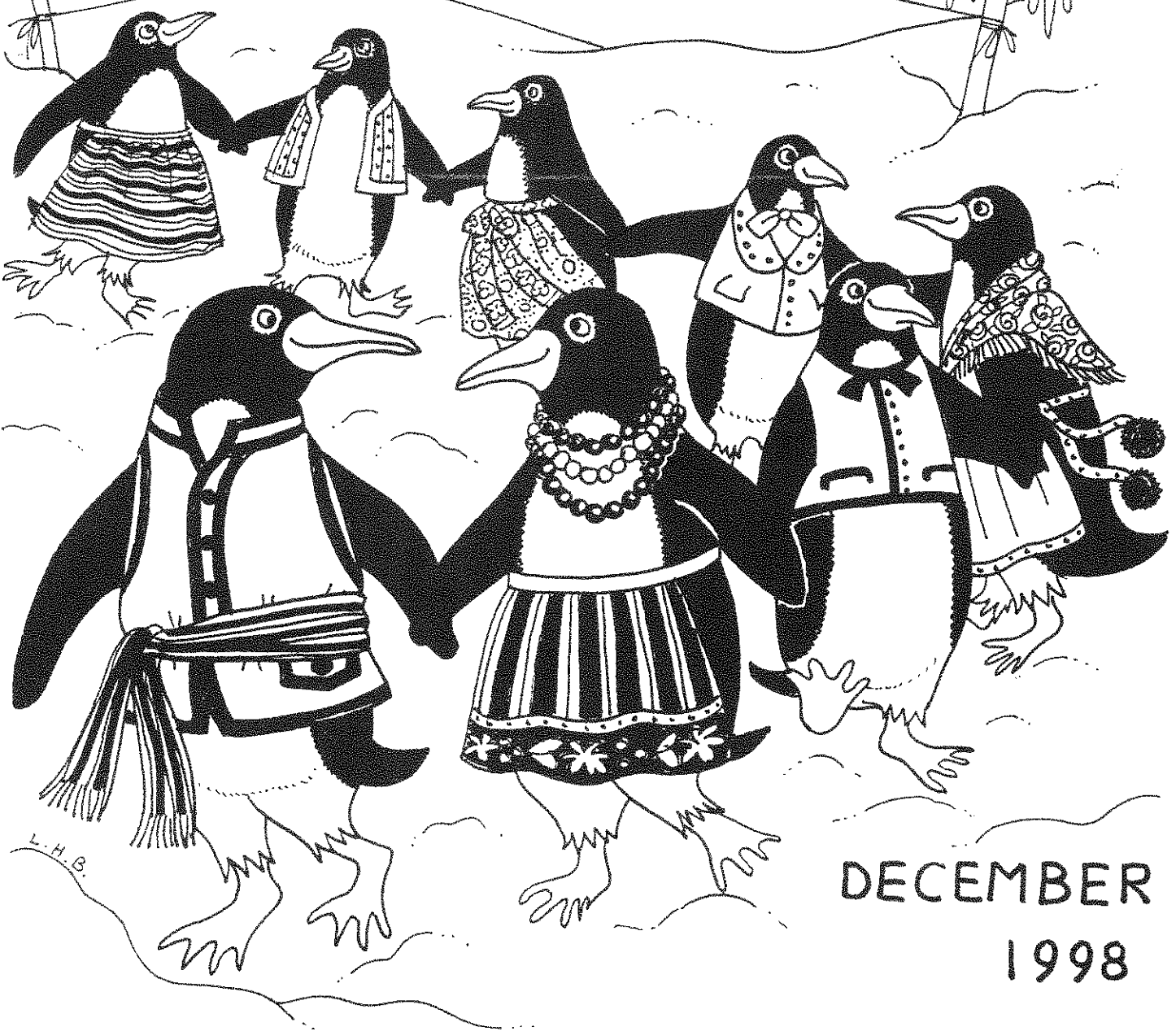


S I F D

NUMS

CHRISTMAS DANCE
COME IN* COSTUME

SIFD
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SOUTH
POLE
GROUP



L.H.B.

DECEMBER
1998

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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Once again we have to thank Lesley Boorer for an imaginative, beautifully drawn,
"Christmassy" cover design this month.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

All material for the January issue of SIFD NEWS must reach the Editor
IN WRITING by 14th December - earlier than usual because of the
Christmas holiday. Anything received after the 14th will have
to wait until the February issue.

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PLEASE NOTIFY THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY IF YOU CHANGE YOUR ADDRESS.

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S.I.F.D. books and cassettes are available from Eleanor Gordon, 70 Chestnut
Grove, New Malden, Surrey KT13 3TS. Other S.I.F.D. goods are available from
Claire Steeley, 34 Broadwater Avenue, Letchworth, Herts. SG6 3HF.

Insurance Cover – a Cautionary Tale

Insurance cover is being mentioned more often these days, as it is becoming increasingly more important.

It is vital that all group and class teachers make sure that they have adequate public liability cover.

An incident in a Medau movement class 4 years ago has only just been resolved. A class member was hurt, decided it was the teacher's fault and proceeded to sue for substantial damages.

Fortunately the teacher was adequately insured – but it still took 4 years, court appearances and much stress to resolve the case. The claim was eventually dismissed, but the teacher said she couldn't have coped without the support of the insurance company (an unexpected benefit) and the knowledge that her insurance would cover any payment.

The SIFD has made insurance claims in the past, but fortunately with less stress.

The situation in the SIFD is –

- Events organised by, and on behalf of, the SIFD committee(s), are covered by SIFD insurance. (If unsure about your position, please contact a member of the committee.) Cecil Sharp House is also covered by EFDSS insurance.
- All SIFD *associated* groups and classes [marked (As) on the list of groups issued last month] are automatically covered by the Society's insurance policy for public liability.
- All SIFD *affiliated* groups and classes [marked (Af) on the list of groups issued last month] are **NOT** automatically covered by the Society's insurance policy. Many of these groups and classes already take advantage of the excellent rate offered on the Society's behalf by Richard Thom. Those that don't are urged to do so, or take out cover policies of their own.
- Cover for equipment is separate, and enquiries should be addressed to Richard Thom.
- The SIFD News advertises many classes and events – but it should be noted that this does not imply that they are covered by SIFD insurance. Please make it clear when your event/class *is* covered, so it can be marked as such.
- Richard Thom's telephone number is **01438 316651**.

It is not being pessimistic to take out adequate insurance – though naturally we all hope that it will never be needed. But this really is a situation where it is far better to be safe than sorry.

Alison Scrimshaw

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Ed.Note: Please remember that the onus is on the person sending me details of each event to state whether or not it is S.I.F.D.-insured if you want it so marked. This includes S.I.F.D.-organized events.

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S.I.F.D. WEEKENDS AWAY, 1998-99

Booking slips which were attached to the notice stapled at the back of the November SIFD NEWS have been slow to come in for this year's programme which starts with a weekend at Dunford 18th-20th December. At the time of writing (mid-November) there were some vacancies on most weekends, so if you are interested, send back your form as soon as possible or telephone me regarding Dunford and Halsway, on 01792 295194 (work) 403153 (home), or Roy Clarke regarding the others, 0181 367 2649.

JACK RICHARDSON

A NOTE OF THANKS

Once again, as we approach the A.G.M., I should like to say how much I appreciate the loyalty and hard work of the small team of people who give so much of their time to ensure continued regular monthly delivery of the SIFD NEWS throughout the year.

Recently, someone congratulated me and said how much they appreciate the regular arrival of the NEWS and that it was the only one of the several magazines they subscribe to which arrives each month on time. Well, I must say that it is not only my effort to keep to time each month that makes this possible. Having done my bit, I then have to pass the baton on to the other members of the team, and Doug and Maureen Wells do a magnificent job in getting the copying done and then coping at home with the folding, packing (with enclosures), stamping and posting. Doug also, sometimes with difficulty, does all he can to keep the cost of the copying to as low a figure as possible. Unfortunately, as with the November issue, we have occasionally to go over the lower postage rate. This was due to the enclosures from the Committee for the A.G.M. which pushed the envelope weight into the higher bracket. Having to pay the extra postage, we took the opportunity to include the other three enclosures (two from the Committee, one from Jack Richardson) which we had been holding over for a suitable month.

The other people involved in the production line are Alan Morton, who spends hours constantly dealing with membership records and seeing that the address labels are accurate and ready in time for Edwina and Michael Holdup who then stick the labels on the envelopes and make sure Doug and Maureen have them in good time.

All these people have been doing these jobs for many years, in spite of having their fulltime jobs, families, occasional illhealth, other commitments and other interests, and it would be almost impossible to find worthy replacements. So, thank you very much indeed, Doug, Maureen, Alan, Edwina and Michael.

My thanks also to the people who contribute articles, letters and items of interest and cover designs, notices of events. Keep them coming - and within the deadline please!

LILY AVERY, Editor

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AN ENJOYABLE DAY

Just to let you know that we had a very enjoyable Day Course on 7th November learning Romanian and Japanese dances.

R Rather a good morning
O Ovreicuta, one of six
M Moldavian partner dance
A And circles from Prahova
N Nippy stamping steps
I Included in the Whirling dance
A And then sedate Jianul
N Nice one, Celia

J Just a marvellous
A afternoon
P Palms rising and turning
A arms weaving and waving
N Nothing too difficult
E everyone laughing at our unco-ordinated
S stilted movements
E each and all enjoyed the dances
Thank you, Marina

Thank you, Celia (Stone), and Marina (Wolstenholme), for your excellent planning and teaching; a superb day.

GILL MORRAL

S.I.F.D. DAY COURSE - ARMENIAN DANCES (from York Summer School)

SATURDAY, 16TH JANUARY 1999, IN TREFUSIS, CECIL SHARP HOUSE

We have been lucky to be able to get Dalila Heath to come along and revise the Armenian dances which she taught at York. If you were not able to go to York, now is the opportunity to learn the dances. The time is 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. The price is £6.00 for S.I.F.D. members, £8.00 for non-members.

Future S.I.F.D. courses are as follows:-

13th February Hungarian (from York Summer School) with Leslie Haddon

13th March Spanish/Portuguese (from Eastbourne Festival) with Steve Steventon

No course in April.

15th May Teaching Forum for prospective teachers, M.C.s, leaders and any others who may be interested.

12th June Dances from Billingham Folk Festival with Marina Wolstenholme and Helen Ezra

More details of these courses will be given nearer the due dates. I hope you will be able to come along and join us.

HELEN EZRA
Badge & Day Courses

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BEXHILL BULLETIN

Bexhill International Folkdance Group is now entering its 6th year, and thanks to an enthusiastic core of members we are looking forward to another year of dancing evenings with a varied and expanding repertoire of dances from a wide selection of countries and regions. Whereas most groups seem to concentrate on a Balkan repertoire, we at Bexhill continue to fly the international flag by dancing, in addition to the popular Balkan countries' dances, those dances which we have learned over so many years with the S.I.F.D. from the series of excellent teachers the Society has had from all the European countries, plus some from other continents.

Some of our members have been with us from the start, others have joined along the way and stayed. Recently we have had a few new members, and numbers are keeping up. Some of our members also go to day courses, weekends, and also to other dance groups to broaden their horizons but in spite of the competition from several other forms of dance in the area we are pleased there is still support for our S.I.F.D.-associated group.

We dance for pleasure, not for demonstration. There is no annual membership fee and anyone is welcome to drop in for an evening. We meet on the first and third Thursdays of each month (except August), 8.00 to 10.00 p.m., at Little Common Methodist Church Hall in Little Common, Bexhill-on-Sea. Further information from Heather Edwards on 01424 222382, or myself on 01424 845866.

LILY AVERY

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HAPPY CHRISTMAS! Owing to a protracted Antipodean holiday, Hilda and Roger Sturge will not be sending any Christmas cards this year. We wish all our friends a very happy Christmas and much good dancing in 1999.

HILDA STURGE

URI GERSON

I was very sad to see reported in SIFD NEWS the death of Uri Gerson, at the age of only 60, on 29th May. Uri was my first folkdance teacher, and in the years 1980-83 taught us many of the Israeli, Romanian and other Balkan dances that were to become favourites in the network and which many of us still dance today. Uri had just started teaching in High Wycombe (in 1980) when Joanna Walter and I decided to give it a try (we were living in Henley at the time, only a few miles away, and had started what I believe was the first regular circle dance group in England, together with Corrie van Oijen and Errol Masters). What we found on that December evening was a group of nearly forty dancers, dancing absolutely beautiful dances to a high standard that we had not seen before. I was so excited about this that I remember rushing to write a long report to Findhorn after about the third session. The very first dance as we walked in was Makazice from Serbia.

Uri soon moved to a bigger hall, so popular was his group, and he continued to teach every Monday evening until recently. He ran his group very efficiently and to a high standard of steps and style. Typically an evening would consist of about thirty-six dances, of which half a dozen might be taught (beginners such as Joanna and I just had to get in there and follow, as in the Balkans - a marvellous training for future teachers - until our dance came up for teaching).

Generally, Uri taught us how to dance. Being Israeli himself (he came to the U.K. in 1961), he was particularly good at Israeli (and Romanian) dances. At first it was difficult, and Uri was quite hard on me because I had been teaching Sacred Dance in the U.K. and U.S.A. and with his high standards he had definite ideas on how teachers should look and feel in the dance; "If you want to be a teacher, David, your dancing will really have to improve". That was a shock, and I can tell you I worked damn hard at it those next three months!

Next, I had a passion for Har Hatsofim (does anyone still dance it?) and Uri saw me taking notes. "That is a sacred dance, and you are not to teach it until you have it perfect". I kept faith and did not, (Uri's special dance, I wouldn't have dared!) until after Uri had come to Geneva twice to help us set up here. Then I remember Joanna giving me hell because I had made a mistake teaching Erev Ba at Moorhurst community during an all-day workshop. She had well absorbed Uri's philosophy. He hated people dropping out and taking notes, so I'm afraid I would slink out into the passage with a surreptitious pencil and note-book, especially after a really irresistible dance (like Arcanul or Damul). Erev Ba was a special favourite of Uri's, often danced last at S.I.F.D. meetings.

Uri had an open mind and could be very independent. During the great controversy of 1988 when our network was under strong attack from Philip Thornton and allies in the S.I.F.D., Uri wrote "...the majority of S.I.F.D. members are much more tolerant than would appear from the recent correspondence. We are not in the business of rubbishing any activity which happens to be slightly different from ours". Back in about 1982 he wrote to S.I.F.D., "You speak with disdain about members who only dance for the fun of dancing....well, I am one of those people who are only interested in the fun side of dancing...I do not care one iota whether or not a particular dance is 100 years old or was invented yesterday". His criteria: "Do I like the music, do I like the steps, do music and steps match?".

So we in circle dance owe an enormous debt to Uri Gerson. He went on to co-found Balkanplus in '86. He ran S.I.F.D. evenings. He was the first I met who knew about tape recorders and cleaning them, and made quality recordings as a service free of charge. He was able and competent, and his influence here was not negligible. If any of you still teach the dances he introduced, spare a thought for Uri, a fine man and a great leader.

DAVID ROBERTS

Ed.Note: We received the above tribute from our overseas member, David Roberts,

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who lives in South-Eastern France, close to Geneva, Switzerland. It is an almost complete re-print of that which appeared in the quarterly journal of the Sacred/Circle Dance network, "Grapevine", modified for S.I.F.D. readers, and we are grateful to the Editor of "Grapevine", Jan Mulreany, for her kind permission to reproduce this modified version here.



THE PONTIC WORKSHOP WITH YIANNIS KEVREKIDIS AND MATHEOS TSAHOURIDIS

What a treat! Sunday (15th November) was a feast of fantastic music played by young, handsome, charming, talented Matheos, at present studying for a music degree in London. He often sang to his own accompaniment and this certainly enhanced the dancing. As usual, Yiannis had us dancing non-stop with only a short break a.m. and p.m. and $\frac{3}{4}$ hr. for lunch. Matheos barely got a minute's respite while the steps were shown and occasionally broken down. It was lovely to just go on dancing, with little corrections "on the hoof", and on and on till everyone was "in the groove" and almost mesmerised.

It seems that Lykion are making this an annual treat, and the promise of Matheos' playing and singing, with Yiannis' wonderful flow of dances and variations, should encourage even more people to book the date as soon as it is announced.

As the style rather than the steps exercises the mind and body, it was so good to have the constant example of faultless style always in front of us. It felt as though a bit of osmosis was taking place, and with the liberal sprinkling of genuine Greeks sometimes it could almost have been a village gathering, especially in the freelance "Tas". As usual, Yiannis was indefatigable and gently kept us on our toes. In retrospect, only one tiny moan: although each dance was fully introduced, I do think it would have been helpful to have had the dance names written up in order of presentation. The English dancers were asking repeatedly for the name.

Yes, Sunday was a HIGHSPOT. The Hellenic Centre is such an elegant, spacious and light and attractive venue. Unless you really do not like Pontic dances, or had a very pressing prior engagement, why did you miss it?

DIKI GLEESON

P.S. If anyone missed the notes and cassette (£6.00 incl.) or the video (£8.00), I could still organize one for you. Ring me on 0181 363 1506.

And make an early note of 7th March when there will be a full performance by the Lykion performing group, with Matheos too, at Bloomsbury Theatre. A good chance to see their full range of lovely costumes from all over Greece. More details later. D.G.



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

Dec.6th M.C.: Anne Leach

7.00 to 10.00 p.m. Admission £4.00 for S.I.F.D. members, £5.00 for non-members.

Music at Eastbourne

Writing and reading about music is all very well, but musical concepts only become meaningful when you try to put them into practice. For this reason, this month's article isn't going to contain any new ideas at all. Instead, I am going to plug Eastbourne Folk Festival.

Eastbourne is generally considered a dancers festival, but there is also a full programme of dance music sessions covering a wide range of topics for most levels of experience.

This year, as well as playing at two evening dances, my own band, Jacob's Ladder, will be giving two workshops, provisionally entitled 'It looks easy, but ...' and 'Exotic Keys and Different Rhythms'. The first will look at some of the ideas I have been writing about over the past four months - essentially, why does music from other traditions so often sound wrong even when you play all the notes right. In 'Exotic Keys and Different Rhythms' we look at some Balkan rhythms, but also at less common rhythms which can often be used in common time signatures. The exotic keys will include the Hejaz mode (also called the Hebrew mode and the Ahava Raba mode) and other unusual scale. Apart from sounding exotic in themselves they play havoc with Western ideas of harmony and phrasing.

In addition we hope to put on a klezmer workshop. Klezmer is essentially the instrumental music of East European Jewry and as such is related to many East European traditions but also has roots in the Middle East. Originally dance music (these days knowledge of the dances lags a long way behind knowledge of the music) this energetic and emotional style of playing is accessible to all and is undergoing something of a revival world-wide. Rather than just play through a few klezmer tunes we will concentrate on 'how to make it sound like klezmer'.

The English bands will of course also be providing workshops. Anyone who takes playing for dancing seriously would benefit from workshops from the likes of Wild Thyme.

The festival is mainly a dance festival and a full programme of dances will be run, but there has been some talk of making 'music only' tickets available for those who don't want to dance at all. This may or may not happen - watch out for further details as we get them.

Mike Gilbert

P.S. The festival usual sells out, so be ready as soon as they start taking bookings.

Ed. Note: We shall be sending out Eastbourne Festival leaflets with the NEWS when we receive them - probably in time for the January issue.



HOLIDAY IN ROMANIA

I have recently seen dance tours to Romania advertised, with Silviu Ciuciumis' organization, and, having been before and having enjoyed Silviu's courses here, I should very much like to go again. However, the dates offered seem to clash with other events and festivals. Ideally, I should like to go at the end of August or the beginning of September for two weeks, provided this can be arranged with Silviu. If anyone else is interested in going about that time of year, please get in touch with me, at 53 Southway, Carshalton Beeches, Surrey SM5 4HP. Tel: 0181 642 3529.

FRANCES HORROCKS

HOW TO GET FREE PUBLICITY FOR YOURSELF AND YOUR EVENTS (Part 3)

RADIO AND TELEVISION

Most regional radio and television stations welcome suggestions for interviews. Ring or write, saying why an interview with you (or your group) would be topical and of local interest. Send the interviewer basic information and a list of questions you want to be asked. Your interviewer will be grateful because he/she may not know anything about folk dancing and probably does not have the time to read up on the subject.

Include the questions people usually ask you ("How did you get into folk dancing?") as well as questions which give you a chance to elaborate on your subject ("What is so special about 18th century ghawazee-style dance?"). Practise answering these questions, but don't learn the answers by heart or they will sound boring.

If your interview is recorded, the television or radio team will probably film and record several times as much material as they are going to use. They will pick only the most interesting bits. If you are participating in a live show, you may be trembling when you think of all the mistakes you can make. Even V.I.P.s suffer from this; it's similar to stage fright, the first time is the worse, after that it gets better, but it never disappears. Professional television and radio presenters actually like people who are a bit nervous. They are the best interviewees because they are natural. Don't worry about stuttering or correct grammar. Nobody speaks perfect English in a live programme.

Smile at the presenter or the audience. Even a radio audience can hear your smile. Be as enthusiastic as you can. Your enthusiasm will get your message across better than the words you say. Afterwards you will probably realize what you have forgotten to say, and how differently you should have phrased your answers. Everyone feels like that after being on air, but there's always a next time and an opportunity to do better.

If you want a tape of the broadcast, ask in advance and hand a blank tape to the recording technician.

CHRISTINE HALL

BALKANPLUS, 12th December, at Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, London N.W.1, 7.00 to 10.30 p.m. £4.00. (Please note the inevitable increase in price mentioned last month).

The ever-delightful Dunav will be making music, while our distinguished M.C. will be the dashing and debonair Dave Carter, who will present an eclectic and efficacious evening of elegant, expressive and exotic dances for your delectation and delight. To reflect the tone of the evening, you are kindly requested to aspire to the quintessence of sartorial elegance.

The next Balkanplus will be on 9th January 1999 with the band "Vuhpross".

Bring & Buy Sale: A big thank you to all those who brought and donated items for the sale (some of whom don't even come to Balkanplus), to those who helped to set up, helped to clear away, helped to sell, and, most of all, to those who bought. We raised £85.05. Admiration and thanks also to Madeleine Chapman and John Riley who ran a most successful and enjoyable dance despite the distractions of the bargain-hunters.

FRANCES HORROCKS

WHAT'S ON IN DECEMBER

- Dec.4th THE WHIRLING DERVISHES from Damascus, 7.00 and 9.30 p.m. at Queen Elizabeth Hall, London. £16.00, £13.50, £10.00. Tel: 0171 960 4242.
- Dec.5th ZIVKO FIRFOV FOLKLORE GROUP PARTY at Moorfields Primary School, London, E.C.1. (Nearest Underground Station, Old Street). 7.00 to 10.30 p.m. Dances from Croatia, Serbia, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania. £6 including refreshments. ADMISSION BY TICKET ONLY. Contact Irene Keywood, 0181 592 4427.
- Dec.6th "KAROLINKA", Polish Song & Dance Company. Fairfield Halls, Croydon. 5.30 p.m. £12.00, £10.00, £8.00, £6.00. Group reductions available. Box Office: 0181 688 9291. Contact No.: 0181 310 4350.
- Dec.6th S.I.F.D. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 4.00 p.m. Cecil Sharp House.
- Dec.7th IRISH SET DANCING WORKSHOP taught by Anne Leach. 8.30 to 10.30 p.m. at Gibson Hall, St.Columba's Church, Downing Place, Cambridge. £1.50. Contact Mike Gilbert for details, 01223 425648.
- S.I. Dec.7th HIGH WYCOMBE FOLKDANCE CLUB CHRISTMAS PARTY, 8.00 p.m. at Manor Farm, County Middle School, Rose Avenue, Hazlemere, High Wycombe, Bucks.£2.00 All welcome. More details from Alison Whisker, 01923 778547.
- S.I. Dec.12th S.I.F.D. WEST MIDLANDS BRANCH CHRISTMAS PARTY, 7.30 to 10.30 p.m. at Bentley Heath Primary School, Widney Close, Bentley Heath (near Dorr-idge). Bring & share supper. Admission £1.50.
- Dec.12th BALKANPLUS. See p.9.
- Dec.12th DANCES, SONGS & MUSIC FROM ALL REGIONS OF POLAND including Krakowiak, Oberek from Lowicz, Kujawiak, Polonaise, Mazurka, dances from Lwow, and Christmas carols and traditional scenes. 7.00 p.m. at Commonwealth Institute Theatre, Kensington High Street, London W.8. Tickets £10.00 available from Polish Y.M.C.A., 0181 992 5699 (11.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.)
- Dec.12th DAY COURSE OF TURKISH & ISRAELI DANCES with Roberto Haddon, organized by Bristol International Group at St.Ursula's School, Brecon Road, Henleaze, Bristol. 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. £8.00. Plus BALKAN/ISRAELI PARTY, 7.00 to 10.30 p.m. Christmas theme. Farewell party for James and Jacky Webb. Please bring food to share for evening. No price given for evening. Contact: Anne Marshall, 0117 950 9889.
- Dec.18th BARNET CHRISTMAS DANCE. The customary rich mix of dance, seasonal fare, and cabaret. Music by Dunav Balkan Group. £4.00. 8.00 p.m. at Church House, Wood Street, Barnet, Herts. Contact: Brian Dowsett, 01992 582717. (Weekly meetings at Barnet recommence on 8th January).
- Dec.18th/20th S.I.F.D. DANCING/WALKING WEEKEND at Dunford, Midhurst, Sussex. Enquiries to Jack Richardson. See p.3.
- Dec.23rd/Jan.3rd CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR with Martin Ihns in Macedonia. For details contact Dave Carter, 14 Highmead, Hockley, Essex SS5 4QG. Tel: 01702 202289.



Events covered by S.I.F.D. insurance are marked "S.I." in the margin. All other events are included for information, and any enquiries should be directed to the organiser.

MERRY CHRISTMAS, AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR

Linksmu sventu Kaledu ir Laimingu Nauju Metu Felic Nadal i Any Nuo
Buon Natale e felice Capo d'Anno Il-Milied it-Tajjeb Is-Sena it-Tajba
Zalig Kerstfeest en een Gelukkig Niëukjaar Glad Jul och ett Gott Nytt Ar
Tchestito Rojdestvo Hristovo. Tchestita Nova Godina Kobotama Na Yesu
Sarbatori Felicite La Multi Ani Nadolic Llawen Blwyddn Newdd
Mo'adim Mesimkha Boldog Karacsonyi is Ujevi Unnepeket
Gledileg Jol og Nyar Kala Christougena kai Eftikhes to Neon Ethos
Betarin arozo baray salnow Kung Ho Hsin Hsi Ching Chi Shen Tan
Gung Tso Sun Tan'Gung Haw Sun Sretam Bozic. Vesela Nova Godina
Hvaa Joula Omnellista Utta Vuotta Joyeux Noel et heureuse Annee
Veselykh Svyat i scaslivoHo Novoho Roku Selamah Tahun Baru
Shenoraavor Nor Dari yev Pari Gaghand Kana Nofagoya hot Pleel Jamia Ahna

Pozdreviyayu vas a proznikom Rozhdestva Khristom i s Novim Godom

Atamma'na Ia'ka 'Id el Mila'd Wa Sa'na Sa'ida

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Yeni Yiliniz Kuthar, Saadetket Dilerim

Gojan Kristnaskon Kaj Felican Novjaron

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Kreshendalat dhe, Motin e ri Gezuarë

Glaedlig Jul og godt Nytt Aar

E. & O.E.!