



Our great 75th Birthday blast



TICKETS were selling slowly less than a month ago, so we searched the highways and byways successfully for past members, and also booked a different duo for dancing to.

At last the big night came and we were allocated seats - eight per circular table. After our choice of meals we primed our glasses for a toasting session, being entertained by several amusing speeches - even Father Gaine (one of our guests) included a few jokes! The band then kicked off with the pleasant tempo of a waltz or two. The music wasn't too loud and most people enjoyed it.

There was now a request for the Limehouse Blues. Thirty to forty years ago, this tune was the signal to get up and dance the Circassian Circle at our weekly clubnights. Now our Country Dance team swung into action, as many young-at-heart dancers checked their memory banks and joined hands. *This progressive dance, which almost every member did in those bygone days, meant that newcomers swapped partners with many of the opposite sex within a few minutes, and were, hopefully, seduced into joining us on future walks.*

Programmed to suit everyone at this large Botanic Suite of Devonshire House Hotel, the dance duo (drummer and keyboard player) alternated half hourly with the disco, while old and new members danced or compared stories about old times and played 'Who's Who' with the many nostalgic photographs displayed near the bar.

Main age of the 110 enjoying this evening, was roughly between 45 to 65 years, with a few slightly

younger ones plus a number of over 65's dancing. A large cake (in the shape of '75') donated by one of our members who had cake decorating connections, was on display and later cut for us either to eat there or to take home.

We also had a presentation of our Fred Norbury Trophy (*inaugurated in 1973 in memory of our last founder member who died in 1972*). Chris Dobbin, our first lay-President, was the surprised recipient. We could say that Chris earned it this year for frantically seeking out our new dance band duo, thus ensuring a very successful 75th celebration.

Two new members, John and Lydia, also unobtrusively captured the whole event on video.

The evening took a lot of organising, by Mike, Will, Chris, Ray, Dave and others, including Hilda (from the Reunion group). We expected to make a slight loss (after some long-term members elected not to come) but the good news is, that thanks to our raffle proceeds, we broke even on costs.