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JULY
1997

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 is from Sula Gleeson's sketches of Madrileños "paseo-ing"
on a Sunday evening. See article on p.3. ("Paseo-ing", as I expect you all
know, is strolling around in Sunday best in the warm summer evenings down the
main streets or round the inevitable squares. Every town of note has at least
a Plaza Mayor. DIKI GLEESON).

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VICTORIA EMBANKMENT GARDENS, LONDON

The first S.I.F.D. performance this year was on Saturday, 17th May, and was
given by the Doina East European Folkdance Group and the London Turkish Dancers.
The weather was unusually fine and warm for May, and also very humid. Those
wearing costumes more suited to cold mountain areas soon found themselves some-
what damp.

Doina skilfully overcame the apparent disadvantage of only one male dancer among
the lovely ladies, and dances were chosen to fit the circumstances. One was a
new Romanian dance, taught by Emil on his visit to England earlier in the year,
and there was also a new Hungarian Finale. For this latter, Doina were very
lucky to have live music performed by Zenekar musicians, who enthusiastically
played faster and faster.

The London Turkish Dancers provided a good contrast, with their varied dances
from different regions of Turkey, wearing their authentic colourful costumes.
(See Pauline Welch's separate article on the Turkish performance on page 13).
Many thanks to both groups for starting off our 1997 season at the Victoria
Embankment Gardens.

KAY KEDGE

A CARD FROM SPAIN

Sula (my daughter whom quite a few of you know) has been teaching on a short contract in Spain, and although we 'phone each other regularly (the 'phone bill is horrendous anyway, with Finn, my son, still in Japan and loads of panic things to chat about, like his English wedding in July!), Sula is a great correspondent and sends a postcard covered with tiny writing to her grandmother EVERY week and often sends me a long letter with the odd little sketch, so I thought maybe a few extracts might be of interest.

DIKI GLEESON

"One Sunday there was an "International Day" at an EXTREMELY posh and expensive hotel in Madrid, organized by the American Embassy women. It was a great afternoon because as well as stalls selling food from around the world, which was all tempting and delicious, there were dancing groups, not entirely but predominately from all the Spanish-speaking countries, so I sat on the floor with the kids, right in the front, feeling quite conspicuous in my scruffiness, surrounded by cut-outs from a Vogue magazine, dripping in gold! It opened with a group from Chile, looking like the Maoris, with a lot of powerful foot stamping and chest beating, but then they had a unique way of "hip thrusting" which made this bit of the performance, with the girls dressed in very low-slung tight skirts, more like a mating ritual. There were Colombian, Panamanian, Ecuadorian etc. dancers, all looking typically happy and carefree. The Filipino Tinikling reminded me of the S.I.F.D. day course I did many years ago!

The Indonesian and Thai groups were exquisitely neat and dainty, but the highlight for me, especially BEING in Spain, was the group from Segovia (North of Madrid) who did some schottish which was good, with interesting choreography, but even better than this was the stick dancing they performed. Each person had a short truncheon-shaped stick in each hand. They started by hitting their own sticks and then those of their partner, but soon it all went crazy! With the speed of lightning they changed places, changed back again, so A would hit B, come back, hit the side partner, hit the opposite, and then I lost it. I tried desperately to see where they all went, but just couldn't. I concentrated and just watched one, to see where she went in case I could perhaps pick out a pattern, but the speed make it so exciting and enthralling to watch, it really seemed too intricate and unpredictable and on first acquaintance impossible to follow. It was a fantastic performance and I was thrilled to see it. There was no footwork as such, which I think would have been too much to ask for as well as the perpetual stick work. Unfortunately I had not expected such delights and hadn't taken my camera, so have no picture to include here, and didn't feel my Spanish was up to befriending anyone to enquire about inviting one or all to England. Certainly a day course to learn this exciting and very different style of dance would be appealing. However, I can say it was an excellent afternoon, full of happy faces and a colourful flamboyance".

(Sula chose to spend the Easter holidays in Spain, rather than come home, so of course she was there for the Semana Santa (Holy Week) in all its glory. She was warned off trying to whizz down to the South to the mega tourist places, so chose instead to go North to Valladolid).

"I stood and waited, hoping I might be able to see most of it, but even in Valladolid the crowds were enormous. The historic traditional Ku-Klux-Klan-like hoods and robes were a medieval penance garb to accord anonymity, but it was clear that the locals all knew whose eyes were shining through the little holes in the hoods. My view was obscured by people standing in front of me, but at the allotted time it began. First, lots of the "Ku Klax Klan" came and lined the street; then, after an interval, two came holding banners, then after a much longer wait a fanfare of trumpets announced a big "float" with the Virgin Mary holding out her arms, looking plaintive. It was a finely carved wooden figure. A further procession of the Ku Klux Klan lot, including little people (children?), seemed to herald a group carrying a carving of Jesus on a huge box-like cross.

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At the back of the procession came three obviously important people in different coloured robes. As these went past, that seemed the final signal and everyone started moving away. It all seemed so strange. It could only have been fifteen minutes at the most, so I thought I'd follow the procession and see what happened to it. Along with half the crowd, I walked behind, right up close. The cross stopped, the people stopped, and a voice over loud-speakers spoke forth. I could not understand a word - half because of the amplification scrambling it, and half because I think it was old poetic Spanish. (I needed Kelsey Blundell there to interpret!). The procession kept stopping at various stations, where the voice would begin again. At points in the reciting, the crowds would join in. I could get quite near to the hooded ones and scrutinised them, imagining the person underneath and what it felt like to be so dressed with vision restricted to the two small holes. Steeped in religious significance and importance, but so bizarre it seemed, especially when you notice they had jeans on and all sorts of scruffy footwear, which seemed a bit incongruous. I walked with the moving crowd past the stationary onlookers, all ordinary people from all walks of life and all ages; then at various given moments the whole crowd suddenly becomes a religious congregation - a huge congregation that could never fit into any church. They all know the words, the prayers and the hymns to join in. The procession continues and the congregation instantly turns back to being a heaving crowd.

The procession, so mysterious to me in its special hypnotic ritual, so obviously a well-guarded tradition of great significance and importance to all its participants and the townsfolk, is suddenly broken with complete careless disregard by two girls walking right through it to cross the street. The participants seemed so anonymous in their black all-enveloping robes, but are they? One waves to a face in the crowd - a white gloved hand with fingers wagging suddenly makes me think of Mickey Mouse! What a combination of imagery!

Music is played over the Tannoy system, between the speeches from "the voice", all so beautifully orchestrated until it seems the tape runs out and there's a splutter and an interrupting pause, then it continues its soothing melodies. The music and the voice are like the sound-track of a well-rehearsed documentary, which I suppose they are.

The candle-bearers are not hooded and are young - no doubt their proud parents are in the crowd. Their robes are beautiful and they look the part - except now the show has been going for more than an hour, their interest is flagging and they whisper to a friend or do what comes naturally to people holding the magic of a naked flame, i.e. to play with it, lean the candle so the falling wax hits the ground, lean it so the hot wax dries in perfect pretty formations down the side of the candle.....but then they are off again, the final few yards to the sanctuary of the church. The last hooded figures hustle them forward, forming another line, until minutes later the previously anonymous figures disguised beneath hoods suddenly reappear - a neighbour, a friend, carrying his robe over one arm and playing with his pointed hood in the other. Procession finished, mystery ended, at least for this parade. I walked back to the hostel in such a positive, happy mood, pondering all the sights, smells and sounds I had just witnessed. I must find out more about it all....!"

SULA GLEESON

GREEK TRADITIONAL DANCES SEMINAR IN MACEDONIA

The above title headed an announcement in last month's SIFD NEWS. One of our members rang me to say that he thought readers might find it confusing or ambiguous. I am sorry if this was so, but it is the exact wording used by the organizers on the leaflet sent to me, and I could see no ambiguity in it. Ed.

LAST MINUTE HOLIDAY BARGAIN! Visit Pavlikeni, Bulgaria, and dance with Delyan Demirev, 11th to 23rd August. £550 including dance or music course and most expenses. (B.B.F.S. members can deduct £10.00). Contact me at 47 Jordan Hill, Oxford OX2 8EU now to secure a place.

ROGER WICKSTEED

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STOP PRESS! We have just heard that the "PIRIN SINGS" Festival will now take place but a week later than originally planned. The Three Mountains Tour organized by the British-Bulgarian Friendship Society has therefore been extended to include the festival. New dates are 11th to 25th August 1997. Leader: Dr. Donald Kenrick. Price: £739. Further details from me at British-Bulgarian Friendship Society, c/o Finsbury Library, 245 St. John Street, London EC1V 4NB. Tel/Fax: 0171 837 2304 or 0171 237 7616.

DR. ANNIE KAY

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HELENÉ IN HASTINGS

For the second time, we persuaded Helené from U.S.A. to spend a day in Hastings on her annual European performance/teaching tour. She taught a workshop on Egyptian Ghawazee dance. The Ghawazee were a tribe of gypsies who settled in Upper Egypt along the Nile and became known as professional dance performers. Some of them took up prostitution as a sideline, and consequently all Ghawazee dancers were banned to Esna. Today, Ghawazee dancing has nearly died out, partly because of the fundamentalist attitudes to women's public dance, despite increasing international interest in this art form. Helené studied with a member of the famous Maazin sisters, the last (now defunct) troupe of Ghawazee dancers.

Like most folkloric forms of Egyptian dance, Ghawazee is essentially a hip-centred dance (what we know as belly dance), with some steps and hand movements. Ghawazee dance, says Helené, is carried out with flat feet and very erect torso. The Ghawazee almost always use a "prop" in their dance, finger cymbals (sagat) or the stick which is popular in folk dances of Upper Egypt. Helené always manages to teach a mixed-level class from (near)-beginners to (near)-professionals in a way which allows beginners to keep up while seasoned participants still pick up new tricks. The routine was complex but we all managed to do it reasonably well at the end of the workshop, although we had to admit defeat when it came to playing a series of complex rhythm patterns on our finger cymbals at the same time. Helené is always helpful and supportive, and she says she would be happy if the workshop participants performed her Ghawazee dance in a show. Maybe we will..... if we get those cymbals right!

CHRISTINE HALL

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FOR SALE The Zivko Firfov Group is disposing of a small double-skinned drum (tapan) which it no longer needs. The drum is well made, from a village near Radovis in Eastern Macedonia, where it is used to accompany bagpipes and small instrumental groups. It is in good condition but the thicker skin is split and needs to be repaired or replaced. Offers are invited in excess of £35.00, to me in writing by the end of July, and the highest bidder gets the drum.

KEN WARD
3 Pipers Court, 80 Beulah Hill,
London SE19 3ET.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Lily,

I recently received a request from Pat Treadwell (née Paice) for copies of the Society's "Histories". I sent them to Vancouver and she has just acknowledged their arrival, and I wondered perhaps if our longer-established members might like to have news of her, so her letter is reproduced below.

She also enclosed photo-copies of photographs taken outside Hortensia Road School in 1955 for "Picture Post". What do you think the chances are now of getting publicity in "Hello!"?

Yours,

GEORGE SWEETLAND
28 Hayes Court, Camberwell New
Road, London SE5 0TQ.

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Dear George,

You are right! I was delighted to receive the old histories of S.I.F.D.! I am proud to have started my dancing days at Cecil Sharp House one Sunday and was immediately hooked - both fascinated and terrified at all the "experts" around me.

Much water has flowed under the bridge since then, and after two years dancing in Toronto (Dick Crum's excellent Kolo weekends), I ventured West to Vancouver where I met up again with Len and Beryl Sawyer. The club we started in their basement has flourished and will be celebrating its 40th in 1999. Where does the time go - fast!

Should you ever wind up in Vancouver, give us a call. We make great tea!

Sincerely,

PAT (PAICE) TREADWELL

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"MANCHESTER"

In the April issue of "SIFD NEWS" I read the information about "Manchester" written by Sue Clark. I should like to say that in Switzerland our folkdance pioneer, Louise Witzig (1901-1969) found at Engelberg and at Stans two not very different "Swiss" folk dances with the name "Manchester". She published both dances in the year 1950 and I enclose a copy of this first publication for those who are interested in this folk dance.

KARL KLENK (Zurich, Switzerland)

Ed.Note: Karl has enclosed a copy of the music and dance notes for the two dances, which I should be happy to pass on to anyone who would like them. (The notes are in German).

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All material for the August issue of SIFD NEWS must reach the Editor IN WRITING by 17th July. Please write in BLOCK CAPITALS all names of people, places and dances, unless typewritten.

EASTBOURNE FOLK FESTIVAL

As usual, Frank and I greatly enjoyed this festival, especially as such an excellent Swedish team was present. We would both like to thank Helen Ezra very much indeed for organizing their trip, with all the difficulties involved.

Helen is a past-master at dealing with the many problems which constantly arise at Eastbourne, and no matter how unexpected or unusual a crisis is, Helen copes with the situation in a very professional and calm way. This year, Hugh Wood was to have been the M.C. for the Friday evening Dance but was unavoidably absent because of family matters. Apparently undismayed, Helen took over his programme and gave us a good evening's dancing - thank you Helen! As an M.C. Helen is to be admired. She uses the microphone (which many other M.C.s are tempted not to do!) and gives short, clear instructions, without "waffle" or irrelevant inaudible asides. This is all very important, especially in a large gym as at Eastbourne.

Thank you, Helen, for all the very hard work which you always put in on behalf of the S.I.F.D. at Eastbourne. It is all much appreciated.

FRANK and KAY KEDGE

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BALKANPLUS - 12th July at Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, London N.W.1. Don't forget that this month is a very special one with guest artists "Popeluc" giving a workshop and playing during the Dance, combining with "Dunav" during the evening. Don't forget that timings and prices are also changed for this occasion.

6.00-10.30 p.m. £5.00 for Workshop, Dance, Performance
7.00-10.30 p.m. £4.00 for Dance, Performance

We hope that everyone will come along and enjoy this special Romanian flavour evening. There will be no Balkanplus in August. The next Balkanplus will be on 13th September.

FRANCES HORROCKS

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FOLKESTONE FESTIVAL

Folkestone International Folk Arts Society reintroduces an INTERNATIONAL DANCE FESTIVAL on the weekend of 11th-13th July 1997. Groups will be visiting from Belgium, Crete and Poland. The venue will be The Folkestone School for Girls, Cooling Lane, Folkestone, Kent. The programme will be as follows:-

Friday (daytime)	Visits to local schools.
Friday (evening)	Opening ceremony followed by an International Dance Party
Saturday	Busking, matinee performance and an evening Concert.
Sunday	10.00-12.00 and 1.00-2.00 Workshops. Evening Closing Concert.

The Party and the Concerts are £5.00. Workshops £2.50 each. Further details from the Festival Director, Evra Jordan, on 01303 269119. Tickets available from 01303 266829.

Re "SPIRIT OF THE DANCE"

I too went to see "Spirit of The Dance" at the White Rock Theatre in Hastings. On that occasion, the Mongolians and the Gospel Choir made an appearance but, if they did not perform at Croydon, I don't think Frances Horrocks missed anything worth watching. The Mongolians did not dance. They presented a jumble of ambitious but poorly rehearsed and badly executed acrobatic acts. This was a great disappointment to me since I had just returned from living in Mongolia where I had had the chance to see just how good the folk dancers, amateur or professional, can be.

The Gospel Choir (I think it was called the New Orleans Gospel Choir) was an embarrassment. I don't think any of the choir members had what can be termed a singing voice. I got the impression that in the hurry to get the show on the road, the managers just picked the first dozen or so people off the street without previously auditioning them for singing or presentation skills.

The Irish harpists were nice to listen to and also gave visual enjoyment in the way they were sitting with their profiles to the audience, with beautiful dresses, romantic lighting and so on, like a marvellous painting. I'm sorry that Frances didn't have the chance to experience them. She found the Cossacks "predictable". I don't know much about Cossack dancing, so maybe they were, but to me they seemed brilliant, with so much spirit, fun, technique and energy. But then, maybe after watching a lot of dreary acts, any performance with a bit of skill and flair would have seemed great.

I also remember a tapdance duo who were good, as far as I can judge, and a com-pere who cracked silly jokes which were completely unrelated to what was going on on stage.

Had "Spirit of The Dance" been an amateur or student showcase, I would have found it pleasant, but for a professional show (for which we paid, I think, £16 each) I was annoyed by the poor standard shown. However, the theatre was sold out on that occasion, and I noticed that most people enjoyed the show. This means either I'm isolated in my opinion that the show was a rip-off, or that the public generally appreciate folkdance shows. In this case, I'm sure that if some S.I.F.D. groups put together a joint programme and took it on tour they would not only be a roaring success but probably provide a much better show than "Spirit of The Dance".

CHRISTINE HALL

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Have you discovered the following venues?

"The Pit", Itchel Lane, Crondall, near Farnham, Surrey GU10 5PU. Tel: 01252 850 789 and 0171 538 5633.

Hazelwood House, Loddiswell, near Kingsbridge, South Devon TQ7 4EB. Tel: 01548 821 232 and 0171 538 5633.

"The Spitz", 109 Commercial Street, Spitalfields, London E1 6BG. Tel: 0171 247 9747.

Although they do not very often have performances of what one might call "authentic folk", the recent programmes they have sent me do include some interesting items - Japanese music, Klezmer music, Balkan singing and dancing, Music from Uganda, Persian and French song, Indian music, Cajun music and dance, Zydeco etc., so it might be worth your getting on their mailing lists.

Ed.

S.I.F.D. SUNDAY DANCES at Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, London N.W.1

July 6th M.C.s: S.I.F.D. Band

No dance in August.

7.00 to 10.00 p.m. Admission £3.00 for S.I.F.D. members, £4.00 for non-members.

INTERNATIONAL FOLKDANCE SUMMER SCHOOL 1998

The College of Ripon and York St. John has been booked for the Summer School from the evening meal on Saturday, 25th July, till after breakfast on Saturday, 1st August, 1998. You will be pleased to know that there will not be any increase in the cost of accommodation at the College; in fact, it will be lower than in 1996 as the College have agreed to lower the price in order to keep our custom!

DAWN & PAUL WEBSTER
Greenacres, Broadstreet Common,
Nash, Newport NP6 2AZ
Tel: 01633 272 662

ORIENTAL RESIDENTIAL WEEKENDS

The Old Rectory in Fittleworth (West Sussex) is offering another THREE residential weekends with Christine Hall for next year.

Feb. 27th-29th 1998 will have a Chinese theme. Participants will learn traditional fan and ribbon dances and also have the opportunity to practise some Chinese crafts such as papercuts, which are easy to make but stunning in effect. Silk fans and ribbons will be available to borrow. Food will include some Chinese dishes.

June 26th-28th 1998. This Oriental dance weekend will look at belly dancing, Persian veil dance, and Mongolian folk. There will be the opportunity to watch Mongolian folk dancers, singers and musicians on video.

August 7th-9th 1998. Another weekend of Oriental dance, this time exploring belly dancing, Egyptian folkloric stick dance and Middle Eastern drumming. Students can borrow drums and sticks. There will also be videos of authentic stick dance performed by Egyptian men.

Each of these weekends costs approximately £125, depending on the type of accommodation. Christine will explain the cultural background of the dances and break down every movement, so that beginners will be able to follow. The emphasis will be on little-known movements, so that experienced dancers can add something new to their existing repertoire of these dance forms. If the weather is pleasant during the two summer weekends, some of the tuition may take place in the open air, followed by a dip in the pool. All weekends are suitable for men and women of any age group. Non-dancing partners can take other courses (e.g. painting) at the same time. For a brochure with these and other courses, write, with s.a.e., to The Old Rectory, Fittleworth, Pulborough, West Sussex RH20 1HU. Tel: 01798 865306.

CHRISTINE HALL

WHAT'S ON IN JULY

- July 3rd to 16th "POPELUC" tour, as detailed last month (p.8). Probably more venues to be added but no details received so far.
- July 4th to 7th MILTON KEYNES INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL.
- July 5th BULGARIAN DANCE DAY COURSE for charity. All proceeds to Friends of Bulgaria, organized by Bristol Balkanplus. Tutor: James Webb. At St. Ursula's School, Brecon Road, Bristol. 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. Party from 7.30 p.m. Help the group to raise much-needed money for Bulgaria and enjoy a day and evening of Bulgarian dancing. Contact: Anne Marshall, 0117 950 9889. No price given.
- July 6th DRUMMING MIDDLE EASTERN FOLK RHYTHMS (Maqsoum, saidí etc.) plus dancing the zaar with live drumming. 1.00-4.00 p.m. at Bourne Arts Centre, The Bourne, Hastings, with Christine Hall. £5.00. Bring your own drum or borrow one from Christine. Tel: 01580 850687.
- July 8th to 13th L'LANGOLLEN INTERNATIONAL MUSICAL EISTEDDFOD.
- July 11th BARNET SUMMER PARTY with music by Dunav. 8.00 p.m. at Church House, Wood Street, Barnet, Herts. £4.00 including wine and refreshments. Enquiries to Brian Dowsett, 01992 582717.
- July 11th to 13th FOLKESTONE INTERNATIONAL DANCE FESTIVAL. See p.7.
- July 12th BALKANPLUS. See p.7.
- July 13th MERTON PARK GROUP with WOODVALE (KENT) and the IBERIAN FOLK SONG & DANCE SOCIETY, 3.00 p.m. at Victoria Embankment Gardens, London.
- July 13th ROMANIAN FOLK DANCE & MUSIC GROUP ("Descendants of Vlad Tepes", from Targoviste, Vallachia). Music and dance show with 20 performers, on their way back from performing at Llangollen Eisteddfod. At the Hellenic Centre, 16-18 Paddington Street, London W.1. 7.30 p.m. Tickets £5.00 (concessions £3.50) available in advance from Romanian Cultural Centre, Tel: 0171 439 4052 or 0171 437 0015 or 0181 340 4893.
- July 19th OXFORD BALKANSKO ORO DANCE WORKSHOP with Cathy Meunier, 1.30 to 5.30 p.m. followed by SUMMER DANCE PARTY, 7.00-10.30 p.m. At St. Margaret's Parish Institute Hall, Polstead Road (off Woodstock Road) Oxford. £5.00 for both events or £3.00 for one. Dances to be taught will probably be: Ramno Velesko Oro, Bracno Oro, Kavrakeleno, Chekurjankino, Lesnoto and Zensko Camce.
- July 20th CENTRAL LONDON and CROXLEY GREEN INTERNATIONAL FOLKDANCE GROUPS 3.00 p.m. at Victoria Embankment Gardens, London.
- July 26th to 27th RESIDENTIAL WEEKEND OF TRADITIONAL EGYPTIAN DANCE. Belly dance, baladi, taqsim, drum solo interpretation, also some drumming and veil dancing, at Pyke House, Battle, East Sussex. Veils and drums can be borrowed, or bring your own. Suitable for all levels. Tutor: Christine Hall. Cost: £65 for accommodation, tuition, meals. Pyke House Tel. No: 01424 772495.

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July 28th GLASTONBURY DANCE FESTIVAL. THE ANCIENT AND TRADITIONAL ART OF EGYPTIAN BELLY DANCING, taught by EMERALD, who has been trained only by Arabian dancers, has travelled extensively and teaches the AUTHENTIC ARABIC STYLE. 9.30 to 11.30 a.m. at ST.BENEDICT'S CHURCH HALL, GLASTONBURY. £4.00. For bookings ring 01458 835717

July 28th GLASTONBURY DANCE FESTIVAL. DANCES OF THE GHAWAZEE (Egytian Gypsy women's dance) learned in Egypt from one of the two remaining GHAWAZEE dancers. 4.30 to 6.30 p.m. Taught by EMERALD and TONI. Same venue, price and telephone number as above.

July 28th GLASTONBURY DANCE FESTIVAL. EVENING BEDOUIN PARTY at THE ASSEMBLY ROOMS, GLASTONBURY. Includes a chance to participate in NUBIAN dancing with EMERALD and TONI. Same number as above for booking.

The Egyptian Folkdance Workshop with Josephine Wise, previously announced for 5th July, has now been cancelled.

There will be no S.I.F.D. Day Courses in July and August.

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LONDON TURKISH GROUP

The London Turkish Group danced two separate selections of dances at the Victoria Embankment Gardens, in a combined programme with the Doina Group, on a beautiful sunny Saturday afternoon on 17th May. The audience was consequently larger than usual and seemed very appreciative.

The first selection was danced in the colourful well-recognised Antep costumes, whilst the second item was in the even more striking Eastern Turkish costumes, with the girls in the flowing satin dresses, with long sleeves, in bright "jewel" colours, and the men in total black and long black boots. We had two extra girls' costumes made this year and a new banner was made by our teacher's sister, Emine Tastaban.

Owing to the fact that our regular teacher, Ibrahim, had gone to Turkey to take up a job for the summer only weeks before, we had to plan and do the performance without him, but despite this we had a good turnout. We also did a performance the previous Saturday in Hampstead Garden Suburb in the driving rain, so the sunny conditions made a welcome change, and was good for our customary picnic in those lovely gardens afterwards.

PAULINE WELCH