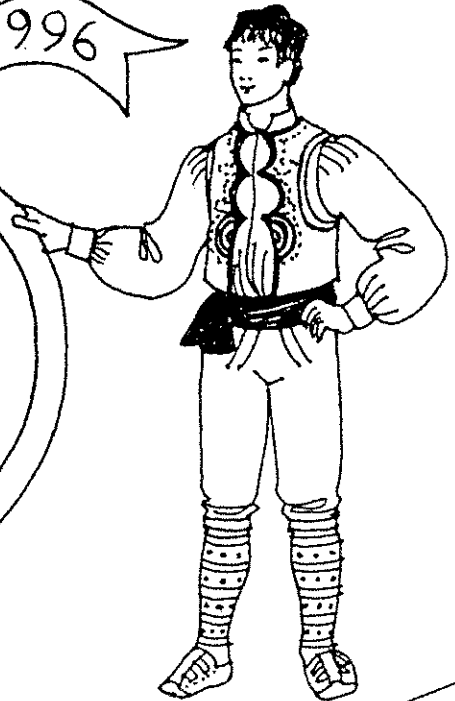


DECEMBER 1996



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GOLDEN

JUBILEE

SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING

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The typing is done by Lily Avery. The printing, packaging and posting
is done by Doug and Maureen Wells.

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This month's cover design was drawn by Lesley Boorer to round off
our Golden Jubilee year.

--oOo--

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A NOTE OF THANKS

It is time, once again, for me to record my grateful thanks for another year of hard work, co-operation and reliability from the very loyal team who ensure that the SIFD NEWS is delivered to every member each month. The October issue was a little later than usual and it is hiccups like this that make us realise how very lucky we are most of the time, in linking up the chain of people involved. People do have other commitments, and on this occasion the copier/printer was unable to fit in our job as promptly as he usually does - which tends to make us take things for granted. But Doug and Maureen Wells collected the NEWS as soon as it was ready and lost no time in getting it in the post to you. So, thank you very much, Doug and Maureen, for this and for the excellent job you do all the year round - folding, packaging, stamping and posting as well as coping with enclosures.

Other people to thank are Alan Morton, for making sure the address labels are ready and up to date with changes of addresses, new members etc.; Edwina and Michael Holdup for seeing that the labels are on the envelopes and ready in time.

Thank you also to those of you who have kept the NEWS going by contributing articles and items of interest. I shall need some new cover designs now that the Golden Jubilee Year is ending (thank you to Lesley Boorer for providing this month's variation). So, those of you who can draw, please keep me supplied!

LILY AVERY, Editor

I am not sending out Christmas cards this year, but wish all my friends and fellow-dancers a very happy Christmas.

LILY AVERY

EARLY (VERY!) MEMORIES

Frances Brown, a founder member of the S.I.F.D., sent us her thanks for a most enjoyable evening at the 50th celebration Dance, and also said she had bought a copy of the Society's "History". It prompted her to give us her memories of the incubation period of the Society, and as I felt current members might be interested I am sending them for inclusion in the SIFD NEWS - see below. (It helps if you have read the History).

GEORGE SWEETLAND

"Nat insisted, soon after I met him, that I should start a group at the I.Y.C. of which I was a member, and our first class was held on 7th May 1944, I having learnt a collection of dances from Nat. These I added to later from a Yugoslav teacher with a Polish husband.

The Directors of the Youth Centre only reluctantly agreed to the class as they said folk dancing had been tried before and was a flop. Our group became one of the most popular at the Centre, and we met every Sunday, flying bombs or not. We invited Philip Thornton to teach some dances in February 1945 and Shalom Weiskopf arranged the first weekend at Kemsing Youth Hostel in early April 1945. He subsequently, having changed his name to Hermon, became organiser of big festivals in Israel and inspector and instructor for folk dance and P.E. in Junior Schools for the whole of Israel - inspired, as he said later, by our group!

We were very frequently invited to demonstrate and teach some dances at other youth clubs, at one of which, in Paddington, Douglas and Helen Kennedy, with two top E.F.D.S.S. musicians, were to call American Square Dance. However, as the young people were so rowdy and Douglas did not have a microphone, he abandoned it. My group, however, would never be put off a chance to dance and we went ahead and danced our whole programme to whistles and catcalls etc. Douglas and Helen were impressed and invited us to show some dances at Cecil Sharp House at a members' evening! Our dancers were so thrilled at being able to dance in such a lovely hall, so Douglas invited us to use it once a month, free! (We probably made a contribution later). I directed our first monthly dance there on 22nd April 1945 and 90-100 people came.

I left for the States in July 1946, before the inaugural meeting of the S.I.F.D., which has certainly grown into an oak tree but from a very good little acorn which also gave pleasure to a lot of people.

Happy dancing,
Sincerely,

FRANCES BROWN"

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JOHN GILLIAM

Since moving to Lymington, John and Janice danced regularly with us. John was a keen folk-dancer and taught us a number of dances. He died dancing, an activity he much enjoyed. It was a shock to us all and he will be greatly missed. We send our heartfelt sympathy to Janice and family.

HURSLEY INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCERS

To all our many friends in S.I.F.D. Thank you for your cards and messages of sympathy and also the memories of John, which have been so precious to receive. John and I were so contented and thankful for our relationship and had had such a happy life together. We will miss him so much.

JANICE GILLIAM

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Lily,

Not only do I wish our Society well for the next 50 years, but I would like to send a most appreciative "Thank you" to all my friends in the S.I.F.D. who have sent me best wishes, and kept me up to date on what you've all been getting up to at the various celebrations. First Kay Kedge, who wrote and sent me a complimentary ticket, and then this week sent me a programme from the Jubilee Dance. I KNOW it was a huge success from all the comments I've heard, both by word of mouth and by letter. Then the cards I've had from others who were there, and then the lovely "composite" card from Wales, as I had to forgo Sue Clark's celebrations too. I can assure you all that I've recently raised more than one glass to "absent friends"! It seems there may be a need for further surgery in the near future, though I hope not.

However, now my apologies to all those who look after the Society's sales etc. I had a rather belated invitation to talk to teachers here in B'ham with regard to Dance in the National Curriculum....how that term strikes horror in the hearts of all teachers, past and present. Between them, Eleanor Gordon and Jeanette Hull have supplied me with a stack of useful material, so even if I have to return some of it, I hope I can show those who attend how much help the Society can be and, who knows, there may be a spin-off towards membership.

So you see, still alive, though not exactly "kicking"! My very best wishes to you all.

SYBIL CHAPMAN
20 Pelham Road, Droitwich,
Worcs. WR9 8NT

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The following is the text of a letter sent to Kay Kedge by Olive Newson, who used to produce shows at the Royal Albert Hall on behalf of the Central Council for Physical Recreation. As members of the C.C.P.R., the S.I.F.D. usually take part in these shows. Olive was unable to attend the Golden Jubilee Dance, and so we asked her to be our guest on Sunday, 3rd November, at Cecil Sharp House. After this event, she wrote:-

"Dear Kay,

Everyone was so kind and welcoming last evening that it would have been quite impossible not to have found total enjoyment in my re-union with S.I.F.D. members. Happy faces galore and able feet and bodies AND live music. Watching each and everyone was an inspiration - no showing off! no prinking and preening! simply like-minded folk sharing a common activity in a special way. As for those generous enough to help me to participate, albeit as a copier a slither behind all the time, well, extra thanks.

All success in all you do,

Sincerely,
OLIVE NEWSON"

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* IMPORTANT NOTICE: All material for the January issue of SIFD NEWS must be
* received by the Editor in writing by 11th December - earlier than usual, due
* to the Christmas holidays. Anything received after the 11th will have to
* wait until the February issue.
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ASIA, OR FAR-OFF-ISTAN?

In response to several people who have been intrigued by the title of the Easter Course with Jan Knoppers (see "Dates for your Diary"), Jan has sent me three pages of information on styles and sources, which I have translated, para-phrased and condensed into this article. Any mistakes are mine! (An atlas could be useful here).

Apart from the Billingham Festival courses, we have had very little opportunity to experience dances from the Eastern part of the world. Jan's wonderful Mongolian workshop in York gave us a glimpse of what exists, and Christine Hall's article in last month's SIFD NEWS, on the same area, is very timely.

The Dutch people have always had close links with the East and many colonies there, and they have traded for centuries along the "Silk Route" to China. We have had similar links with India and Pakistan, and in Britain we can see Bhangra dancing from the Punjab in N.India, but get little opportunity to actually try this extremely exuberant and energetic style.

Dances from Moluccas, often involving accessories such as fans and hankies, were sampled in a small way at Aberystwyth Summer School. The drum accompaniment gives the dancing a "swinging" feeling. Classic Balinese dances, as done at Court, cannot be done by us, Westerners, but the folk forms are easier, and the Gamelan orchestra is fascinating to hear and to dance to. Javanese dances seem similar, to the lay person, but there are more dance styles suitable for beginners, and the music is on the whole easier than the Balinese.

Chinese and Uigur dances from Sinkiang and Uigur provinces in N.W.China, along the "Silk Route" are fun, and often to amusing music. The dances of Mongolia are as diverse as this vast area. In the farthest N.E. of the former Soviet Union there are the dances of the Eskimo-type people, such as the Koryaks, whom some of us met at Billingham a few years ago. Their dances are based on the movements and sounds of animals and birds. The roots of High Mongolian dances go back to the days of Genghis Khan, with a gracious and courtly way of moving. Dances from W.Mongolia reflect the skill and elegance of a nomadic, horse-riding people. In Buryatia are found old circle dances which remind us of the well-known Balkan dances.

Further dances from along the "Silk Route" come from Tadjikistan and Uzbekistan. In spite of their modest character, these dances use hands and arms exuberantly. Both styles are related to the Chinese dances.

The Philippines is another area with an enormous variety of forms and styles, from the dances of the Indian and Muslim peoples to dances which undoubtedly show the influence of Spain and Portugal. There are also "country" dances such as the Tinikling with bamboo poles and dances with coconut shells. In Thailand there is also great variety and contrasting dance styles from folk dances similar to the Filipino ones to traditional national dances with arm and hand movements. Korean dance forms have controlled movements, and the accentuation in the music is perhaps not easy to acquire, but this is a fascinating and exciting style.

To this programme we could add repetition of some of the Japanese dances shown by the visitors to the Summer School, of Hula dances from Hawaii, modern hulas for men or women. They demand co-ordination and a very different movement vocabulary, but the music is lovely and very accessible, as some of us experienced at the Buxton course!

In Eastern styles, the dancer is primarily moving for him/herself, not for an audience, or to dance with others. The dancing is individualistic and personal.

A personal note: I hope that this brief overview will help to open people's eyes (and minds) and add something to their knowledge of Asian dancing, even if my readers have no intention of trying it for themselves. Up to now, the S.I.F.D. has only danced with half the world, even though "Dance With The World"

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is used on our promotional leaflets. I hope that by organizing this course I can help to redress the balance.

MARINA WOLSTENHOLME

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S.I.F.D. DAY COURSE - JANUARY (See also Simon's article below)

January's Course is something special - Breton, with Sybille Helmer. Breton dances have something for everyone, circles and lines but also couples and set dances, and lovely music, with a definite Celtic flavour. I do urge you all to come along, even die-hard Balkan enthusiasts! You can attend either day or, even better, both.

Date: 11/12th January 1997. Time: 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

Venue: Saturday, Trefusis, Cecil Sharp House, Regent's Park Road, London N.W.1.
Sunday, Studio 12, The Place, Flaxman Terrace, London W.C.1.

Cost: £10.00 members, £11.00 non-members (concessions available on request).

Numbers will be limited, so tickets will be available in advance from me at Flat 1, 317A Caledonian Road, London N1 1DR. Tel: 0171 609 7098. Cassettes and notes will be available.

As usual, there will be no S.I.F.D. Day Course in December.

MAGGIE O'REGAN

BRETON DANCING (See S.I.F.D. Day course, above)

Poised in the N.W. corner of France, thrusting out into the Atlantic, Brittany is not on the way to anywhere. For this reason, it has suffered fewer incursions in the past than most other parts of Europe and external influences have served only to modify and not replace the traditional, indigenous dances. With its very long coast line, rich hinterlands and some quite hilly inland areas, Brittany has a broad spectrum of dances and styles, kept alive today by many "cercles celtiques".

In his "Dances de Bretagne", Pierre Helias writes, "Looking at the gavottes, the passepieds, the 'bals' and the 'jabadaos', one rediscovers the "soul of the dance" which academicism lost many years ago". Coming down to earth we find the dances are definitely fun to do and possibly closer to the "roots" than many of the other dances in the Society's repertoire. They come in lines, couples and sets, fast and slow, and though often simple in concept they are by no means trivial, and getting them right can be very rewarding.

Pre-course reading: "Dances of France 1: Brittany and Bourbonnais" by Claudie Marcel-Dubois & Marie Andral. Max Parrish & Co. 1950

"Teaching Folk Dancing" (pp 61 et seq) by Audrey Bamba & Muriel Webster. B.T.Batsford Ltd. 1972.

SIMON GUEST

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CASSETTE TAPES

Members who use short tapes for teaching may be interested in the following source of supply: Short cassette tapes, low noise. Length C20, 10 minutes each side, available from Keith Orchard, 32 Myton Crescent, Warwick CV34 6QA. Tel: 01926 490897. £7.30 PER 10, £7.00 PER 10 FOR 50 OR MORE. Postage: £1.80 for 10, £3.60 for 20, £5.20 for 30/40/50, £6.70 for 100.

NEW S.I.F.D. BOOK AND CASSETTE - C9 "FIFTY DANCING YEARS"

The new S.I.F.D. book and cassette are available from Eleanor Gordon, 92 Norbiton Avenue, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey KT1 3QP. Price £10 for the book and tape together, £5 for either the book or the tape (members' discount 10%) plus £1.00 postage & packing. The tape contains new recordings made specially by seven bands, aiming for as authentic a sound as possible. In addition to dance notes and music, the book includes a note on the background to each dance and how it was introduced to the Society. The dances are:-

Targa Rehealune - Estonia
Makedonsko Bavno Oro - Macedonia
Skudrinka - Macedonia
Przodek - Poland
Eiswalzer - Austria
La Danza - Italy
Russian Lyrical Dance - Russia
Trip to Bavaria - Scotland
Kalamatianos - Greece

Tarantella Montevergine - Italy
Schottis - Sweden
En Allant aux Chataignes - Switzerland
Hora de la Risipiti - Romania
Shir Hachatuna - Israel
Salty Dog Rag - U.S.A.
Jota Tapatia - Mexico
Hambo med Vals fran Jarvso - Sweden

SUMMER SCHOOL

Work in preparation for the 1998 Summer School will start in earnest in January, so if you want to make any comments about venue or choice of teacher, please write to me as soon as possible so I can pass information to the organizer. At this stage we will welcome ideas or just statements of whether the location or the choice of teacher or country is the deciding factor. (If you wish to have your letter published in SIFD NEWS please send copies to me and to Lily. I shall need the information before the next SIFD NEWS is published).

JEANETTE HULL

Ed.Note: Letters will be published subject to space.

BEXHILL BULLETIN

Bexhill International Folkdance Group is now well into its fourth year, with a loyal following of dancers, supplemented by visitors/first-timers, who come and go (and sometimes stay). Our repertoire increases all the time, to give a wide variety of countries and degrees of difficulty, to suit everyone, including those who come to us with experience of English folk dancing, American Line dancing, Circle Dancing and Ballroom Sequence Dancing, and find International "something different". In fact, we were guests at a very enjoyable party last month (to celebrate the wedding of two of our members) which incorporated several different kinds of dancing (including an esoteric "Billabong Bourree(!)" from the Circle Dancers - eat your heart out, Simon & Joan!).

We also have variety in teaching, most of it by Heather Edwards and myself but with a welcome input from Rowena Martin, who runs groups in Eastbourne, and from Jack Carter, who dances with an English group.

Now that we seem to have a firm footing(!) we have applied for and been accepted as an S.I.F.D. Associated group, so we shall be more motivated to spread the word, pass around the SIFD NEWS, and perhaps recruit more individual members for the Society.

We meet on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month, 8 to 10 p.m. at the Methodist Church Hall, in Little Common, Bexhill-on-Sea. Further information from Heather Edwards on 01424 222382, or myself on 01424 845866.

LILY AVERY

PEMBROKESHIRE INTERNATIONAL FOLKDANCE GROUP'S 10TH ANNIVERSARY

We thank Sue and Vic Clark for the warm welcome we had when we attended the 10th Anniversary Celebration in Haverfordwest on Saturday evening, 26th October 1996. Sue and her group put in a lot of hard work and meticulous preparation of the dance programme for a most enjoyable and memorable event that was attended by the Lady Mayor and the Sheriff representing the town of Haverfordwest, who, with all present, joined in the social dances with great enthusiasm. The party took place in the Community Hall opened in 1991 for the twinning ceremony with Oberkirch, a similarly sized town in Germany near Strasbourg, and it made a very pleasant venue.

The dance programme included clearly announced international and social folk dances including of course some Welsh dances so that everyone knew when and when not to join in, giving rise to full visitor participation. There were very entertaining demonstrations of Czech, Hungarian and Romanian dances by Sue's group, Mexican dances by Newport I.F.D.G., led by Sue Oates, and the local Welsh Folk-dance Group, Glan Cleddau.

We learned that the Glan Cleddau (pronounced something like Glan Clethai - we even learned a little Welsh pronunciation!) needed special mention. One of their members, Les Morris, gave a superb display of Welsh clog dancing. Ten years ago Les was to have danced in the nearby village of Roch at a fund-raising concert but as a result of an injury he couldn't, so Sue got together with people she knew, including Mark Howells of Newport I.F.D.G., on holiday for the weekend of the concert, and made up a team. It was from this that the Group was formed and never looked back. People were able to see the clog dancing they were unable to see ten years ago. Happily, Les made a full recovery from the injury and it is an example of good coming out of misfortune.

Visitors came from Bristol, Exmouth, London and the Home Counties, Manchester, and Newport, and throughout Pembrokeshire. The catering was excellent and complete with a superb 10th Anniversary Cake decorated beautifully with the flags of several countries.

Vic, who gave invaluable assistance with the amplification equipment, Sue and her team can now relax with pride after organizing and presenting such a successful and enjoyable evening. Thanks again, Sue and Vic, and wishing you well for your 20th!

MARGARET & ALAN MORTON

Thank you to everyone involved in our 10th birthday celebration. To our own members who ALL played their part in making it happen. (Help even came from supporters and lapsed members). To the dancers and non-dancers who came from far and wide. To those who sent us cards and greetings or made 'phone calls to wish us well. We were especially chuffed by the card from the Midlands Branch of S.I.F.D.

Thank you too to "the powers that be" because on the Monday following there were widespread power cuts as the tail end of "Hurricane Lili" hit us. Our own electricity was off for 6½ hours, and Little Haven, where 18 of us enjoyed a headland stroll and a relaxed lunch on the Sunday was badly hit by the stormy sea! It all happens down here.

Happy Dancing.

SUE & VIC CLARK
and all P.I.F.D. members

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LOST PROPERTY. If the sweater found after the Dance on 12th October is still unclaimed by 4th January it will be sold through Claire Steeley in aid of Society funds (it is nearly new).

JEANETTE HULL

"KAN HA DISKAN" - an intriguing title for what turned out to be a very interesting and enjoyable 5-hour workshop at Patcham, near Brighton, last month. Over the years I have been to many many workshops organized by different people but for me this was something new. I had never been to a Breton singing/dancing workshop, and was most intrigued to learn the songs that essentially go with the Breton dances. Quite a few of the people who attended the workshop were singers and musicians, as well as dancers, and so were able to pick up the songs and tunes surprisingly quickly (although the French words were much easier to cope with than the Breton!). There is an earthy feeling about dancing to this very special, hypnotic two-part singing, with no instrumental accompaniment - reminiscent of the Sardinian, although a different style of singing.

The workshop was followed by a "Fest Noz" - dancing Breton and French to the bands "Boa" and "Citizen Camembert" and dances just accompanied by Brigitte and her daughter singing (with those of us who had been at the workshop trying to cope with the new songs and dances at the same time!).

Thank you to Jan Mulreany for organizing a very enjoyable day.

LILY AVERY

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THE GEORGIAN STATE DANCE COMPANY

The above company performed at the Festival Hall, London, and Fairfield Hall, Croydon, in October. Owing to the regrettable lack of advertising, I would be not at all surprised if a number of young people, who had never seen or even heard of the Georgian State Dance Company expected to see dancers from the U.S.A. state of Georgia. That they were not disappointed was shown in the rapturous applause between numbers and especially at the end - clapping, shouting, waving of arms - thanks to the company for opening out a completely different world to them; a chivalrous world in which it is enough to throw a woman's headdress between two fighting men to make them stop immediately!

Beautiful, serene, graceful women, and strong, bold energetic men dazzle the audience with nearly incredible quick spins on their knees, spins and jumps on one foot or both, even on their toes. The Georgians are the only men in the world who do not, as our ballerinas do, dance in blocked shoes on the tip of their toes, but bend their toes in the flexible, soft, long boots. Readers who have, on the several occasions that the Georgians have been here before, been to their performances, will have seen "Kartul", the famous couple dance with which Nino Ramishvili and Iliko Sukhishvili won the first prize in the first International Folkdance Competition in 1925 (that, and some other dances the now defunct Balalaika Dance Group dared to copy, but even they didn't dare ask their male dancers to perform a whole dance on their toes). It is very encouraging to see that, all political differences notwithstanding, the Georgian State Dance Company is carrying on in the same unbroken tradition.

JENIA GRAMAN

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S.I.F.D. GROUP HISTORIES

It took longer than I expected to assemble the necessary contributions for the new History, but I have now edited the last one and the text is in the first stage of production, and I have everyhope that the booklets will be on sale at the December dance at Cecil Sharp House.

GEORGE SWEETLAND

COSTUMES FOR SALE

I have been asked to find out if anyone in the S.I.F.D. would be interested in buying the following costumes:-

- 1) An Austrian dirndl; blue, piped in light green and embroidered round hem and on bodice in shades of red and green. The blouse is white with cut work down the front and on the short, frilled sleeves. The costume needs a light green apron to match the piping and embroidery (this is missing). Length of dress from shoulder to hem 34", waist 26", blouse up to 34". Region: Salzburg.
- 2) A German costume: jacket and skirt. The jacket is red with a small design of white and black tiny spots. It is shaped and piped and has a peplum in the Hungarian style, and has a hand-crocheted frill round the neck and six lovely floral buttons. The skirt is black, with the same design in white and red. It is fairly full and has two frills; the white under-frill has a beautiful hand-worked lacy edging. Length of skirt 28"; length of jacket from shoulder 20"; length of sleeves 24"; bust 32". There is a white blouse but it is not the original. With this costume comes a gorgeous straw hat in blue straw with red felt and natural straw decoration. Region: Leipzig.

The owner is more anxious for the costumes to go to a good home than about the price. For more information, ring or write to me, at "Robin Cottage", 4 Commercial Road, Grindleford, Sheffield S30 1HA. Tel: 01433 630183.

MARINA WOLSTENHOLME

BALKANPLUS returns to its usual time and place this month - Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regents Park Road, London N.W.1, 7.00-10.30 p.m. on 14th December. M.C. Frances Horrocks. This is the Dance closest to Christmas, so to add to the spirit of the season please wear something red and/or green, decorated in silver, gold or tinsel if you wish. Also, please bring a pen or pencil.

Many thanks to all the people who attended our 10th anniversary Dance in October in splendid costumes and who so generously donated special refreshments. We hope all our visitors enjoyed the evening and will come again soon - like this month? See you there.

FRANCES HORROCKS

ISRAELI FOLKDANCE WEEKEND WITH FIONA HOWARTH, 25TH-27TH APRIL 1997

This popular dance course is already full, but it is still possible for walkers and sightseers to join us at this Spring weekend break at the delightful location of Freshwater Bay House on the Isle of Wight. The cost of £60.00 includes full board from Friday evening meal to Sunday (packed) lunch in comfortable single and twin-bedded rooms, with plentiful choice of food and all the facilities of the house and grounds. If you wish to book as a "non-dancer", or to add your name to the waiting list for the dance course, please send s.a.e. to me at 115 Chetwynd Road, London NW5 1DA.

CATHY MEUNIER

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Jan.5th MAGGIE & VAL'S SUNDAY WORKSHOP, 3.00-5.00 p.m. at The Place, Flaxman Terrace, London W.C.1. Studio 3. Price: £2.50. Enquiries: 0171 609 7098.

Jan.11th/12th. S.I.F.D. BRETON WEEKEND COURSE. See p.6.

Jan.18th CROXLEY GREEN INTERNATIONAL FOLKDANCERS NEW YEAR'S PARTY, 7.30 to 10.45 p.m. at St.Oswald's Church Hall, Malvern Way, Croxley Green, near Watford, Herts. Come in costume if you can. £2.00 including refreshments, payable at the door. Enquiries to Joyce Sharp, 01923 228080.

Jan.19th ISRAELI DANCE DAY with Anat at Stone Cross Memorial Hall, near Eastbourne, E.Sussex. Contact Rowena Martin for details, 01323 503991. No price given.

Jan.25th CELEBRATING CHINESE NEW YEAR with Christine Hall. Workshop in fan and ribbon dance, plus slide show, papercutting etc. Hastings Adult Education Centre, 01424 435619. No price given.

Jan.25th OXFORD BALKANSKO DRO NEW YEAR PARTY, 7.30 to 11.00 p.m. at St.Margaret's Parish Institute Hall, Polstead Road (off Woodstock Road). Live music. Tickets £5.00 on the door, including refreshments.

Feb.1st CELEBRATING CHINESE NEW YEAR (as on 25th January) at Sevenoaks Adult Education Centre, 01732 451618.

Feb.8th EGYPTIAN BELLY DANCING workshop with Christine Hall, women only. Isle of Sheppey Adult Education Centre, 01795 875059. No price given.

Feb.9th INTENSIVE WORKSHOP IN EGYPTIAN RAKS SHARQI, veil dance, and dancing with finger cymbals, in Lewes. Christine Hall plus special guest tutor. Enquiries: 01580 850687. No price given.

Feb.15th CELEBRATING CHINESE NEW YEAR (as on 25th January) at Rye Adult Education Centre, 01797 222318. No price given.

Mar.9th LAURA SHANNON'S WORKSHOP of mostly Armenian dances, with some Gypsy and Greek. 10.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. at Stone Cross Memorial Hall, near Eastbourne. No price given. Booking form and map from Rowena Martin, 01323 503991.

Mar.15th RUSSIAN DAY COURSE, 10.30 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. at Stevenson Junior School, Wadsworth Road, Stapleford, Notts. £5.00. Tutor: Marina Wolstenholme. Organized by Nutbrook I.F.D.G. Contact: Gill Morral, 0115 9393204.

Mar.29th/31st "EASTERN PROMISE", Asian weekend course with Jan Knoppers at Doncaster College Conference Centre, High Melton. Please send s.a.e. for further information and booking form to Marina Wolstenholme, Robin Cottage, 4 Commercial Road, Grindleford, Sheffield S30 1HA. (See p.5).

May 23rd/26th BALKANPLUS WHITSUN WEEKEND OF BULGARIAN DANCING with Eddy Tijssen at Cheddar Youth Hostel, Somerset. Contact Anne Marshall, 44 Church Road, Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol BS9 3EQ. Tel: 0117 950 9889. No price given but reduction if you book before 9th December.

Aug.22nd/25th BALKAN FLAVOUR WEEKEND (Bank Holiday weekend) at Dunford House, Midhurst, West Sussex. If you are interested, please contact Irene Keywood on 0181 592 4427.

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When sending in details of events, please give prices where possible. Ed.