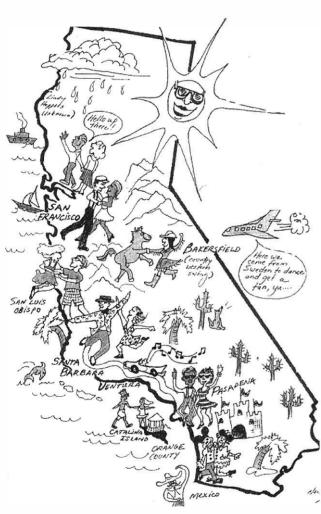
# Hoppin'

For dancers, by dancers £2, \$4, SEK26, DM8, 5.5 SFr

## Lindy Hop and Joie de Vivre in California



A dancer's view of California. (Illustration by Nancy and Wendy Sandburg)

Take a wide angle on California - the Cosmopolitan State. Those soft ocean breezes, smog-choked freeways, snowy alpine peaks, farmland and fairyland. rap and Bach, glitter and grit. The largest trees, the oldest trees, no more trees. The affluence, effluence, bubbling mixture of cultures. So many places to go and things to do. Surfs up! Boogie board, sail-

board, snowboard, bungee jump, bebop, hip-hop, Lindy Hop...wait! Hold that rolling camera on the Lindy Hop.

1935...Close-up on a slim young man's arrival in Hollywood direct from the New York Lindy Hop scene. His name is Dean Collins and he dances a smooth Lindy style well adapted to social dancing. He just scrapes by at first but soon lands work on the Hollywood screen. A few years later Dean appears in a film that showcases yet another New York import, the fabulous Whitey's Lindy Hoppers in Hellzapoppin'.

1982...Dean Collins, older now but still swinging, is approached by two swing neophytes in an LA nightclub. Jonathan Bixby and Sylvia Sykes have searched out vintage Lindy Dancers to learn directly about the dance which has them so excited. And the rest? Let's jam to California to find Lindy Hop - the Next Generation.

As your jet circles LA and you ponder the confusing megalopolis, remember you have a contact in the lively Lindy Hop lady from Pasadena, Erin Stevens. During the 80's, Erin and dance partner Steve Mitchell searched for original Lindy Hop dancers, found them in New York in the likes of Al Minns and Frankie Manning, and brought home style and moves for weekly Lindy Hop classes. When Steve left for Germany, Erin continued teaching Lindy Hop under the auspices of the Pasadena Ballroom Dance Association that she operates with her sister Tami. Guest artists such as Frankie, Marcus Koch and Bärbl Kaufer, and Steve conduct workshops several times each year to satisfy swing devotees, which number about 350 Lindy dancers throughout the LA area.

The 4th Saturday of each month Erin hosts Club USA Jitterbug Swing Party in Pasadena with a live band. If you're fortunate you will catch an exhibition of her choreography by the Steppin' Out Dancers. The PBDA coordinates big band music the 1st and 3rd Fridays of the month with the Bill

Elliot Trchestra at the elegant
Sportsman's Lodge. This past
summer the PBDA sponsored
Swing Camp Catalina (see box,
page 8), and its success has
prompted another camp scheduled
(continued on page 8)

#### NSIDE

#### AN AXE TO GRIND

Judy Martin talks about "That Swing Thing" (page 3 & 4)

#### SANDRA GIBSON

One of New York's originals (page 5)

#### CAMP AND EVENT REVIEWS

Seattle, London, California, Bristol (page 6, 7, 8, and 15)

## SPOTLIGHT ON THE SUGARFOOT STOMPERS

The performing group of the London Swing Dance Society (page 11)

and more ...

## **NEWS FLASH**

## Photo and Illustration Contest.

The stakes have been raised in the photo and illustration contest. First prize is now a **FREE WEEK IN HERRANG!** (for 1996), by the kind generosity of Sweden's Rhythm Hot Shots.

Get those photos and illustrations of Lindy and Lindy-related events, people, activities in by 8 MAY for the next and last issue before the judging starts!

Judging will be done in closed ballot by attendees at the 1995 Herräng Dance Camp - you don't have to be present to win. Send submissions to .P.O. Box 600\$. London W2 5ZY, UK.

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# Hoppin'

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## Letter From the Editor

Dear Reader:

First, a goodbye. We note with regret the departure of Becky Crane as Deputy Editor of the newsletter. She offered her energy and talents at a critical juncture in the newsletter's development - she will be much missed. We wish her the best in juggling the many demands on her time and talents.

In the last issue we welcomed Steve Carlan as West Coast USA Advertising Manager You'll see the results of his and Nancy Sandburg's efforts in the following pages, having brought in much-needed advertising revenue. Good Work, team!

A reader suggests we mention Cab Calloway's appearance in the movie *The Blues Brothers*, which is where "a lot of us younger generation" (he wasn't really trying to remind me of my age, was he?) first heard of him. If you haven't seen the movie, check it out.

At our last staff meeting, we had a raging dicusion about the proper designation for

dates. We throw it open to you, our readers. Should it be eg '30s (apostrophe used to hold the place of what's missing, 19), 30's, or 30s?

For the first time Hoppin' is planning to have a birthday celebration! Not our first birthday - there was no time for such tomfoolery in the early startup up years, those lean and hungry years (do you hear violins playing?) If you have ideas for how we might celebrate (and oh, by the way, raise some money for Hoppin', this non-profit making newsletter) send them along. We'd like to have birthday dance events all over the world or, if we were to get really ambitions, simultaneous broadcasts worldwide of wildly celebrating Lindy Hoppers, all connected via satellite....

In the UK it is planned for Saturday night, II November 1995. Join in, and help us celebrate!

# Debarah

## Letters To the Editor

#### Dear Hoppin'

Congratulations on your piece on Mickey Dee. No one could dismiss **Hoppin**' as being lightweight! When I opened the last issue, I didn't expect lessons in life as well as Lindy! Mickey really sounds like some lady, one I would like to meet. As soomeone who is ofte accused of 'leading' in life as well as on the dance floor, I found Mickey's thoughts on strong women using their 'quiet power' both at home to keep their families together <u>and</u> on the dance floor to keep their act together really relevant. More power to her elbow. Radical stuff, this dance thing called Lindy!

Sue Milner

London, UK

Sue - if you want to see more of Mickey Dee, check out Herräng this summer - she'll be teaching there (see ad, p. 13). And thanks for the letter - letters like yours make doing this worthwhile. Ed.

#### Dear Hoppin'.

This newsletter is a tremendous asset and vehicle for the Lindy Hop. I'd like to help you out with adertising because I care a lot about the dance and I like what you're doing with the magazine.

Steve Carlan

Santa Barbara, CA

#### Dear **Hoppin**'

I am a very big fan of Lindy Hop. Please can you help me find someplace where I can buy these movies: After Sehen, Hellzapoppin'. Hot Chocolate, Jammin' the Blues, Killer Diller, Radio City Revels, Cabin in the Sky, Groovie Movie, and Call of the Jitterbug.

Kaare Dagfinn Strand

Fyllingsdalen, Norway

Kaare - I put this question to the

Hoppin's staff, and they all said - "when you find out, let us know too!" So how about it, readers - anyone know a good source for the old movies? -Ed.

#### Dear **Hoppin**'

Great magazine!

Lesley Benjamin Brighton, UK

#### Dear Hoppin'

Received a copy of **Hoppin'** Volume 2 Issue I. I read it from cover to cover, and loved the article by Mickey Davidson. She sounds amazingly mature and I would love to meet her! So very warm and compassionate.

Also liked the article by Tayo Ajibade, a tribute to Cab Calloway! I used to dance to his band so often between the time I was "16 and 21"! Also, his sister Blanche's band, and Glen Miller, The Dorsey Brothers, Stan Kenton, and dozens of others in that Big Band Era. Really brought back a lot of memories. Cab could sing 'Scat' that was fabulous and was a terrific entertainer.

You are doing a wonderful job with your publication of Hoppin'.

Murt Chartrand

Arizona, USA

Murt - Thank you for the kind words and the memories. Ed.

## An Axe to Grind or That Swing Thing

Every Lindy Hopper worth their salt knows that "if it ain't got that swing, it ain't worth a thing" which in my, admittedly, obsessional view, makes most bands playing for dancers today worthless. Of course that is very unfair to the excellent musicians who entertain us regularly and would be hotly repudiated by most of my co-dancers.

Nevertheless, "that swing" is an extremely elusive and increasingly rare element these days. I have spent many long hours with my good friend pianist Big Moe, trying to define what constitutes swing and why modern dance bands don't have it.

One inescapable conclusion is that there are hardly any exponents of the art alive and performing today to inspire young musicians with a penchant for swinging jazz. Jazz colleges and music professors seem only to teach the text-book rules to their students. Jazz literature is crammed with accounts of the great jazz players

of the '20s and '30s who studied classical music becoming superb musicians along the way, but who longed to "play hot for a living". So they did just that - they didn't make much of a living at it. but they spent every spare moment jamming together and breaking all the rules imposed on them by having to play strictly for ballroom dancing. It didn't take long for the wild dancers to cotton on to where the swing was. The more the musicians swung, the more the dancers would. If the dancers turned up in droves for particular bands the promoters were spurred on to find more of the same, thus creating the right environment for young swing musicians to let their hair down.

None of this explains what hap pened to "that swing". I suspect one of the main reasons for its rarity is the virtual disappearance of the jam session. As far as I know musicians today only iam if they are formally booked into venues and paid to do it. In the

heyday of swing, the great exponents of the art would invariably drop in to certain clubs and basements and jam together, playing their kind of music. There was a competitive element of course. much as some old and young hoofers today still get together and try and outdo each other, but this was tempered with enormous appreciation between one musician and another, coupled with the sheer happiness of playing with a fellow instrumentalist who inspired you to pull out every stop and produce brilliantly spontaneous swing.

Of all the bands I've heard play live and who purport to swing, in my view the ones who achieve it best are the (for want of a better expression) "retro" bands, who faithfully recreate the repertoire and arrangements of the so-called golden era. But it isn't simply a matter of playing old arrangements. The mix of instruments in any band or orchestra is absolutely crucial for the swing content

or, as Big Moe calls it, the "chug". There is a driving element to swing which I am convinced starts with the bass. Yes of course the drumming is vital, but what you hear if you listen to any good swing is the inescapably bouncy bass fixing the chug. Not for nothing does the song go "slap that bass...". The guitar in its acoustic jazz form also provided a unique, fairly indefinable component of the elusive swing style.

I'd say the cornerstone of swing music though is the piano. Listen to a modern jump-jive band without a piano (the keyboard is a poor substitute) and compare it with the sound of any swinging jazz band from the golden era and listen to the role of the pianist who provides that irresistible chug and extraordinary range of harmonies and effects. The jumpjive bands do play good music and they are enjoyable to dance to, but they very rarely really

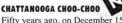
continued, page 4

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• 1994 Christian Batchelor

LINDY HOP POSTCARDS

#### SAVOY

Lindy Hoppers at Harlem's famous Savoy Ballroom, also known as 'The Home of Happy Feet'. Duke Ellington at the piane. Dancing at the Savoy was so intense that the wooden floor had to be replaced every three years Printed on white shirts

## That Swing Thing (continued from page 3)

Which leads me to the brass section. Any groovy jump-jive band will have good, beefy brass. This is where I think the road between swing and jumpjive forks sharply. Modern musicians play their saxophones differently and the instruments don't seem to wail the way they used to. The techniques for playing brass and wind instruments appear to have moved away from the swinging, tantalising sounds of the glory days to a much smoother, and vibrato, free form. Again, listen to any of the "greats" and then try a good modern jump-jive band note carefully the sounds you hear from the saxes. That unique swing quality is gone and

although the jump-jive outfit will produce an infectious bouncy beat, something vital has disappeared. I discussed this once with a sax player I know who also dances Lindy Hop, and he was hard-pressed to understand what I meant when I said I thought it was the way the instrument was sounded and tone produced. His reaction to my description of the swinging kind of brass I liked was, "\(\textstyle{\textsty

I rest my case.

©Judy Martin, 1995. For a list of most of the current London swing bands, compiled by Port Smith, send a stamped self-addressed envelope to Hoppin'.



Submitted by Sarah Reynolds in the photo and illustration contest which will be judged in Herräng in July. For more details, see box, page 1.

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## Sandra Gibson



1938 Harvest Moon Ball winners Sandra Gibson and Al Minns doing the Peckin' during the semifinals at the Savoy Ballroom. (Photo courtesy of the New York Swing Dance Society)

The following article by Robert P. Crease is reprinted by kind permission of the New York Swing Dance Society. It was originally published in Footnotes Volume 2 No. 1 April-June 1987.

Strong as a bull and extremely sexy, Sandra Gibson was one of the most striking and talented of Whitey's Lindy Hoppers. Born in Atlanta in 1919 as Mildred Pollard (she later changed her name), she came to New York at age 5. Her father was minister at Jerusalem Baptist church; he had his young daughter, blessed with a rare and beautiful bass voice, sing during services.

At church, Sandra met three neighbourhood kids, Al Minns, Joyce James and Joe Daniels, and they formed a singing quartet; Sandra on bass, Albert on tenor, Joyce on soprano, Joe on baritone. The four also learned to Lindy Hop, and it wasn't long before they went to the Savoy Ballroom, home base for Herbert Whitey's Lindy Hoppers. It was 1937.

"When we first met," Sandra says, "it was Saturday, when the Savoy had regular contests which were supposed to be won by the Lindy Hoppers. But Whitey and his crew were all out on jobs. Al and I took first prize that night, and the next, and the next.

Brownie (Clyde Brown), whom Whitey had left in charge, told

Whitey about it, and Whitey told Brownie that if the four of us didn't join his group, don't let us enter the contest no more. That's how we started."

When Whitey returned, he was delighted with his new talent. Sandra played the Apollo, then went to California with a group including Frankie Manning and a 400 pound dancer named Tiny Bunch. There they made two movies: Everybody Sing! an MGM musical with Judy Garland (the Lindy Hop scene was cut after Whitey argued with the director) and Radio City Revels, an RKO comedy with Bob Burns and Jack Oakie.

Sandra was known for her sexy wiggle, which is exploited wonderfully in the latter film. "In our scene, Tiny Bunch was a chef. So they had me take a tray from him, loaded with food, and dance from one side of the room to the other with my behind sticking up in the air, truckin'."

Her best partner was Al Minns. The two were well suited, Sandra with her boogie-woogie wiggle (her nickname was "Boogie"), Al with his sensuous leg movements (his name was "Rubberlegs). Sandra was also extremely strong; she was the first female Lindy Hopper to pick up and flip her partner.

In the 1938 Harvest Moon Ball, for instance, she had Al jump into her arms at the climax. "Nobody

in his right mind would have agreed to do it but Albert," she says. Whitey was watching from the sidelines; he covered his eyes. When he didn't hear a crash he looked up; Sandra was holding Al in her arms, and both were grinning widely. They took 1st prize.

She and Al worked six months at the Cotton Club. "We played with the whole list of Cotton Club stars: Cab, Sister Rosetta Tharpe, the Nicholas Brothers, the Dandridge Sisters, Timmy and Freddie, the Berry brothers — and way down at the bottom of the program you'd read, 'Al and Millie, '38 Lindy Hop Champs',"

She and Al danced in the Hot Mikado on Broadway; she also did a shake dance for the waterfall number, an erotic scene in which she wore a skin-color leotard with flowers in the strategic places.

She left the Lindy Hoppers in 1939 in a dispute with Whitey. "When I stopped Lindy Hopping I did exotic dancing, sang and did comedy. You name it in show business – I've done it." In 1965,

she met Albert Gibson at a party thrown by Mura Dehn; the two married the next year. Although Albert lost his right leg, he still choreographs a show "the Mad Gibsons"; Sandra sings in it and does comedy. Both she and her husband continue to be important talents in show business.

## EVENTS AND PERFORMANCES

Bullies Ballerinas, 30th March, Wolverhampton, UK. Contact +44 181 541 3191.

Jiving Lindy Hopper, London Swing Dance Society, and Bullies Ballerinas at Dance World, 31 March to 2 April, London, UK, Contact +44 181 364 8680.

Frankie Manning at The Sophisticates, 29th April, NY, USA. Contact +1 914 345 8002.

The Rhythm Hot Shots perform at Miller Studio, 19 & 20 May, Zurich, Switzerland. Contact Swedish Swing Society, +41 89 430 3620.

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## Winter Wild Week Review

--Seattle, Washington, USA, 1994/95

Welcome to Fort Worden, Port Townsend - home to the Winter Wild Week and less well-known as the film set for the movie, An Officer and a Gentleman.

The Winter Wild Week is an annual dance camp which starts on 26 December and finishes at breakfast on New Year's Day.
The camp is hosted by Walter and Nancyanna Dill of Living Traditions Music and Dance, assisted by the magnificent Marylee Lykes whose enthusiasm and kindness makes sure everything is organised and everyone is looked after.

The journey to the camp is via Seatac airport where Living Traditions can arrange to have you picked up and taken to Port Townsend, about a two-hour drive north of Seattle. But if your budget can stretch to it, hire a car, because the countryside on route to Port Townsend is very beautiful and having transport to get around is useful. The camp is a twenty minutes up-hill walk from the town, full of quaint seaside tourist shops and an old-fashioned

deli which makes the best chocolate fudge and a mean espresso. Fort Worden, formerly a military base, now a conference centre, is right next to the ocean, where the view across the bay at sunrise and sunset is magnificent.

In true dance camp tradition the food and accommodation were both just about adequate, which is more than can be said for the mattresses and the space in the toilets. Good taste prevents us from going into any further detail! On the plus side, the rooms were warm, the showers hot, with three meals a day and breakfast runs until 08.45 with a lie–in on New Year's Day until 09.30.

Enough of trivia and on to the dancing! This year's camp was organised around three disciplines - Lindy Hop (Steve Mitchell, Ewa "W" Staremo, Frankie Manning), Tango (Daniel Trenner, Rebecca Shulman) and Tap (Chazz Young). The Lindy Hop and tap classes were excellent and we think a special mention must go to Steve and W whose teaching partnership was both expert and entertaining. The final class of

the day and one of the highlights of the week was Steve's Hip-Hop class, an energetic workout where the ear-to-ear grin on the face of the man from Ojai (pronounced "oh-high") captured the mood of all of us, as did Steve's call "Floyd's in the house and the joint is cooking!". Of the Tango, we cannot say much other than that most people enjoyed themselves. My ignorance has to do with the timetable: beginners' Tango and Tap coincided with intermediate Lindy Hop, precluding intermediate Lindy Hoppers from trying out these dances which I think was an unfortunate oversight by the organisers.

Back to the fun - the evenings. There were live bands on four nights after which the party continued in the notorious Room 204 (don't ask). A special mention must go to Christine Nelson and Viola Spencer of the Savoy Swing Club in Seattle who produced the camp's first cabaret, tribute to Herräng's "Cabare Bla Manen". This show was organised, performed and enjoyed by the whole camp - apparently bookings are

already being taken for next year!

The finale of the camp was New Year's Eve, a splendid event with more than two hundred people dancing to the Blue Moon Big Band.

All in all the Wild Winter Week can be thoroughly recommended. As "foreigners" we were made particularly welcome and people expressed genuine astonishment that we had come from London, England and not London, Ohio! It really is friendly, good fun and not that expensive if you book your flights early enough and is one hell of a way to spend Christmas and New Year.

--by Gilly Love

### **BACK ISSUES**

Back issues of Hoppin' are available. If your collection is not complete, you save money buying them as a group, as we save on postage.

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## The 100 Minute Review



Three of the Fabulous Dancing Doris's (Photo courtesy of Jenny , Sweden)

Special writer on <u>The Times</u> of London, **Joe Joseph**, attened a recent London charity event organised by Lindy Hoppers Louise Thwaite & Keith Harrison.

On a Thursday night in mid-January, a dancing troupe calling themselves "The Fabulous Dancing Doris's" voluntarily got up on the stage of the 100 Club in London's Oxford Street and did a snappy routine to the tune of "All 1 Do Is Dream Of You". They were dressed in salmon pink satin, all eight of them. You want names? Okay, there was Carol Knight, and Caroline O'Driscoll and Judy Martin. Louise Thwaite and Lucy Pemberton. Who else? Nina Burghiner and Rachel Glasspool and Ursula Collin.

Oh yes, and they all wore salmon pink satin bows in their hair, too. What? You want phone numbers as well? Get outta here!

Remember: nobody forced them to do this. In fact, they looked like they were enjoying

themselves: these people were born with a spring in their step and a wink in their eye. Or put it another way, they know of no better way to escape reality and take their mind off the world's problems. Actually, the audience seemed to be enjoying themselves too, having also come along to the 100 Minute Revue -- a charity fundraiser organised by members of the London Swing Dance Society -- completely voluntarily and with no coercion from the performers beyond threats of severed friendships and divorce.

For those who can't get enough of salmon pink satin, the bad news was that it was a couple of hours before the Dancing Doris's returned on stage for the evening' finale, when they performed "Lullaby of Broadway".

The 120-minute gap that divided the debut and reappearance of the Doris's was choc full of entertainment, not all of it dancing. Lindy Hoppers are clearly a tal-

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ented bunch in their spare time. Big Moe played foot-tapping Boogie Woogie, Annette Stein lifted the rafters with a couple of West Side Story numbers. Louise Thwaite and Simon Selmon delivered a meticulous and relaxed version of "We're a Couple of Swells", complete with tattered tails and top hats. Fiona Harrison (on guitar) and Simon Bell (on flute) played a haunting duet. Pianist Liz Barne and counter tenor Adrian Hill performed "Cry Me a River" and "Ave Maria" in a way that made the burly 100 Club barkeepers search their souls and ask themselves when they had last bought their mothers flowers.

Doctor Love and the Lovettes sang '70s classics -- Dr. Love arriving complete with unbuttoned shirt and soup plate-sized medallion, which we assumed was a nod to the world of Jason King, although it's possible the medallion really was a soup plate and that Dr. Love had spilt hot minestrone soup over his shirtfront in the dressing room and hadn't brought a change of chemise with him.

The highlight of the first half was undoubtedly Bubble and Squeak, otherwise known as Judy Martin and Porl Smith, dancing in cook's costumes to "Shortnin' Bread" In this sassy new routine (performed complete with onstage cooker and sizzling frying pans) Martin and Smith are clearly staking their claim to becoming the Fanny and Johnnie Cradock (famous TV cooks in Britain) of the Lindy Hop world.

The youthful Chestnut Grove Lindy Hoppers — who showed that if you catch Lindy Hoppers young enough they won't have realised yet that Lindy Hopping is more addictive than many illegal drugs, and that in years to come they will be shaking their heads at their local branch meeting of Lindy Hoppers Anonymous and wondering how years of their lives disappeared down the black hole of boogie — provided the perfect first act curtain.

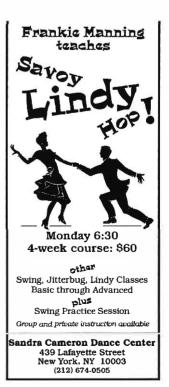
The second half of the revue began with an inspired adaptation entitled "Snow White and The Seven Hoods", although inspired by what, we weren't told. Elizabeth Green, dancing an acrobatic routine to the backing of Sting's "Nothing About Me,", created enough energy to keep the National Grid fed for a week.

Singers? They had 'em! And jolly good they were too, all in different styles. The three Alka Seltzer Sisters were followed by Flora Jenkin singng "A Foggy Day", before Diane Hall brought a smokey speakeasy atmosphere to the evening with her plaintive renditions of "All of Me" and "Good Morning Heartache".

Then it was the Doris's turn to come and wind up the show. And the audience. Try and tell these young kids today about dirty dancing, and they just won't know what you're talking about.

Ed Note: The 100 Minute Review made £500 for charity, and plans to reprise next year. For those who missed this year's, the organisers are putting a video together - contact Keith Harrison at +44 494 527 241 or Louise Thwaite at +44 81 954 2147,

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## California (cont.)



Frin Stevens and Steve Mitchell

for this June. Erin says the local club scene is expanding with the growth of Lindy Hop.

Hepcat Denise Paulino describes the current club scene in the LA area as down from last year's activity but venues here change constantly. The Eddie Reed Swing Band or Johnny Crawford play The Atlas on Thursdays and swing music is featured at the Legion Hall in Montebello on Sundays. Multiday big band events arc common and provide a variety of music and dance floors. A landmark club called The Derby has live swing music most evenings with favorite bands such as the Royal Crown Revue and Flat Top Tom & His Jumpcats. Unfortunately recent publicity has raised the club's celebrity appeal and entrance is limited (it helps to be Wynona Ryder or Johnny Depp).

Swing southward to Orange County and contact Tina Bevan for dances and activities. A small but active performance troupe. Swing Shift, practices out of Martin Parker's dance studio and hosts a dance the second Saturday of each month. Knotts Berry Farm is a regular location with ample dance floors. Disneyland hosts a big band each Saturday night, as well as the US Open at Disneyland Hotel in November. This event is predominantly West Coast Swing (slotted, lycra style), but it would be great to see the floor stormed by Lindy Hoppers.

Now hop in your convertible and cruise up Ventura Highway to make a call to the Ventura County Swing Dance Club Hotline. The smooth voice on the phone is Melinda Comeau, who teaches three classes of Lindy Hop each week, as well as other Lindy styles for the towns of Ventura, Ojai, and Camarillo. Melinda spent years immersed in other dance forms and knew Lindy Hop only as a dance about which her mother reminisced. This 2nd generation swing dancer calls Lindy Hop "perfect" - a happy, complex, improvisational dance with room to grow. Her performance group, Mo Dancin', brings Lindy Hop into the local community, and as Vintage Dance consultant to the State, Melinda conducts an annual workshop for up to 1,500 children from Southern California. The VCSDC sponsors parties and dances at the Poinsettia Pavilion the 2nd Friday of each month. Nicholby's is the club of choice for Lindy Hop in Ventura where you can dance to Big Bad Voodoo Daddy and other bands from LA and Santa Barbara.

Since this is a lovely night, turn up Basie on the tapedeck and let's continue north along the coast to Santa Barbara. You sense the first upbeats as you pass the pounding waves off Rincon Point. It's Tuesday and Jonathan and Sylvia are teaching smooth-style Lindy on Carrillo Street, Rob van Haaren's troupe is rehearsing Shag and Lindy Hop on Gutierrez and Dennis and Denise are running new Charleston students through their paces at the other end of town. There is an additional cacophony of West Coast and Country Western Swing reverberating off the Spanish tile. Californians have too much to choose from - it promotes confusion and competition, but it provides a rich diversity on the dance floor.

Jonathan and Sylvia, the instigators and institution of the Santa Barbara Lindy scene, began teaching together 28 years ago (they must have started very



Melinda Comeau, Ventura

young...). J&S, as they are locally known, teach social Lindy Hop up to 25 weeks of the year. Smoothstyle Lindy is taught year-round, as are Balboa, East Coast Swing, Carolina & St. Louis Shag, and other specialized classes. Sylvia would like to see Lindy Hop continue not only as a performance dance but as a social style. Steve Mitchell has been a guest teacher since '87 and their performance

## SWING CAMP CATALINA

(June 17-19, 1994 - Pasadena Ballroom Dance Association)

Swing Camp Catalina was held on that sunny southern California playground, Catalina Island. Many "CANT TOP THE LINDY HOP" instructors simply flew out from New York and hopped on the island ferry boat. Frankie Manning, Ryan Francois, The Rhythm Hotshots, Marcus Koch & Bärbl Kaufer, and Erin Stevens & Steve Mitchell taught Lindy Hop variations. Ryan demonstrated soft shoe and Steve's Hip Hop class was steaming.

The little island resort town of Avalon is very enjoyable - we wanted more time to play on the beach! Motor vehicle activity is dominated by golf carts and Steve Mitchell (wild man driver) acted as an impromptu taxi driver, ferrying us between the two teaching locations. There are few places to dance as lovely as the restored Avalon Casino Ballroom A spacious, round dance floor is located on the second story of this building, circled by an outdoor balcony that provides expansive views of the ocean. The Big Band dance on Saturday evening filled the floor with happy Lindy Hoppers and ballroom dancers. (My vote is for an additional dance on Fridaynight.) The next Swing Camp Catalina is planned for June 9-11, 1995 (see ad p. 13).

Between Santa Barbara's weekend workshop and Catalina's Swing Camp, summer would be a good time to Lindy Hop your way through California.

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## California (cont.)



Jonathan Bixby & Sylvia Sykes group, Cats N' Jammers, has Lindy Hopped in the US Open.

J&S have a hotline of their sponsored events and club venues in town. On the 1st and 3rd Fridays of each month, they sponsor local, LA, and San Francisco bands at the Carrillo Recre-ation Center with its large, sprung floor. J&S have a talent for instruction and comedy repartee that can bring a smile to the face of a shy beginner. Like their predecessor, Dean Collins, J&S have taught and inspired Lindy instructors from Ventura to San Francisco.

Rob Van Haaren and dance partner Jann Olsen are Lindy Hop

Central in Santa Barbara. It is to their credit that Santa Barbarans have been exposed to styling and Jazz elements of Lindy Hop and the international scene on a consistent basis. Their creative focus centers primarily on the preservation of the dance and music of the 20's, 30's, and 40's. Both agree that Lindy Hop should remain dynamic and open to influences from Jazz, Hip Hop, and new music. Jann was first captivated by Lindy Hop for its vitality and "In Your Face" rebel quality. She assists Rob in teaching abroad and at home. Rob was attracted to Lindy Hop for its exciting music, challenging syncopations, and opportunities for dynamic styling. He conducts weekly classes in vernacular Lindy Hop. Charleston, Balboa, and original Shag to an established core of Lindy dancers via the Upbeat Swing Club. Rob directs and choreographs Lindy Hop and Shag routines for his performance dancers, the "Upbeats", and brings guests such as American dance historian/choreographer, Lance Benishek to Santa Barbara

for special workshops. Two years ago Rob sponsored the 1st annual Santa Barbara International Swing Dance Festival, which ignited enthusiasm for Lindy Hop in Santa Barbara.

Dennis Holcomb and Denise Rinaldi teach Lindy Hop several times a year in addition to weekly classes in smooth-style Lindy, and workshops in Charleston and St. Louis Shag. Dennis favors Lindy Hop above all its spinoffs and he sponsors occasional dances to bring in favorite bands. The Dennis and Denise Dancers provide numerous community performances, demonstrating a progression of dance from Charleston through 1950's Swing. In addition to operating a well known Ballet school. Denise works with another Lindy Hop performance



Dennis Holcomb & Denise Rinaldi

troupe called Swing Set.

Local clubs currently offering live Swing music in Santa Barbara include SoHo Toes Tavern, and the Creekside Inn; but check the J&S hotline or local activities paper for changing venues. Dennis does D.J. Swing at the Galleon Room on Tuesday nights and that floor is packed with the Lindy crowd. Local bands to look for include Rob Rio and the Revolvers. The Duke Mitchell Band, The Bombers, The Goods, Little Johnny and the Giants, the Roadhouse Rockers. Lately we've seen more performances by LA bands such as the Joz Band and Derby regulars.

Another pocket of Lindy Hop has extended northward to San Luis Obispo. Enthusiastic Jeffrey Bloom recently began teaching Lindy Hop classes, and invites all Lindy Hoppers to practice with him at the unique Madonna Inn. With increased exposure, Lindy Hop is growing in the Santa Barbara "Swing Belt". Lindy is even taught in two health and fitness clubs, and Cuddle Productions sponsors Swing

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## California (cont.)

dances and travel trips. With all this Lindy energy in the relatively small area of Santa Barbara, opportunity exists to coordinate a great swing scene mutually beneficial to instructors, musicians, clubs, and dancers.

Speaking of potential, San Francisco, although a bastion of West Coast Swing, hosts a small but organized group of rebel dancers, the Northern California Lindy Society. Momentum is growing through the efforts of Belinda Rickleffs, George Woolley, and a motivated group of Swing enthusiasts. Bob (Red) Donnelly from San Jose, also produces dances and workshops for the San Francisco Bay Area. Between these two forces, guest instructors Margaret Batiuchok. Frankie Manning, and Santa Barbara teachers have been sponsored for successful workshops. Belinda teaches beginning and intermediate Lindy-Jitterbug on a weekly basis. Belinda and Laurie Ann Lepoff also offer classes before the dance held the second

Saturday of each month at the Candlelight Ballroom.

Before you lose yourself in the ambiance of downtown, contact Belinda and George for the NCLS swing scene and the jive schedule at area clubs. The Claremont Hotel in Oakland hosts various bands playing 30's, 40's jump and swing music on Thursdays. The Palace is the spot for jump and swing in the city of Sunnyvale. Downtown, in the City, try Mr. Ricks Martini Club. Belinda cautions that although San Francisco has good bands, many of the floors are tiny. One exception is Bimbo's with a large dance floor. Michael Maranjio recommends the Johnny Nocturne Band, St. Vitus Dance, and Levay Smith and her Red Hot Skillet Lickers for Lindy Hop dancing. The DNA Lounge and Cafe Nord have smaller dance floors, but good music. With all the West Coast Swing in town, why go against the grain? Belinda says that she finds in Lindy Hop a "rhythm, playfulness and balance; a joyous" dance.

But wherever your feet land in the USA, common feelings about Lindy Hop are shared from coast to coast. During the last evening of "CANT TOP THE LINDY HOP" at Wells Restaurant in Harlem, music and dancers spilled out the doors on to the sidewalk. A group of younger Harlem residents stopped to watch and asked "What kind of dance are you doing?" Lindy Hop-now foreign to teenagers of Harlem, but embraced by people of different cultures and countries. An older gentleman in tattered duds came along and asked me to dance. Bystanding dancers stepped back, perhaps reticent about their proximity to the man with shining eyes. He told me in a tipsy voice, that he used to be a dancer, Despite his inebriated state he maintained his balance and rhythm with a big half moon grin. When the song ended, he enthusiastically repeated "Yes, I dance, I used to be a dancer. I will come to California and teach all you how to dance." I hope he comes.

Why do we dance? My Jazz teacher clenches her fist below her rib-cage to demonstrate that we need to center to dance. Dancers tell me that dance provides them a center of balance in life; that dance is a vivid moment when you are connected with the soul of the music. And Lindy Hop? That word "joy" comes from the lips of Lindy Hoppers and you see it radiate from the smile on Frankie's face. Lindy Hop must be a little bit of joy, an awareness of being alive, whether you are from California or the streets of Harlem.

by Nancy H. Sandburg



Belinda Rickleffs & GeorgeWoolley

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## Spotlight on the Sugarfoot Stompers



The London Swing Dance Society Dancers. (Photos this page courtesy of Richard Dixon.)

The end of a good hard session rehearsing for a big show at London's Queen Elizabeth Hall, and one might ask, where did it all start for the Sugarfoot Stompers?

At the start of 1990, Simon Selmon, founder of the London Swing Dance Socity (LSDS) was teaching Jitterbug and Rock 'n Roll. He

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decided to promote awareness of the dance by getting a group of his pupils to form a display team. The group first performed at the 100 Club in June to the tune of "Christopher Columbus". Thus the king of swing, Benny Goodman, ushered in the performance group of the London Swing Dance Society.

'91 started with some of the dancers appearing on BBCTV in the David Jacobs' Primetime show. The Lindy Hop and Jitterbug scene was expanding and Louise Thwaite joined the group, bringing her rapidly blossoming talent and fund of choreographing ideas.

The LSDS dancer's first serious gig was performed at a Christmas party for Saatchi and Saatchi. '92 saw the introduction of regular practice sessions, as it had been decided to enter a competition! At the '92 International Rock-a-Rama in Birmingham the LSDS dancers debuted new costumes, ranged against some serious coordinated team uniforms (think of the film Strictly Ballroom). Nonetheless.

the LSDS dancers took first prize in the Lindy Hop team category.

1992 marked the 50th anniversary of the arrival of US troops in the UK and there was a spate of wonderful 40's-theme hangar dances where the group performed, taught, and taxidanced the nights away to huge appreciative gatherings. Dance shows around England. many for charity fundraising, kept the group busy up to Christmas.

In November the LSDS dancers took the United Kingdom authentic Rock 'n Roll team title. The group needed a name and so "The Sugarfoot Stompers" was premiered at a large fundraising ball for a charity for the spinally injured at the London Hilton. We wore white tie and tails and specially-made dresses shades of Fred and Ginger!

Original "Stompers" still performing are Porl Smith, Caroline O'Driscoll, Carole Knight, Mark Steere, Bronwen Jones, Lucy Pemberton, Simon Selmon and Richard Dixon. In July '93 the newest "Sugarfoot", Daisy Steere, aged 3 weeks, came to her first class.

The Sugarfoot Stempers continue to expand their performances, "appearing" on radio with the BBC Big Band on Radio 2 for the "The Joint is Jumping" series, joining forces with the Jiving Lindy Hoppers to perform to the Herb Miller Band, and performing at many charity events, private parties, corporate functions, and even a wedding.

Last year the men were joined by Keith Harrison and Anders Johansson. After performances at Shepperton and Pinewood Studios and the Bentley Drivers' Club dinner in the company of six of those most elegant motor cars, we are preparing for a performance with the Piccadilly Dance Orchestra at the Queen Elizabeth Hall. White tie and tails; the elegance, spirit and fun of the Charleston, Lindy Hop and Jitterbug; the spirit of the Sugarfoot by Richard Dixon



White tie & tails - The Sugarfoot Stompers

## Swing Changes - Big Band Jazz in New Deal America

In Swing Changes, author David W.Stowe looks at America in the 1930's and 40's through its music and shows how the contradictions and tensions in swing culture - over race, politics, cultural status, gender - mirrored the same tensions in society at large.

Living in fragmented times, it is salutary to remind ourselves what a unifying culture swing was. Boundaries of age, class and most importantly, race, were challenged and crossed by musicians, dancers and listeners through a common involvement with and love for swing.

At the apex of this community were the agents and producers, dominated by the paradoxical but immensely powerful figure of John Hammond - an uppermiddle class millionaire crusader for racial integration and a range of leftist causes. Next.the bandleadcrs; as glamorous as film stars and very shrewd businessmen. They emerge as people of great integrity and intelligence who, on the whole, treated their musicians

with great patience and tenderness.

Most crucial to the development of the music were the listeners and dancers. Occasionally these were interchangeable, but often they were not - and this gave rise to considerable tensions.

Various camps emerged, most notably those who treated music as high art and those, often dancers, with a more raucous appreciation. Pity the poor band leader who had to please them all. Differences in culture were underlined at hilarious meetings of the two camps such as Goodman's Carnegie Hall debut where dinner–jacketed concert–goers were infiltrated by groups of hooting, catcalling jitterbugs.

The band leaders were cool toward some sections of their audience. Artie Shaw notoriously referred to jitterbug 'morons', whilst Benny Goodman's impression was that 'their eyes popped, their heads pecked, their feet tapped out the time, arms jerked to the rhythm'. By the late '30s a crackdown had started. 'Positively no jitterbug dancing allowed' declared one Milwaukee ballroom whilst in Indianapolis there was a ban on 'stomping, heel clicking, back kicks, worm wiggling, acrobatics, breaking contact beyond arm's length, floor hugging...'

The white jitterbug seems, in the '30s, to have been a universally despised breed. Generally of high school or college age, they appear in the main to have been "twitchers and groaners" rather than serious dancers. 'The white jitterbug is oftener than not uncouth to look at,' reported the NY Times. By contrast, 'his Negro original is quite another matter. His movements are never so exaggerated that they lack control, and there is an unmistakable dignity about his most violent figures.'

For the serious white dancer, the best option was to attend the black dance halls. The Savoy had a policy of welcoming white dancers and spectators. Malcolm X estimated that up to a third of its patrons were white.

Appreciation for swing performers caused racial boundaries to be crossed on all sides. Glenn Miller and Bennie Goodman in particular played sell-out dates at black ballrooms, and Ellington was adored by the more "intellectual" white fans.

The repeal of Prohibition led to a democratisation of dance hall culture. Big bands needed big business - this ultimately led to their demise. Dance halls pulled in the punters with regular 'Stunt nites'. Free dance lessons, bathing beauty contests, mechanical horse races, even a "candid camera" night could all be found on the week's bill at one LA hall.

This is a fascinating book by an academic who writes in scholarly but readable style. Published by Harvard University Press \$29.95/£19.99

Review by Simon Bell. Ed note: if you come across an interesting book and would like to share a review of it, send it along.

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## Lindy Listings

Additions and corrections to the Lindy Listings, as up-to-date as we could get by press time. If you have more recent information, be sure to let us know Cor rections are highlighted in bold.

#### **England**

#### DANCE COMPANY:

Temujin & Co. (teach, perform) Contact Temujin Gill, 25 Copperfield Mews, Dickens Lane, Edmonton, London N18 1PE. phone +44 181 884 0313

#### **ORGANISATION:**

RocJive in Bristol, phone +44 117 9 666443.

#### France

#### VENUE:

1st Thursday of each month, BC (Buck Clayton) Blues Club, 25 place Carnot, Lyon. Contact Franck Balbin, +33 78 08 89 52.

#### **Switzerland**

#### **ORGANISATION:**

Swiss Swing Society. Correct phone number for Joe Namesnik: +41 61 691 46 72. Our apologies for any inconvenience.

#### California

#### CONTACTS:

Tina Bevan, Orange County: +1714638-3086

Pasadena Baliroom Dance Association: +1 818 799-5689

Ventura County Swing Dance Club Hotline: +1 805 643-3114

Jonathan and Sylvia Hotline, Santa Barbara +1 805 569-2535

Upbeat Swing Club, Santa Barbara: +1 805 687-6407

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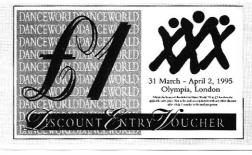
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Germany: Eva-Maria Schmid, Franz-Joseph-Strasse 32, 80801 München. Sweden: Money - postgiro 628643-9, Yeah Man; Forms -The Rhythm Hot Shots, Ploggatan 1, S-11634 Stockholm. Switzerland: Money - Postcheck-Konto 80-176002-3 Vermerk: speak easy; Forms Lorenz IIg, Postfach 464, 8024 Zurich. *USA*: Nancy H. Sandburg, 811 Knapp Drive, Santa Barbara, CA 93108. *UK/World*: Dancing Star Productions, P.O. Box 6008, London W2 5ZY UK

<sup>\*</sup>Hoppin' is published quarterly; Vol2 lss1 was Dec. '94. Back issues are available. Prices include postage. PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY ORDER.

## ...And Finally

## SANTA BARBARA INTERNATIONAL SWING DANCE FESTIVAL

April 14-17, 1994 - the Upbeat Swing Club in conjunction with the Santa Barbara ■ance Alliance.

The most exuberant dances of the Swing Era - Shag, Big Apple, Black Bottom, Tap, and Lindy Hop were celebrated during four days of classes, shows and evening dances. Featured instructors included Lindy Hopper Frankie Manning; Fayard Nicholas of the legendary Nicholas Brothers tap team; and bright apple Betty Wood, an original Shag dancer from North Carolina who introduced the Big Apple



Chester Whitmore

to New York. Chester Whitmore, a man of many talents - choreographer, musician, comedian, and protege of the Nicholas Brothers-provided excellent classes in Tap and Jazz dance. Lance Benishek gave us a mean Black Bottom, Conga, and the original Shag. Betty was an

# LINDY HOP MEETS ROCJIVE IN BRISTOL

January 14 saw all manner of hippers, hoppers and spatsters descend on the British Aerospace Ballroom to jump, jive, jiggle and groove into the early hours. Traditionally "RocJive" who teach their own subtle blend of French jive, jazz and swing team up with Amnesty to invent an excuse to have fun and raise money at the same time. Now in its 7th year the event has gained a reputation for a spicy cocktail of great bands, original dance displays and exciting cabaret.

For the dancers who packed the floor at this year's 20's and 30's style event the 17-piece Rhythm Kings struck up a heady mix of Glenn Miller style swing and Latin American cha-cha, rhumba et al. fellowed by a quick lesson in basic Lindy Hop by Julie Oram, who



Rob van Haaren & Jann Olsen teching at the Santa Barbara International Swing Dance Festival 1994.

exuberant presence and instructed students in the original "Apple". Lindy Hop and Charleston moves were taught by the Rhythm Hot Shots, Erin Stevens, Rob van Haaren and Jann Olsen

Friday evening provided a memorable and intimate experience in dance repartee. Frankie, Fayard, Betty, Chester, and Lance talked and joshed warmly with the audience about dance experiences. The next day Chester Whitmore brought up his Big Band for Saturday night's Big Show and dance. Hotshot performances by the Swedes impressed the audience which was also treated to dance specialties of the instructors and the Upbeat Swing Troupe. Hosts Shirley Hartman and Chester clowned in a Paso Doble and provided hilarious, impromptu comedy that had the audience laughing throughout the show. Energy was high and the crowd danced until the doors closed.

--by Nancy Sandburg. For details of next year's, see ad page 6.

had brought her team of Jitterbug Jammers down from London as part of the cabaret.

"Gosh", she said, "this is a big class" and submerged under a sea of faces, her instructions on the intricacies of footwork were rendered vaguely metaphorical, but it didn't seem to matter as the saxophones took up the tune again and the event swung into gear.

In between were displays of RocJive, a hat and tap routine from the Hot Shoc Hoofers and cabaret from the Jitterbug Jammers, who performed three high energy Lindy numbers alongside the usual cats' corners, strolls, madisons and solo virtuosos.

At midnight the Rhythm Kings handed over to T J and the Jive Giants playing a fast and furious set of swing to round off the evening and sent a throng of tired, but happy, dancers out into the cold night air.

--by Jes Newton, a sometimes Lindy Hopper, who submitted this from exotic Dar-es-Salaam

Advertisement

## VIDEOS & MUSIC

#### INSTRUCTIONAL VIDEOS FROM THE BEST IN THE SWING DANCE WORLD

Frankie Manning Steven Mitchell & Erin Stevens Jonathan Bixby & Sylvia Sykes Charlie Womble & Jackie McGee Mario Robau, Kelly Buckwalter

#### **SWING STYLES**

Lindy Hop, Smooth Lindy, Texas Push, Carolina Shag, and West Coast Swing

#### SPECIALTY DANCES

Balboa, St. Louis Shag, Mambo, Cha Cha, & Shim Sham

#### "CAN'T TOP THE LINDY HOP"

A 3 video series taped in New York at Frankie's 80th birthday celebration. The event tape features performances & other special moments, the workshop tape reviews all the classes by the premiere Lindy Hop teachers, and the famous birthday video with clips of Lindy Hopping around the world is a must see.

#### **SWING MUSIC**

#### Roll Up The Rug

A CD with 60 min. of danceable R & B tunes ranging from 114 - 146 beats per minute. Artists include Albert Collins, Elvin Bishop, Katie Webster, Koko Taylor and more. Also available are two collections by Boogie Woogie master Rob Rio.

### FOR A COMPLETE BROCHURE CALL OR WRITE TO: A.R.B.S.P.

Directors: Jonathan & Sylvia 1220 Mission Canyon Road Santa Barbara, California 93105 (805) 569-1952

## What's Hoppin' Around the World

We are told that the following events have significant Lindy content. Thanks to all who have sent in the details to keep us informed.

#### Lindy Weekend

Toulouse, France. 25 & 26 March, '95. Contact Andi Hafitz, +33 61 59 40 92.

## American Swing Dance Championships

New York, NY. USA 7-9 April '95. Contact ASDC, +1 212 260 2033 or 1 800 537 8937.

#### Santa Barbara 3rd International Swing Dance Festival

California, USA. 5-7 May 95. Contact Rob van Haaren, +1 805 687 6407. (see ad p. 6)

#### Lindy Hop Workshop

Baltimore, MD, USA. 13 & 14

May, '95. Contact Swing Baltimore, +1 410 377 7410.

#### Lindy Hop Festival

Lyon, France. 20 & 21 May '95. Contact the French Swing Dance Society, +33 78 08 89 52. (see ad p. 10)

## Lindy Weekend with Jiving Lindy Hoppers

Toulouse, France. 20 & 21 May, '95. Contact Andi Hafitz, +33 61 59 40 92.

## 9th Annual Boogie Bären Pfingst Seminar

Landsberg, Germany. 3-5 June '95. Contact Boogie Bears, +49 89 812 11 58.

#### Swing Camp Catalina

Catalina Island, USA. 9-11 June '95. Contact Pasadena Ballroom Dance, +1 818 799 5689. (see ad p. 13)

#### Vintage Dance Week '95

Ohio, USA. 18-24 June '95. Contact Flying Cloud Academy, +1 513 733 3077.

#### **Summer Workshop**

Oslo, Norway. 30 June - 2 July '95. Contact Bårdar Dance Insti-tute, +47 22 20 90 10 (see ad, p 4)

#### Herräng Dance Camp

Herräng, Sweden. 8 July -5 August '95. Contact the Rhythm Hot Shots, +46 8 643 40 58. (see ad p 9)

## International World Lindy Hop Championships

Oslo, Norway. 9-13 August '95. Contact Bardar Dance Institute, +47 22 20 90 10 (ad, p12).

#### Swing Master's Jam III

London, UK. 25-27 August '95. Contact Live 2 Jive +44 181

866 9093. (see ad p 5).

#### 3rd Annual Swiss Lindy Hop Weekend

Note: New Information! Zurich, Switzerland. 30 Sept. to 1 Oct. '95. Contact Stephan Joller, Erika Schriber, +41 61 411 9576.

#### London Lindy Festival

London, UK. October '95. Contact Jiving Lindy Hoppers, +44 181 992 8128/London Swing Dance Society, +44 181 954 2147



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