

# The Society for International Folk Dancing



## Members' Handbook

(2021)

Charitable Incorporated Organisation  
Number 1189141

[www.sifd.org](http://www.sifd.org)  
find us on Facebook

# Contents

## Introduction

### Aims

### Officers

### The Society – General

### Benefits of Being a Member

### Activities

- Sunday Dance Workshops
- Friday Feet
- Teacher Training
- Support for Group and Member Ventures and Projects

### Products and Publications

- The SIFD News
- Music Products – Books and CDs
- The Wilf Horrocks Collection
- The Digital Archive Memory Stick Project
- The SIFD Shop
- Publicity
- Branding
- List of SIFD Teachers
- Website
- Photograph Album

### Festivals

- General
- Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod
- Victoria Embankment Gardens

## Background, Administration and Legal Matters

- A Brief General Background
- Affiliations
- Constitution
- Child and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy
- DBS Checks
- Data Protection
- Finance
- Insurance
- Bringing in Teachers From Abroad

## Membership Structure and Subscription Rates

- Individual Membership
- Group Membership
- Membership Records

## Other Topics

- Audio Equipment
- Costumes
- Health and Safety
- PPL Phonographic Performances Limited
- Live Music
- The SIFD Archives
- Slippery Floors
- West Midlands Branch
- The Beginning

# Introduction

This handbook has been compiled in an attempt to give new and existing members all the information they might need as members of the Society for International Folk Dancing ('SIFD'). Many people have contributed, sharing their specialist knowledge, and the Committee is most grateful to them all.

## Aims

The aims of the Society are:

- to preserve Folk Dances of all peoples, to make them better known and encourage the practice of them in their traditional forms
- to encourage the knowledge and practice of Folk Dances by means of classes, demonstrations and other ways
- to provide, and encourage for the public benefit, research into and study of the origin, development and traditional practice of Folk Dances
- to encourage the playing and collection of and research into International Folk Dance Music, with particular regard to traditional styles.

In practice this means encouraging people to learn and enjoy international folk dances, and offering as many opportunities as possible to do so. Learning folk dances combines so many pleasures – the sense of achievement when steps are mastered, the enjoyment of the music, the appreciation of the original dancing style, and the satisfaction of continuing age-old traditions in the company of others who love dancing.

If you are a new member, we welcome you to the Society, and hope you will experience these pleasures for yourself. This booklet should help you make full use of your membership and, it is to be hoped, remain a member for many years.

If you are an established member, we are grateful for your continued support of the Society; without you it would not exist, and we would not be able to provide or support the many events and experienced teaching which so many of us enjoy.

We hope this book will help you increase your knowledge of the extra benefits which the Society can offer.

The contents of this booklet are correct as of September 2021

*The Committee*

Much more information about the Society can be found online at [www.sifd.org](http://www.sifd.org)

Queries can be sent to [mail@sifd.org](mailto:mail@sifd.org)

## **Officers**

Currently the officers of the SIFD are as follows:

**Acting Chairman**      **Richard Mellish**  
15 Lancaster Road, Harrow HA2 7NN  
[richard@mellish.uk](mailto:richard@mellish.uk)

**Treasurer**              **Judith Payling**  
56 Quickley Lane, Chorleywood,  
Rickmansworth, Herts WD3 5AF  
[judithcpayling@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:judithcpayling@yahoo.co.uk)

**Secretary**              **Dalila Heath**  
102 High Street, Landbeach  
Cambridge CB25 9FT  
[dalila.heath@btoopenworld.com](mailto:dalila.heath@btoopenworld.com)

**Committee  
Members**              **Caspar Cronk**  
8 Langbourne Avenue,  
London N6 6AL  
[caspar.cronk@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:caspar.cronk@blueyonder.co.uk)

**Holly Payling**  
[hollycp@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:hollycp@hotmail.co.uk)

**Brenda Steventon**  
92 Hamilton Avenue, Surbiton,  
Surrey KT6 7PT  
[brenda.steventon@btinternet.com](mailto:brenda.steventon@btinternet.com)

**John Stewart**  
129 Glebe Road, Thringstone Coalville,  
Leics LE67 8NU  
[j2ohn@yahoo.com](mailto:j2ohn@yahoo.com)

**SIFD Officers are shown in the SIFD News each month**

## **The Society – General**

The Society is made up of Associated, Affiliated and Music groups and classes, and individual members. Groups vary in size and frequency of meeting, and can be found throughout England, with a few in Wales and Scotland.

## **Benefits of Being a Member**

As a member of the SIFD you are entitled to the benefits described in this booklet. Some are obvious – your monthly copy of the News, while others are less measurable – help, advice and support from knowledgeable members.

The News and website will keep you in touch, giving notice of events, allowing you to plan which events to attend both in the UK and abroad

Membership gives access to wonderful teachers, and opportunities to extend your dancing experience, at workshops, dances and sometimes in demonstrations.

You can claim a discount when buying SIFD CDs and books and you can borrow costumes, CDs, DVDs, archive material and audio equipment. Members may buy a Memory Stick of SIFD material.

You can use the list on the website and circulated with the News each year to discover your nearest dance groups. Refer to it too if you want to dance in a different part of the country as a visitor.

Do you need advice or information on dancing, costumes or music? Try asking in the News.

And, most importantly, you can help the Society help you – have your say and vote at the AGM and even consider standing for election to the Committee.

## **Activities**

### ***Sunday Dances***

[These are currently not being held due to Covid-19. However, we hope they will resume soon.]

Sunday (and occasionally Saturday) social Dance Workshops in London are a monthly opportunity to meet other dancers and enjoy several hours of social dancing with like-minded people outside one's own group. Dances are usually on the first Sunday of each month and each is hosted by a different MC, so a wide variety of dances will be included over a year. We have the chance to sample new dances and glimpse the huge range of International Folk Dance.

One of our great assets, adding to the enjoyment of the evening, is the SIFD Band which provides live – and lively – music to dance to. As most of our classes are taught to recorded music, a live band is a treat, adding an extra dimension to our dance experience.

Both experienced dancers and newcomers are welcome; many dances are walked through/explained/demonstrated beforehand so everyone can join in. Refreshments are available during the interval, or the energetic can continue to dance.

The dances run from 6.45 p.m. to 9.30 p.m. at:  
Primrose Hill Community Association (<http://phca.cc>)  
29 Hopkinson's Place, Fitzroy Road, London NW1 8TN  
Entry fee is £10.

### ***Friday Feet***

Friday Feet is a class held nearly every Friday from 7.30 to 9.30 p.m. at Cecil Sharp House ([www.cecilsharp.org](http://www.cecilsharp.org))  
2 Regents Park Road, London NW1 7AY  
The class is taught by Anne Leach and Ursula Brown.  
Entry fee is £6 (£5 for concessions) per class.

Friday Feet is intended specifically for complete beginners and those new to international folk dancing and is an officially recognised SIFD beginners' class. It provides a route into the other SIFD groups and classes and the social dances. In practice, some experienced dancers frequently attend because they enjoy the relaxed pace at the end of the week.

An important feature of Friday Feet is that it is a 'drop-in' class. Nobody has to commit themselves to attending regularly. The programme for each evening is decided upon ad hoc, depending on the experience and interests of those present.

### ***Teacher Training***

The recognition of teachers is the responsibility of the Committee. Teacher training courses are run irregularly and are organised when a sufficient number of people have expressed an interest. If **you** are interested in training or assessment as a teacher please write to the Secretary or email [mail@sifd.org](mailto:mail@sifd.org).

### ***Support for Group and Member Ventures and Projects***

The Society is always keen to support its groups and members in ventures and projects furthering the cause of International Folk Dance and Music. Details are summarised as follows:

#### **Helping New Groups get started**

It is recognised that the initial costs of setting up a new group and the running costs during the period in which a group becomes established can be prohibitive. A scheme has been set up under which, as appropriate, the SIFD offers assistance to a member setting up a group. The assistance can include a hall hire subsidy, contribution to publicity costs, 10 hours free teaching, insurance benefits, and advice.

#### **Events and Activities Underwriting Policy**

This Policy allows the Society to underwrite an event or activity, or provide a subsidy, if the event or activity is in furtherance of the Society's objectives as set out in the Constitution, **and** if in the absence of financial support the event or activity might not take place, would not take place, or would be substantially less effective.

### The Frank Flanagan Bursary Scheme

Part of the bequest left to SIFD by Frank Flanagan has been used to establish a bursary fund to make awards to members. The object of the awards is to provide financial support for the attendance of SIFD Teachers and potential teachers and leaders at appropriate training events and courses, with resultant benefit to the Society.

### SIFD Weekends

Money in the Frank Flanagan Fund can be used to financially underwrite Weekends, which it is intended should include teaching sessions, as well as social dancing.

Please contact the SIFD Committee for more details. All applications are considered on their merits and taking account of the foreseen benefit to the Society's objectives in relation to the amount of money sought and the state of the Society's finances at the time.

In addition, SIFD Equipment and Costumes may be borrowed by groups and members, and details about Insurance cover for groups under the SIFD policy are referred to elsewhere in the booklet.



## Products and Publications

### *The SIFD News*

This is your magazine; you can send in anything you think would interest other members. If you are a new member we would like to hear how you got involved with International Folk Dance. We would also like to learn details of new groups, and also, of course, news about established groups.

You can tell us which country or countries you specialise in, whether you do displays, and even send photos of your group members (especially if they are in costume) – with approval of course. Pictures are welcome – pictures, photos and cover designs that enhance our understanding of dances from around the world. Cover designs should be A5 size and if you include the name of the month please check with the Editor first that your chosen month is free.

In the pages of the News you may find music which has been transcribed by our musicians and notes about dances. Specialist teachers may share their wisdom with us: hints on style, costume, history etc. but you do not need to be a specialist teacher to share your observations with us.

There is a popular Diary Dates section in the News where details of forthcoming special events can be publicised. Details of festivals, international dance holidays, weekends and courses are also shared. We often have articles in the News which review festivals and dance courses; some are very informative and detailed, others simply write a letter expressing their enjoyment (or otherwise!).

Our Committee also keeps us in touch with administrative affairs through the medium of the News. It is our main method of communication; hopefully you will find it interesting and informative. It keeps us all in touch with our shared interest – international folk dancing.

The News is sent every month to members and Affiliated Groups. As it arrives at the beginning of every month it is necessary to have a deadline for submissions - usually the 18th day of the previous month.

Your copy can be sent by email, an option chosen when you renew your membership fee.

The editor is Janet Douglas, Oak Cottage, 92 Rose Green Road, Bognor Regis, West Sussex, PO21 3EQ and the email address is - **SIFDNews@hotmail.co.uk**

### ***Music Products – Books and CDs***

The Society produces a range of music products which feature dances from many countries. All the books include the printed music (except for the book of French Dances, number 6) and full instructions for each dance. The music is made available on the accompanying CD.

CD1 (the dances are described in books 1 and 4), CD2 (the dances are described in books 2 and 3), and CD7 contain a mixture of dances from many countries, while CD5 is exclusively dances from Israel. CD6 features nineteen French dances – mostly from the Berry region in central France. The music to accompany this book was recorded by a band specialising in French music with vielles and bagpipes.

“Dancing into Europe” (CD3) was produced especially for use in primary schools; the eleven dances from eleven countries are suitable for young children. The book contains much additional material - a calendar of European customs, and pictures of costumes from each country, to colour and cut out. This is the only book and CD to be accompanied by a DVD.

CD9 celebrated the Society’s Golden Jubilee in 1996 – “Fifty Dancing Years”. It features 17 dances from 14 countries, reflecting the growing repertoire of the Society.

CD10, the latest release, expands the output still further with 26 dances on a double CD.

Full details of the contents of each book and CD (also lists of all recorded dances shown alphabetically **and** by country) and an order form can be seen on the website ([www.sifd.org](http://www.sifd.org) – go to the first item in the SIFD Shop) or can be obtained by phoning 020 8395 1400.

A book – “The *Sardana* - how to dance it” by Brian Bishop – is a comprehensive account of this classic Catalan dance. The book covers its background, music, etiquette and rules, as well as providing copious instructions, illustrations on how it is danced and web references. Three methods are included to help with working out the ‘counting’ needed, to ensure the dance is always ended in the correct way.

The price of all these items is very reasonable, and SIFD members are eligible for a discount on one copy of each item.

### ***The Wilf Horrocks Collection***

The sheet music collection of the late Wilf Horrocks was given to the Society. Some of the collection was in handwritten form and very fragile, but the whole collection has been indexed and digitised, to preserve it and make it a real asset for bands and musicians in a most convenient form.

### ***The Digital Archive Memory Stick Project***

With the invaluable assistance of Ron Wilks all the SIFD’s music recordings, music notations, dance instructions, the Wilf Horrocks Collection of sheet music, videos of teaching at Daycourses and Summer Schools and much more material is available on a memory stick for members to purchase.

All these products are available by using the online order form or phoning 020 8395 1400.

### ***The SIFD Shop***

The shop was first started in 1987 by the late Kay Kedge and taken over by Claire Steeley in March 1994. Claire created a wide range of shoe bags, shopping bags, notelets and organised specially printed T-shirts, sweat shirts, polo shirts, tea towels and mugs, using designs drawn by our very artistic members. New designs were created for special events such as our 50<sup>th</sup> and 60<sup>th</sup> anniversaries.

The latest T-shirt design has almost sold out – ideas for a new one would be most welcome.

Society members have also been most generous over the years with their donations to the shop which were then sold at events to raise a welcome income for the Society.

Unfortunately Claire had to give up the shop due to health problems and, at the time of going to press, no one has offered to take it over, though a few items are offered for sale on the website, under “Resources”>”Merchandise”.

### ***Publicity***

Publicity is created and distributed by a small team of volunteers, aiming to publicise events and the Society as widely as we can. We would be grateful if individual members could also help to spread information about events, and the Society generally, whenever they can.

The **SIFD News** reaches SIFD members, and members of groups if the leader/another member takes their copy of the News to show non-members.

The **website** reaches anyone who looks for folk dance/international folk dance on the internet. Facebook is updated when new events are added. We also try to add information of any events run by other organisations that would be of interest to members.

We produce **cards and leaflets** for distribution at non-member events: a colourful card that gives the website address and a telephone number, an application form with the advantages of joining the Society, and a booklet listing all the groups & classes.

If you are going to a **festival** – please ask the publicity officer for a bundle of cards and leaflets to take with you.

Please send your events information to both Janet Douglas at [sifdnews@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sifdnews@hotmail.co.uk) for the News and to Dalila Heath, the Secretary, at [dalila.heath1@btopenworld.com](mailto:dalila.heath1@btopenworld.com) for the website.

### ***Branding***

Please feel free to use our **logo** on your class or event publicity (as long as that event matches the Society's aims). Please use the updated version (shown on the cover), and if you use it in colour, please stick to the recommended colour scheme. Versions are available to download from the website.

We do as much as we can but could do more with a bit of help: If you think of any **new ideas** – please contact us.

We are building a collection of **photos** for publicity purposes and know how very difficult it can be to get good action shots of dancers - but please send good quality digital pictures to [mail@sifd.org](mailto:mail@sifd.org).

### ***List of SIFD Teachers***

The purpose of the Teachers List is to provide up-to-date information on all SIFD-recognised teachers. The listed teachers either hold SIFD, or equivalent, teaching qualifications, or are recognised by the SIFD as suitably experienced or specialist teachers. Some of them feel they can no longer teach but are valued as consultants and advisors. Other teachers are also listed as useful contacts. At present there are over 40 teachers on the list.

Many teachers specialise in dances from one or more countries, so they are also listed by country. It is impressive to see how many areas are covered.

The list is updated annually. The new list is automatically sent to each Associated and Affiliated Group and Class with their membership renewal notice in July, so they may take advantage of the “Free Teachers to Groups” scheme. Under this scheme, the SIFD will reimburse fees when a recognised teacher is booked, whilst funds permit. Details of how to book a teacher are on the front page of the list.

A copy of the list is available on the website, or by phoning 020 8395 1400 or emailing [mail@sifd.org](mailto:mail@sifd.org).

Payments to teachers under this scheme are intended to be in line with prevailing rates and are reviewed regularly by the executive Committee.

It is always good to hear of ‘new’ teachers. If you attend an event and are impressed by the teacher, please tell us! Send the information to [mail@sifd.org](mailto:mail@sifd.org).

### ***Website***

The website address is [www.sifd.org](http://www.sifd.org).

Here you can find out about events and teachers and groups and details of classes – particularly useful if you are visiting another part of the country.

The 'Home' page lists events which are coming up in the next two weeks, while the 'What's On' page lists all the future events of which we are aware.

The Groups page shows all Associated and Affiliated Groups, arranged by region with links to individual web sites and email addresses if applicable. There is also a membership form, and the obligatory ‘Links’ page. Information on holidays and other news items can be found in 'News and Announcements' – a section which should grow larger with time.

If you would like your event or news listed, please contact [mail@sifd.org](mailto:mail@sifd.org). The structure of the site is always evolving, so why not have a look next time you are browsing?

### ***Photograph Album***

A two-volume photo album was compiled to commemorate the Millennium, which attempted to show everyone who was a member of the Society in the year 2000. Most of the photos were actually taken in 2000.

Almost all the Associated and Affiliated Groups of the SIFD are represented, and many of the individual members who might not otherwise appear in group photographs.

Several much older photos were also included, which extended into a third album, showing past members who played an important role in the establishment of the Society. If you would like to borrow these albums please email: [mail@sifd.org](mailto:mail@sifd.org)

# Festivals

## *General*

There are many annual Folk Dance Festivals advertised. Not all of them include International Folk Dancing; here are some that do.

If you wish to join in, you could try May Heydays, in Evesham (formerly the Eastbourne International Folk Festival). Also worth visiting are Great Alne Long Weekend held in April ([www.greatalnefolk.org.uk](http://www.greatalnefolk.org.uk)) and Billingham International Folklore Festival held in July/August, ([www.billinghamfestival.co.uk](http://www.billinghamfestival.co.uk)). The Builth Wells Dance Festival in May has been absorbed into the Royal Welsh Spring Festival ([www.rwas.co.uk](http://www.rwas.co.uk)).

For opportunities to watch performances, the Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod (July, [www.international-eisteddfod.co.uk](http://www.international-eisteddfod.co.uk)) is excellent, as is the Alnwick International Music Festival (July/August, [www.alnwickmusicfestival.com](http://www.alnwickmusicfestival.com)).

Dance Around the World at Cecil Sharp House (October/November, [www.datw.org.uk](http://www.datw.org.uk)) provides a non-stop weekend programme of displays and workshops from all parts of the world.

## *Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod*

The first Eisteddfod was held in 1947 on the premise that nations meeting together to celebrate with song and dance would bring a more peaceful world. It has grown into a most exciting festival, featuring many of the best competitive groups, excelling in dance, song and music, from all over the world.

It is always held in the first week of July, and well worth a visit. For more information on the next Eisteddfod, visit —[www.international-eisteddfod.co.uk](http://www.international-eisteddfod.co.uk).

The SIFD has had links with the event from the start; Lucile Armstrong (a keen early member of the Society) was a dance adjudicator there for years, and in her memory the Society donates a sum every year towards the prize money. Frances Horrocks and



Narendra Kotiyan from the SIFD have also adjudicated at the Folk Dance Competition.

### ***Victoria Embankment Gardens***

For many years SIFD groups booked a Saturday or Sunday during the summer, to perform on the Victoria Embankment Gardens stage for the general public. Some groups performed with others – some alone.

This continued successfully for years, until the original instigator died, and the impetus to perform there was gradually lost.

One or two groups still keep this tradition alive, and if you fancy joining them, you would be most welcome. Please contact [mail@sifd.org](mailto:mail@sifd.org) for details.

# **Background, Administration and Legal matters**

## ***A Brief General Background***

The SIFD was founded in 1946 in London.

It was an unincorporated association governed by a Constitution, but in 2020 it converted to a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation.) Under its Constitution a Committee is elected annually to run the SIFD. The Committee meets throughout the year and an AGM is held annually.

The SIFD is a Registered Charity (number 1189141). The SIFD has no physical office and operates on a 100% voluntary basis from members' homes.

The SIFD has grown from its small beginnings and currently has about 300 individual members in the UK and overseas, and over 80 Affiliated and Associated Groups all over the UK. It has an autonomous Branch in the West Midlands.

Over the years the SIFD has participated in Festivals around the country and given performances at events at the Royal Albert Hall in London and other venues.

## ***Affiliations***

Currently the Society is affiliated to, and has close links with, the English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS) and the Society of Folk Dance Historians, in the USA. It is also a member of One Dance UK.

## ***Constitution***

A copy of the Constitution can be obtained from the Secretary or downloaded from the Society's website ([www.sifd.org](http://www.sifd.org)).

### ***Child and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy***

The SIFD has a specific responsibility for the protection of children and vulnerable adults who take part in activities associated with its classes and projects. SIFD gives special consideration to all applications for association and affiliation from groups and group leaders who may be expected to work principally with children and young people.

The SIFD has assessed the potential risks to children and vulnerable adults who are involved in SIFD activities and has developed a policy for child protection. SIFD has identified four broad categories of potential risk to children:

- (1) Harm caused to children through inadequate supervision and/or instructions at SIFD classes and events.
- (2) Harm caused to children by the deliberate course of action of an adult at SIFD classes and events.
- (3) Harm caused to children lost at SIFD classes and events.
- (4) The Disclosure by a child at an SIFD class or event of harm he or she has sustained elsewhere

In the light of this assessment, SIFD recommends several measures for good practice in child protection and issues these recommendations to group leaders and accredited teachers. The policy is reviewed annually.

SIFD welcomes opportunities to consult and discuss widely on developments in good practice. Members with questions or concerns about child protection should contact the secretary for further information.

### ***DBS Checks***

To keep abreast of child protection regulations, any individual working regularly with children or vulnerable adults in an SIFD class must have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate. A certificate held for another organisation (e.g. a school) is also valid for an SIFD group or class.

The new Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, which came effect in 2013, put the onus of a disclosure on the individual rather than the employer, and the SIFD will attempt to keep members advised of the changes as and when they occur.

Anyone who wants a certificate now applies directly to:

<https://www.gov.uk/request-copy-criminal-record>

### ***Data Protection Act***

The SIFD has registered for a Licence under the Data Protection Act.

### ***Finance***

The SIFD is funded by its subscription income, supplemented by the invested capital. Under the Gift Aid legislation, the SIFD is able to make a claim in respect of subscription income and all qualifying members are encouraged to support the SIFD by completing a Gift Aid Declaration.

Income is used to finance day-to-day running costs, and activities and projects which promote the Society and its objectives. All activities are expected to be self-financing where this is appropriate and feasible. The financial position of the SIFD is monitored on a regular basis.

The SIFD has occasionally received legacies and major donations. Money from these sources is generally held in a specially designated Legacy and Major Donations Fund. This Fund has not been used for general purposes, and is used to make small grants to support members and groups in ventures which the Society considers to be in its interests and which would otherwise prove a financial burden to the member/group. A substantial legacy was received in 2010 under the will of the late Frank Flanagan. This is held in a separately designated Fund and is to be used to support ventures in the interests of the Society. Application for a grant from either Fund (see Support for Group and Member Ventures and Projects) should be made to the Committee, with full details. Each case is considered on its own merits.

In the Lucile Armstrong Memorial Fund the Society holds money gifted in memory of a former member. A donation in Lucile Armstrong's memory is made annually from the Fund towards prize money at the Llangollen International Eisteddfod, at which she was for many years a judge in the Folk Dance Competition.

### ***Insurance***

The SIFD's insurance cover can be extended to include groups, clubs and classes officially Affiliated to or Associated with the Society. Considerable savings are available to groups and classes under this arrangement; independently arranged cover will almost always be more expensive and minimum premiums often apply.

We can obtain quotations and arrange cover for any group once its status as Affiliated or Associated has been approved by the SIFD committee. Application to become Affiliated or Associated should be made via the Membership Secretary.

The cover provided is for All Risks anywhere in the United Kingdom, excluding losses from unattended vehicles, unless the vehicle is a locked building. However, there is a £100 excess on any claim. The policy renewal date is 4th October each year and premiums for new clubs are calculated on a strictly pro rata basis from the day the club is added to the policy.

The insurers can include all the club's equipment on the policy. If the club owns costumes or any other equipment, including audio equipment, it should all be insured. How many clubs could afford to replace lost equipment?

Under the present arrangements classes and groups which have Associated status (only available to groups and classes with an SIFD recognised teacher) have their Public Liability insurance premiums paid by the Society. However, future financial constraints or regimes could mean that these clubs may be asked to pay for this cover (not an expensive proposition) in the future.

Affiliated clubs can ask to be included provided they have paid the insurance premium requested by the SIFD on the club's behalf.

The cover on the SIFD's policy extends to include all the club's activities, provided they are in pursuit of the aims of the SIFD as outlined in the Constitution. The cover is for the club's legal liability for damage to third party property or injury to, or death of, a third party. The limit of indemnity is £5,000,000. The policy extends to include negligent damage to leased or rented premises and any claims arising out of food poisoning; and also, for clubs dancing in Europe, but would exclude any cover the clubs' individual members who normally get under the household or travel insurance. We understand that similar cover arranged through a local broker would attract a minimum premium of at least £100 and this would probably be for only a £1,000,000 limit of indemnity. A higher premium still would be required to match the limit on the SIFD policy. In recent years the SIFD was charging Affiliated Clubs in the region of only £50, (or slightly higher for festival style if festival style events are held, depending on attendance numbers).

If a club meets in a rented hall, the hall owner or local authority normally insists on adequate Public Liability insurance with, usually, a minimum limit of indemnity of £2,000,000.

Please note that, under FCA regulations, SIFD itself cannot give any advice on Insurance matters. We have to pass queries to our brokers and convey their response. All premiums due will be payable to SIFD.

### ***Bringing in Teachers From Abroad***

At the time of writing we are unable to give more than very general advice on the visa requirements etc for this, following the UK's departure from the EU. We recommend that specific enquiries be made regarding regulations in each case. We would be interested to hear about groups' experience in this matter in due course, so that we can offer guidance to other groups as appropriate.

# Membership Structure and Subscription Rates

## *Individual Membership*

The Society's year runs from 1st September to 31st August. Membership renewal forms are distributed with the July SIFD News and should be returned, or renewal made electronically as appropriate, by the *end of August*.

Acknowledgement is in the form of a membership card which is sent out with the issue of the SIFD News following renewal.

Current Individual Membership fees (at the time of this revision of the Handbook) are as below. Rates are lower for those members receiving their SIFD News and official communications electronically.

<b>Individual Adult Membership</b>	<b>£</b>
- by post	20.00
- electronically	13.00
<b>Young Adult Membership (18-25)</b>	
- by post	9.00
- electronically	7.00
<b>Junior Member (under 18)</b>	
- by post	7.00
- electronically	5.00

## *Family Membership*

*Family Membership is available where two or more persons live at the same address and only receive one copy of publications and notices*

<b>Applicant and One Other Family Member</b>	
- by post	24.00
- electronically	17.00
<b>Additional Adult Family Members</b>	4.00
<b>Additional Junior Members (under 18)</b>	2.00

### ***Life Membership***

- by post 240.00
- electronically 156.00

*Life Membership requires the specific approval of the Committee and can usually only be applied for after two years continuous membership.*

A membership application form can be found on the SIFD website. Members are asked to pay subscriptions electronically if they can do so.

### ***Honorary Membership***

By the passing of an appropriate motion at an Annual General Meeting, Honorary Membership can be conferred on individuals who have made an outstanding commitment or contribution to the Society. Honorary Membership must first be proposed by six members who have each belonged to the Society for five consecutive years.

### ***Overseas Members***

Overseas members pay the same subscription rates as UK members but are asked to pay their subscriptions by BACS or by using PayPal. (If using PayPal please add £1 to cover PayPal's charges). All subscriptions can be paid by electronic transfer. Overseas members who want their SIFD News sent by airmail are asked to add £10.00 to their subscription to cover the extra postage.

### ***Gift Aid***

Individual members who are UK taxpayers are encouraged to Gift Aid their subscriptions.

### ***Group Membership - Affiliation and Association***

The Constitution of the Society allows for two ways in which a group or class may officially belong to the SIFD.



With the approval of the Committee an organisation may become an **‘Affiliated Group’** at an annual subscription of £40 if they intend to take advantage of between 0 and 5 hours of subsidised teaching a year from a recognised SIFD teacher or teachers, or £60 if they wish to have up to 10 hours of subsidised teaching.

This provision of subsidised teaching is known as the “free-to-groups” scheme. An updated Teachers List is circulated to Affiliated groups upon renewal. The annual subscription for an Affiliated Music Group is £29.00. Affiliated groups receive two copies of the SIFD News and are listed in the Society’s publicity leaflets and on the website. An Affiliated Group may appoint a delegate to represent it at an SIFD General Meeting and have one vote. (The rates given above are as current at the time of this revision of the Handbook).

A class or group which is led or taught by an SIFD recognised teacher may apply for **‘Associated Class’** status. There is no subscription payable by such classes but they are listed in all publicity, receive assistance with visiting teachers (for up to 5 hours per SIFD membership year) and, on request, receive two copies of the News.

### ***Membership Records***

Membership records are kept on a secure simple computer database and the following information is held for each member:

Style (Mr, Mrs, Ms etc.), Name, Forename(s) or Initial(s), Membership Number, Membership Class, Postal Address, Telephone Number (where supplied), Mobile Number (where supplied), Email Address (where supplied) and a Label Code (to assist in the SIFD News distribution). This information is treated as strictly confidential and is only used for legitimate SIFD purposes such as the distribution of the News and official notices, and only retained as required for membership, and accounting purposes.

Change of address or other changes should be sent to the Membership Secretary as soon as possible.

## Other Topics

### *Audio Equipment*

The Society's audio equipment is primarily for use at the Society's own events, but when not required for those it is available to borrow (for an appropriate donation) by members of Associated or Affiliated Groups, subject to suitable arrangements for collecting and returning it. It is usually kept in a locked store cupboard in Cecil Sharp House in London.

The main set of equipment includes:

- a 12-channel mixing desk with a variety of outputs (12 mono plus 4 stereo input pairs)
- a 2-channel power amplifier and a pair of speakers, which can deliver ample volume for dancing in a large hall, though not the high sound levels favoured by some people
- speaker stands
- seven microphones (5 condenser plus 2 dynamic)
- microphone stands, most of them with boom arms
- a UHF radio microphone for use by a teacher or MC wishing to be amplified while moving around the floor (2-channel, one headset/lapel mic plus one or two handheld)
- a cassette player
- all the necessary leads

There is also a Compact-Disc player (ghetto-blaster) which can be used with the above system, or users can provide their own CD or Minidisk player, but, if doing so, should check in advance what connecting leads are needed. Leads for phono or 3.5mm jack provided, suitable for iPods and MP3 players.

There is also an 'equaliser' box which can be connected between the mixing desk (or other signal source) and the power amplifier to compensate for the characteristics of the speakers, but in practice we find that this makes little difference with most of our music (live or recorded), so we seldom bother to use it.

We currently do not have additional monitoring speakers for use by the musicians (although the mixer can provide aux signals for your own powered speakers).

Instruction on operating the mixing desk can be arranged if sufficient notice is given.

There is a subsidiary set of equipment for use in a smaller hall if live music amplification is not required. It consists of:

- a ghetto-blaster-style player for CDs , with a remote control and adjustable speed.
- a Walkman-sized cassette player, also with adjustable speed, for connection to the CD player.
- CD player

The CD player also has a microphone input for use by the MC/caller/teacher if required, but in practice we find that this facility is seldom used.

Contacts:

Caspar Cronk (primary) - [caspar.cronk@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:caspar.cronk@blueyonder.co.uk)

Richard Mellish - [richard@mellish.uk](mailto:richard@mellish.uk)

Dave Wedd - [dave.wedd@wrgbitm.org.uk](mailto:dave.wedd@wrgbitm.org.uk)

### ***Costumes***

Costumes are probably the Society's most valuable assets, not merely in terms of their monetary value, but also for the richness and colour they bring to our displays, and the inspiration they give to the dancers. The collection is growing all the time, and the costumes can be borrowed by members and Associated and Affiliated Groups. The West Midlands Branch of the Society also has costumes which may be borrowed.

Borrowers are responsible for collecting costumes from, and returning them to, either Harrow (North West London), where they are stored, or an agreed SIFD event.

Any washable items should be washed before they are returned, but please check beforehand as the colours of some fabrics and embroideries may run.

Many of the costumes are originals, and in some cases are irreplaceable and valuable. They, especially, should be treated with great care, and all costumes should be completely checked before return to make sure no items are missing.

Some countries are better represented than other. There are several costumes, both men's and women's, from Austria, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Russia, Sweden and Switzerland. There might be only a few costumes, or just a single example, from other countries, but they all amount to a splendid collection.

New items are added whenever possible, so the collection often changes. For an up-to-date list of all the costume items held in the collection, and to borrow any of them please contact:

Janet Woolbar

- by email at [janw@mellish.uk](mailto:janw@mellish.uk)
- or by post at 34a Prestwood Avenue, Kenton, Harrow, HA3 8JZ

### ***Health and Safety***

The guidelines below are a summarised version of those supplied by Sutton College. It is recommended that all clubs and groups give copies to their members.

#### ***Health and Safety Guidelines for Dance***

##### **General**

- Inform teacher of any medical conditions which might be aggravated by exercise
- Wear appropriate footwear and clothing
- Arrive in time
- Be considerate to other people's dance space
- Keep personal effects out of the way
- Familiarise yourself with emergency procedures
- If you feel pain or strain, stop and inform tutor.

Always ...

- Start slowly and progress gradually with any dance class
- Warm up at the start of every class
- Exercise regularly
- Be aware of your physical limitations
- Listen to your body – if you feel faint or dizzy, inform your tutor
- Bring bottled water and drink regularly to avoid dehydration
- Listen to the tutor and follow his or her instructions
- Ask for clarification if required
- Cool down and stretch at the end of every class
- Leave the area clean and tidy.

Never...

- Exercise within one hour of eating a meal
- Hold your breath whilst performing exercise
- Hyperventilate during exercise or at rest
- Sacrifice good exercise technique when performing a skill
- Exercise if you are feeling unwell or have an injury
- Stretch your muscles beyond the point of comfort
- Distract other class members while they are working

Finally...

- Be safety conscious at all times

### ***PPL – Phonographic Performances Limited***

Our advice given a number of years ago follows below:

- PPL occasionally contacts dance classes, clubs and groups, requesting payment of a fee for the use\* of recorded music as part of the group’s activities. As most dancing groups run on a small budget, this money can be hard to find, and an inability to pay has sadly forced some groups to close.
- Fortunately, one of the Society’s members has undertaken considerable research into this topic. We would pass on his advice to investigate the situation thoroughly before paying – there are occasions when a group can claim exemption.
- Start by investigating Clause 67 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act (which can be found by searching for “Copyright, Designs and Patents” on the Internet). This clearly states the

conditions under which a group may claim exemption. If these conditions apply, then it is worth also reading the experiences of other groups before replying to PPL.

- The member's experiences and notes can be obtained by contacting the Secretary for more information.
- The Committee is very concerned about the problem posed by PPL and will be monitoring the representations that it understands the SRA will be making on behalf of member clubs and organisations such as ourselves.
- It is hall owners/hirers-out who must obtain a licence. However the SIFD has come across hall owners/hirers-out requiring a contribution towards this from the hall user.
- As mentioned above, the Government website states that you do not need a licence to play royalty-free music, and of course SIFD does not collect royalties on its copyrighted recordings. However we anticipate that it probably does not follow that the licence requirements can be "tailored" to individual groups' circumstances, because the system may well not be set up to accommodate small scale one-off variations.

The above advice still stands, but we can now add that

- PPL and PRS have joined forces and issue "TheMusicLicence".
- the Gov.UK website advising that a licence is usually required to play live or recorded music specifically states that a licence is not needed to play royalty-free music.

\* NB This is not the same issue as making copies of recorded music where copyright has to be observed.

### ***Live Music***

There are many bands who play live music for International Folk Dances, and there is no doubt that dancing to live music is more enjoyable than dancing to recorded music.

Here are some examples, all of whom would be pleased to be asked to play:

**SIFD Band** – led by Phil Steventon

- [philip.steventon@btinternet.com](mailto:philip.steventon@btinternet.com)

**Cloudburst** – led by Martin Butler

- [cloudburstfolkdanceband@gmail.com](mailto:cloudburstfolkdanceband@gmail.com)

**Dunav Balkan Group** – led by Caroline Thomas

- [www.dunav.org.uk/](http://www.dunav.org.uk/)

**Maggie's Mix** – led by Maggie Kaye

- [margaretkaye@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:margaretkaye@blueyonder.co.uk)

Various **Scandi bands**

**Clyde Olliver and Mike Machin**

- [clyde.olliver@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:clyde.olliver@hotmail.co.uk)

### *The SIFD Archives*

Dalila Heath now organises storage of the Archives. They include many official papers, records and items from the Society's past, as well as books and periodicals associated with folk dance and costume.

There is an almost-complete set of the SIFD News from 1958, Committee minutes covering many years, early photos from the 40s and 50s, with programmes of early SIFD events, and those the Society took part in.

There are books on folk costume, embroidery and printed music.

Information can be requested by contacting [mail@sifd.org](mailto:mail@sifd.org).

Although it is not currently possible to visit the archive collection, items may be made available for inspection by arrangement. And if you have something you feel belongs in the archives, we would be pleased to hear from you.

### *Slippery Floors*

Slippery floors can be made less slippery, if appropriate, (some dances *require* a slippery floor), by the application of a very fine white powder. But always ask permission of the hall owner before using it.

An alternative to the now discontinued Slip Stop is available from:  
[www.supadance.com](http://www.supadance.com).

Click on *Shop Online*, then the *Shoe Care* section and select **Anti-slip powder**. It is a very fine white powder which should be sprinkled sparingly on a floor or shoes, and which soon becomes invisible.

### ***West Midlands Branch***

Although there had been classes in Birmingham in the 1960s, International Folk Dancing really took off in the Midlands when Sybil Chapman launched the SELPAR Group in Selly Park, Birmingham in 1973. Five years later a second group was started in the Solihull area, which later became known as the HEART OF ENGLAND Group. In October 1979 these two groups formed the West Midlands Branch of the SIFD and they were joined in 1984 by ARDEN Group, led by Grace Pittman. As the first (and to date only) SIFD Branch, these three groups flourished for 30 years, but sadly, in 2005, Arden closed. In spite of failing health, Grace continued to dance and occasionally teach at the Heart of England group, until her death in early 2017.

Apart from the weekly group meetings, the West Midlands Branch also organises occasional workshops, day courses and dances, although these have become much less regular than in the past – gone are the days of annual Cotswold Safaris and Christmas and New Year dances! Demonstrations in costume are also sadly a diminishing part of our activities these days, largely due to increasing age, conflicting commitments and also the demise of the West Midlands Movement and Dance Association, which for many years organised a biennial Festival in Leamington Spa, at which we usually presented two International items, our costumes and different music always proving an added attraction at these shows.



Every two years or so we are still holding a weekend away with a visiting teacher to lead the dancing. Past venues included the Royal Agricultural College at Cirencester and The Paddocks Hotel at Symonds Yat, near Ross-on-Wye, but our favourite since our first visit there in 2007 is Willersley Castle at Cromford, near Matlock in Derbyshire, which has now become our regular venue. It is a beautiful building with a good size room for dancing (made somewhat more interesting by the offset pillar!) and pleasant areas for visits and walking in the free time between the dancing. These weekends are always very popular, attracting old and new Midlands' members and dancing friends from as far afield as Scotland, Kent and Pembrokeshire.

The other annual Midlands weekend event in our calendar is the Great Alne Long Weekend, held each year towards the end of April near Alcester in Worcestershire. This is organised by André Hobro, usually with a visiting International dance teacher from Holland and a wide range of folk dance and music workshops, evening dances, walking, cycling and other activities throughout the weekend.

The West Midlands Branch has quite a large wardrobe of costumes from many countries housed by Maggie Kaye. There are particularly good sets of Romanian and Russian costumes, plus Israeli, other Balkan, French, Czech, Hungarian etc. As we are now rarely using them for demonstrations, they are available on loan to individual members in the area and can also be borrowed by other groups by arrangement. I'd be happy to consider donating some of them to groups, who still 'dance out' frequently and would get more use out of them than we now do. Please contact me if you are interested.

International dancing is still flourishing in the West Midlands and we always welcome new members and visitors to our groups and events.

## ***The Beginning***

It seems appropriate to end with a fascinating letter about the origins of the SIFD, which was sent to the Secretary in June 2000 by Frances Brown, whose membership number is 2.

*“I don’t know whether or not you know that the SIFD started in mid-1944 from a group at the International Youth Centre in Pont Street, Chelsea, which Nat Brown, here with the U.S. Air Force (later my husband) pressed me to start.*

*He was a very keen folk dancer – an ace at the Hambo – he was part Swedish – and taught me many dances which he’d learnt from Michael and Mary Herman’s group in New York. I already knew the Hambo and found that I could teach it.*

*We met at the Youth Centre every Sunday (flying bombs or no) and soon had a very enthusiastic group going.*

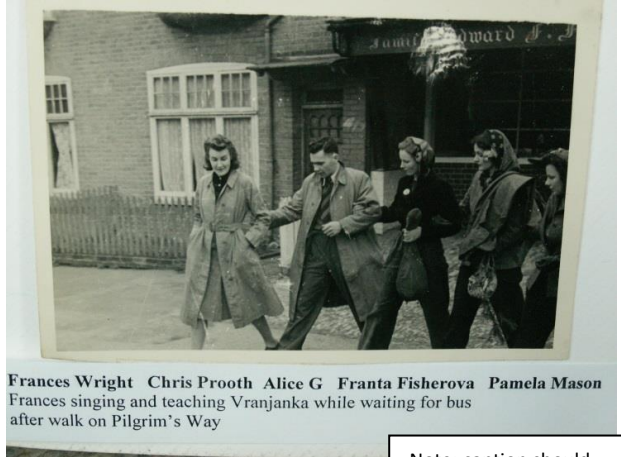
*We were often asked by other youth clubs to show and teach our dances, and at one of these in Paddington met Douglas and Helen Kennedy, whom I already knew. They were so impressed with our dancing that they invited us to demonstrate at a Member’s Night, and then offered the use of the present Kennedy room, free, for monthly dances. That is how you are still able to use it.*

*Of course during war-time we could only enlarge our repertoire if there were people here from other countries. One of our earliest enthusiastic recruits was Shalom Weiskopf (later Hermon) who taught us Palestinian Polka and Waltz. He later became chief instructor and inspector for PE and dance in schools for the whole of Israel, inspired, as he told us later, by our group. He organised many festivals there.*

*He also organised the first Youth Hostel weekend at Kemsing in 1945. About 20 of us went on that weekend and we had a party for all comers at a local village hall and a walk along the Pilgrim’s Way. Shalom at that time was training to be an officer in the British Palestinian army.*

*Ken Clarke who had never before danced a step, was in our demonstration group and later became a teacher and organiser in the Midlands for the E.F.D.S.*

*Another source of dances was a class I went to in Leicester Square, where a visiting Yugoslav teacher taught us many Kolos including 2 versions of Vranjanka. Her husband was an officer in the Polish army and from him she had learnt many Polish dances – Kujawiak, Krakowiak etc. So all these I was able to teach to the group.*



Frances Wright Chris Prooth Alice G Franta Fisherova Pamela Mason  
Frances singing and teaching Vranjanka while waiting for bus  
after walk on Pilgrim's Way

Note: caption should  
say Frances Waight

*Tony Latham as a small boy was in my class at Manor School, Barking, and that is how his mother Margery became interested.*

*Philip Thornton also came a couple of times and taught some Balkan dances, and advised us.*

*I went to the U.S. as an exchange teacher and to marry Nat in 1946 just as the SIFD was formed breaking away from the International Youth Centre.*

*Sadly Nat died ten years ago but would be astonished to know what had developed from his wish to get people to understand some- thing of the culture of other countries so that maybe they wouldn't be so ready to fight each other! It hasn't worked out yet unfortunately!*



*At 89 my dancing days are over, but I remember well what great fun we had at Pont Street during those grim days. In the photos I can be seen teaching Vranjanka at the bus stop.*

*It's a nice picture of Kurt Eisinger; he was SIFD's first treasurer and gave me a membership card till 2000 – which it is now!!”*