a good Lindy Hopper down!

**Freddy Haugan, Oslo, Norway** has had six Lindy workshops in the last year and a half, with about 100 dancers every time. "People love it, and the music, of course." Steve Mitchell gave a workshop in January; Margaret Batiuchok teaches in Norway 1-14 February.

The **Rhythm Hot Shots** will be

performing and teaching 18-20 March in Lippstadt Germany (contact Torsten Hiltz in Lippstadt, +49 29 41 51 05), teaching in Gothenburg, Sweden 14-17 April (contact West Coast Swingers, see *Listings*) and performing at the Feather Awards in Beverly Hills, USA 25 June (contact Cay Cannon, +1 714 494-5086)

**Ivan and Elisabet Berggren**, also of Sweden, will return to London in March to give another aerials workshop with the London Swing Dance Society.

**Kurt Bieller and Regina Förster** in Austria, inspired by the Jam in London, have started a "Cool and Crazy" Jitterbug Club in Vienna, have already been mentioned in an article on Lindy Hop in local papers, and have performed with the Vienna Swing Orchestra.

**Rob van Haaren** has workshops in Eugene, Oregon in February and Santa Barbara in March. Contact Rob (see *Listings*).

## Resources

### Books

*Black Dance from 1619 to Today*, Lynne Fauley Emery. Brief references to Lindy, and photo of "Whyte's Hopping Maniacs".

*Black Dance*, Edward Thorpe. 2 pages of photos of '40s Lindy Hoppers and the Savoy, with some Lindy history.

*Jookin', The Rise of Social Dance Formations in African American Culture*. Katrine Hazzard-Gordon. 3 brief references to Lindy Hop, and unreferenced photo of young Frankie Manning, mid-aerial, on the cover.

*Let's Lindy*, Simon Selmon. 58-page how-to book with photos, instructions, some history and references.

### Films

Listed in chronological order, the following have varying amounts of Lindy Hop. Descriptions excerpted from Marshall Stern's *Jazz Dance*.

*After Seben* - 1929 - Three pairs of Lindy dancers from the Savoy Ballroom, including George "Shorty" Snowden, perform early Lindy.

*Day at the Races*, 1937. Numerous Lindy dancers, incl. Leon James.

*Hellzapoppin'*, 1941. Choreographed by Nick Castle/Frank Manning. The one that inspired so many of today's best dancers!

*Hot Chocolate* - 1941. Duke Ellington short, features Whitey's Lindy Hoppers (Frank Manning, Al Minns, Billy Ricker, Norma Miller, et al).

*Jammin' the Blues* - 1944. Archie Savage & Marie Bryant Lindy Hop.

*Killer Diller* - 1948. The four Congoos with Nat King Cole.

*Call of the Jitterbug*, ca 1987. American documentary on Lindy Hop

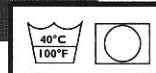
*Autobiography of Malcolm X* - 1992. Lindy scene w/Frankie Manning and Ryan Francois among others; Lindy choreography, Frankie Manning.

*Swing Kids* - 1993. Disney movie; Lindy choreography, Ryan Francois

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# Lindy Listings

## Europe

### Austria

#### Club:

*\*Cool and Crazy Jitterbug Club*, Mautner Markhofgasse 17-21/12/5, 1110 Vienna. Contact Kurt Bieller or Regina Förster phone +43 222 74 94 581

### France

#### Venues:

*La Caveau de la Huchettes*, rue de la Huchette, 75005 Paris. Jazz club, small, crowded dance floor, atmosphere. phone +33 4326 6505

*Slow Club*, 130 rue de Rivoili, 75001, Paris. Jazz club, crowded, small dance floor, atmosphere. phone +33 42 33 84 30.

#### Organisation:

*\*French Swing Dance Society*, 25 E. rue André Lassagne, 69300 Caluire. Contact: Franck Balbin.

### Germany

#### Clubs:

*Boogie Bears*, Munich. Contact Marcus Koch, Pelikangasse 34, 85551 Heimsletten, Tyskland, or Bärbl Käufer, Georgenstr. 49/II, 80799 München (Marcus & Bärbl compete, perform, teach). Boogie Woogie & Lindy dance club. phone Marcus +49 89 904 4767 or Bärbl +49 89 271 7299

*Boogie Club*, Berlin. Contact Volkart Meier, President, Drewitzerstr. 59, 13467 Berlin, or Andreas Seebach, Hagenstr. 2, E. Berlin 1130. Boogie dancers; new to Lindy. phone Volkart +49 30 4044 580 or Andreas +49 30 553 3484

#### Contact:

*Steve Mitchell* (teaches, choreographs). phone +49 6103 86920

#### Venue:

*\*Tuesday* (2nd ea. month, 20:00 to 23:00) Max-Emanuel-Brauerei 33 Adalbertstr, 8000 Munich 40. Contact Marcus Koch (*above*)

### Hungary

#### Contacts:

*Gabor Janicsek*, (works with

Bóbis & Szikora) Budapest. phone +361 202 0289

*Bóbis László, Szikora Boglárka* (perform tap - new to Lindy), Budapest. phone +361 176 7970; fax +361 115 3202

### Norway

#### Organisation:

*Bårdar Dance Institute*, Kristian August Gate 15, N-0170 Oslo. Contact: Freddie Haugan. phone +47 22 20 90 10

### Sweden

#### Dance Companies:

*Rhythm Hot Shots*, Plogkatan 1, S-116 34 Stockholm, (perform and teach). Sweden's first and only professional Lindy company. Contact Lennart Westerlund +46 8 643 40 58 or Anita Kankimäki. +46 8 18 07 82.

#### Club/Organisation:

*Swedish Swing Society*, Bergsundsstrand 43, S-11738, Stockholm. phone +46 8 84 75 60 or contact Stefan Löf, phone +46 8 36 56 66

*West Coast Swingers*, Eklandagatan 60B, S-41261, Gothenburg. Lindy Hop club on the West Coast of Sweden. Contact Susan Schultz, Johan Burell, phone +46 312 076 89.

#### Venues:

*Wednesday* (19:30-23:00) Jesse's Jazz Club, Pryssgränd 14, Stockholm. Beg. class 18:30. Contact Lennart (*see above*).

#### Contacts:

*Maria Weber* (teaches), Daljunkaregatan 16, S-791 37 Falun. phone +46 23 69 286

### Switzerland

#### Contacts:

*Manuella Foresti* (facilitates Lindy workshops), Basel. phone +41 61 65 0683

### UK

#### Organisations:

*\*Bullies Ballerinas*, (teach, perform). Jeanefer Jean-Charles//Tobias Tak. Contact 67 Bravington Road, London W9

3AA, phone +1 44 81 964 5512.

#### \*Chestnut Grove Lindy

*Hoppers*, performing group from a multi-cultural comprehensive school; dance curriculum based around Lindy. Contact John Brooks, Chestnut Grove School, Chestnut Grove, Balham SW12 8JZ. phone 081 690 2364

*Jitterbugs* (holds workshops, camps). Sing Lim, mgr, 7 Eton Road, London NW3. phone +44 71 483 1055.

*London Swing Dance Society*, 28 Nottingham Place, London W1M 3FD. Contact Simon Selmon (teaches, performs). phone +44 81 954 2147.

#### Dance Companies:

*Jiving Lindy Hoppers* (teach, perform), Eileen Feeney, mgr, 35 Newton Avenue, London W3 8AR. First of the '80s professional Lindy Hop troupes in London. phone +44 81 992 8128

*\*The Ladybugs*, the world's only female Lindy revue (amateur). Contact Sing Lim, mgr. (*above*).

*Sugarfoot Stompers*. Semi-pro performing troupe of the London Swing Dance Society. Contact Simon Selmon, mgr, (*see above*).

*Zoots & Spangles*. Ryan Francois, director. (Choreographs, teaches, performs), 59A Crowland Road, Tottenham, London N15 6VL. Professional dance company dedicated to Lindy - perform and teach. phone +44 81 809 5507.

#### Venues:

*Mondays* (20:30-midnight), Stomp'n' at the 100 Club, 100 Oxford Street, London. Beg. class 19:30, DJs and bands, cost £5 to £7 depending on band. Contact Simon Selmon (*see above*).

*Tuesdays* (19:00 - 21:50), Urdang Academy, 20 Shelton Street, London. Classes. Contact Simon Selmon (*see above*)

*Wednesday* (21:15-23:30), Jitterbugs, Notre Dame Hall, 5 Leicester Place, Leicester Sq. London WC2. Beg. class 19:30, int. class 20:30, DJs and bands, cost £4 to £5 depending on band.

Contact Sing Lim (*see above*).

*Saturdays* (2 per month, 20:00-23:30), Hellzapoppin', Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regents Park Rd. Camden Town, London NW1. DJs, cost £4. \*Upcoming dates Feb 19, Mar 5,19, Apr 9,23, May 7,21, June 11,25. Contact Tim +44 81 886 3473 or Caroline Cole +44 81 444 9623.

*\*Saturdays* 19:30-3:00 am), *The Jazz Age*, a Lindy Hop Club at Turnmills, 63B Clerkenwell Road, London, EC1. Beg. class 17:45, 20:30-23:30 Swing, Jazz, R&B; 23:30 - 3 am Jazz, Latin, Fusion & Funk. DJs, some bands, cost £4. Contact Simon Selmon (*above*)

## USA

### California

#### Dance Companies:

*Steppin' Out Dancers* (perform), P.O. Box 91131, Pasadena, CA 91109-1131. Contact Erin Stevens (teaches 6-week Lindy classes on Thursdays; performs, and choreographs). phone +1 818 799 5689

*The Upbeats* (performing group of the Upbeat Swing Club), P.O. Box 20081, Santa Barbara, CA 93102. Contact Rob van Haaren (performs, teaches). phone +1 805 687 6407

#### Organisation:

*\*Santa Barbara Swing Dance Club*, P.O. Box 21225, Santa Barbara, CA 93121. Contact Sylvia Sykes (teaches). phone +1 805 569 1952.

*\*Ventura County Swing Dance Club*, P.O. Box 2124, Ventura, CA 93002-2124. Contact Melinda Comeau (teaches weekly classes throughout Ventura County). phone +1 805 643 3114.

#### Venues:

*\*Thursday*, Lindy Classes, 23 West Key Terrace, Santa Barbara. Contact Rob van Haaren (*see above*).

*\*Friday* (2nd of each month, 20:30-24:00), Dance, Poinsettia Pavilion, 345 Foothill Road, Ventura. Class 20:00. Contact Melinda Comeau (*see above*).

## Lindy Listings

*Saturday* (1st & 3rd, 20:00-23:30), Dances, 997 E. Walnut Street, Pasadena. Contact Erin Stevens (see above).

### Illinois

#### Organisation:

\**Illinois Swing Dance Club*, 8510 N. Knoxville #307, Peoria, IL 61615. Contact Steve Cullinan, +1 309 672 5681.

### Maryland

#### Venue:

\**Saturday* (21:00 - 24:00) *Swing Baltimore*, Townsend Armory, 307 Washington Ave., Townsend. Class 20:00 - 21:00, then dance. Upcoming Lindy dates: Jan 29, Feb 26, Mar 26, Apr 23. phone +1 410 377 7410.

#### Contacts:

\**Swing Baltimore*, 752 Overbrook Road, Baltimore, MD 21212. Contact Leslie Coombs (teaches) phone +1 410 377 0832

### New York City

#### Dance Companies:

*Big Apple Lindy Hoppers*. Contact Cynthia Millman via New York Swing Dance Society, 303 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1515, NY 10016. phone +1 212 696 9737

#### Venues:

*NY Swing Dance Society's*

*Savoy Sundays* (19:00-24:00), Continental Club, 17 Irving Place at 15th Street, live bands, cost\$12. phone +1 212 696 9737

\**Monday* (21:00-23:30), Well's, Restaurant, 132 Street & 7th Ave. 30's; reopened by daughter of original owners. 18-piece Renaissance Band (formerly at Willie's Lounge) moved up to Well's when Willie's shut. Be sure to try their famous fried chicken and waffles.

### Washington

#### Contacts:

*Living Traditions*, 2442 NW Market St. #168, Seattle, WA 98107. Classes/events include Lindy Hop. Contact Nancy Ann/ Walter Dill. phone +1 206 781 1238

\**Savoy Swing Club*, 9709 35th Avenue NE, Seattle, WA 98115. 6-week sessions of Lindy Hop classes: dance on alternate Tuesdays. Performances /workshops. phone +1 206 726 2997.

### Virginia

#### Contacts:

\**Potomac Swing Dance Club*, 3409 Silver Maple Place, Falls Church, VA 22042-3545. Contact Craig 'Hutch' Hutchinson phone +1 703 698 9811.

#### Venues:

\**Thursday*, (20:30 - 23:30)

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VA. Beginner/ Intermediate. class  
18:30, Intermediate/ Advanced  
19:30. Contact Hutch (see above).

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## What's Hoppin' Around the World

### American Swing Dance Championships

New York, NY, USA  
8-10 April '94

Includes Lindy competition.

\*Contact American Swing Dance Championships. phone +1 212 260 2033 or 1 800 537 8937.

### International Swing Dance Festival

Santa Barbara, CA, USA  
14-17 April '94

Lindy, Charleston, Tap, etc.  
Contact Upbeat Swing Club (*see ad page 15*)

### Boogie Bären Pfingst Seminar

Landsberg, Germany  
21-23 May '94

Lindy and Boogie Woogie.  
Contact Boogie Bears (*see ad page 9*)

### \*Can't Top The Lindy Hop!

New York, NY, USA  
27-30 May '94

International Lindy Hop event to celebrate Frankie Manning's 80th birthday and the 10th

Anniversary Year of the New York Swing Dance Society.

Details in the article, page 2.  
Contact NYSDS (*see ad page 5*)

### \*Boogie '94

Catskills, NY, USA  
3-5 June '94

Big bands, dance workshops in Lindy, Smooth-style Swing and more. Contact Boogie Dance Productions. phone +1 212 260 2033 (information); +1 518 943 2524 (reservations)

### Augusta Heritage Arts Workshop Swing Week

W. Virginia, USA

\*17-22 July '94 (New dates)

Lindy and more. Contact Augusta Heritage Center. phone +1 304 636-1903

### Herräng Dance Camp

Herräng, Sweden

\*9 July-6 Aug '94 (New dates)

Lindy, Boogie Woogie, Tap. Stay tuned for surprise guests!

Contact Rhythm Hot Shots (*see ad page 12*)

### Swing Masters Jam

London, UK

26-29 August '94

Lindy, West Coast Swing, Big

Apple. Contact: Fred Hunt/Beckie Menckhoff, 23 The Chase, Eastcote, Pinner, M'sex HA5 1SJ. phone +44 81 866 9093 or Jitterbugs (*see Listings*)

## Next issue:

### Special Features

- A Birthday Tribute to Frankie Manning
- Spotlight on the Big Apple Lindy Hoppers
- New York, NY
- The London Scene

### Regular Features

- What's Hoppin' Around the World: Lindy events
- Lindy Listings: clubs, venues, etc.
- Resources & References
- Lindy Bits - news from around the world

### Plus

- Homes for Hoppers! If you have accommodation to share with travelling Lindy Hoppers, send details to Hoppin'!

...and more!

\*indicates new information since last issue



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