

SJFD NEWS



MAY

1999

SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING

EDITOR: Lily Avery (Mrs.), 16 Willow Drive, Little Common, Bexhill-on-Sea,
East Sussex TN39 4PX. Tel: 01424 845866.

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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 shows a Chinese dancer, one of a large group of dancers,
students of the Politics Department of Tonghua Teacher Training College in
Tonghua, Jilin Province, Northeast China. She wears a white dress and dances
with one pink and one red bamboo and silk fan. The drawing is by Deolinda
Caldeira and is based on a photograph taken by Christine Hall (copyright).

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CHAIRPERSON: Jeanette Hull (Miss), 24 The Homefield, London Road, Morden,
Surrey SM4 5AS. Tel: 0181 640 5267.

SECRETARY: Alison Scrimshaw (Mrs.), 22 Sherwood Park Road, Sutton, Surrey
SM1 2SQ. Tel: 0181 642 3385.

TREASURER: Judith Payling (Mrs.), Rosebank, 56 Quickley Lane, Chorleywood,
Rickmansworth, Herts. WD3 5AF.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY &
GROUPS LIAISON OFFICER: Alan Morton, 26 Durham Road, Harrow, Middx. HA1 4PG.
Tel: 0181 427 8042.

PUBLICITY OFFICER: George Sweetland, 28 Hayes Court, Camberwell New Road,
London SE5 0TQ. Tel: 0171 701 3785.
Internet Web Site Address: www.sifd.org

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REPORT ON S.I.F.D. BEGINNERS' DANCE, 20TH MARCH

I am pleased to report that we had a very successful Beginners' Dance on 20th
March. There were about sixty people in attendance, including a fair number of
new faces. (I didn't manage to keep an accurate count). We have hopes that
some will turn up in some of our regular classes.

I should particularly like to thank Fiona Howarth and Anne Leach for their
stimulating teaching, and to thank "Cloudburst" for their versatile playing.
I should also like to thank Anna Huston for the appropriately illustrated flier
advertising the event, and both Anna Huston and Frank Dowling for handling the
cash box. I can also say that the sound equipment worked flawlessly, thanks to
regular maintenance work by Richard Mellish. Finally, my thanks to all the
regular members who supported the event and to those who publicised the event
to newcomers.

CASPAR CRONK

S.I.F.D. TEACHERS' FORUM (A TASTER DAY), 15TH MAY 1999

In Trefusis, Cecil Sharp House. 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.
£6.00 for S.I.F.D. members. £8.00 for non-members.

Proposed timetable for the day:-

- 10.30-11.30 Presentation and discussion of the aims and objectives of the proposed new teachers' syllabus.
- 11.30-11.45 Coffee break.
- 11.45-1.00 Two teachers will teach dances, using contrasting styles/methods and "students" will be asked to think about how they are being taught, and a questionnaire will be handed out.
- 1.00-2.00 Lunch (during which time, the questionnaire to be completed).
- 2.00-2.30 Discussion of the methods from the questionnaire.
- 2.30-3.00 Analyse two or three popular dances. How would they be taught?
- 3.00-3.15 Tea break.
- 3.15-4.15 "Students" who have brought tapes can ask for hints and discuss how to teach the dances (only time for two or three people) and use the rest of us as "guinea pigs" if they wish.
- 4.15-4.30 Wind down with a couple of easy dances for everyone.

All times are approximate, and I hope everyone will find the day worthwhile. All are welcome.

HELEN EZRA

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SACRED MASK DANCES AND MUSIC BY TIBETAN MONKS FROM TASHI LHUNPO MONASTERY IN SOUTHERN INDIA

In addition to the performance of the monks at the Conway Hall, London W.C.1, on 13th May 1999 (see last month's SIFD NEWS), they will be touring the U.K. as follows:-

- May 18th Burnley (Lancs.). 20th Craigavon (N.Ireland). 21st Shrewsbury.
22nd Cardigan. 23rd Inverclyde (Scotland). 24th Cardiff.
- June 10th Beaford (Devon). 11th Malvern. 12th Woodbridge (Suffolk).
15th Halifax. 16th Kendal. 29th Grassington (N.Yorkshire).
- July 6th York. 23rd Reading.

For further information, please contact me at The Tibet Foundation on 0171 404 2889.

JUDY INGRAM

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MUSIC
Some English tunes from Wilf Horrocks on p.12. If you would like the music for any particular dance, please let Wilf know, on 0181 642 3629.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ISRAELI FOLK DANCING

For almost as long as I have been involved with Israeli folk dancing on the one hand and the SIFD on the other, I have been aware of the existence of two opposing camps - those who accept Israeli dancing, despite its young history, as folk dancing, and those who maintain that because of its short life span and constant evolution and change it cannot be considered as such.

"To create a folk dance culture artificially, generally nurtured over generations, even centuries, is almost a contradiction in terms". I am quoting here from an article by Shelly Kleinman which appeared in a publication called Ariel a few years ago. This article, entitled "Folk Dancing in Israel" gave me the impetus to write a brief history of Israeli dancing based on this article as well as my own knowledge and experience which go back (I hate to admit it) over 40 years - not that much less than the state of Israel itself.

Both in the Old Testament and the Talmud there are many references to dancing, and, throughout the history of the Jews, dancing has been "an expression of joy and religious devotion". The Hassidim (the religious Jews of Eastern Europe) had their own dance traditions as did the Yemenite community, but the early pioneers of the 20s and 30s had to rely on the dances which had immigrated with them as, for example, the polka from Poland, the cherkassia from Russia and the hora from Rumania.

The hora, above all other dances, came to epitomise the togetherness of all the members of the community. As Gurit Kadman, one of the most influential founders of the Israeli folk dance movement said: "All of them with equal rights and equal value, regardless of sex or dancing ability..... Simple and energetic movement..... the closely-knit chain remains and goes on like a magic ring."

In the early 1940s, despite the increasing popularity of folk dancing, only a handful of dances had been created locally, and it became Gurit Kadman's mission to - as she put it - "dance in Hebrew", i.e. to create new dances in the Jewish settlements. The first gathering of folk dancers took place in 1944, almost in defiance of the tragic news from Europe, and the motto for this first Dalia dance festival became the word 'davka' which means 'in spite of' or 'all the more'.

By 1947 all the dances at the 2nd Dalia festival were native Israeli. Shelly Kleinman writes: "The 2nd Dalia Festival has become legendary. 500 took part in the 2-day event which attracted over 25,000 spectators who sat on ploughed furrows in a large natural amphitheatre... A curfew imposed by the British authorities prohibited travel at night so the festival was marked by enthusiastic dancing till dawn, setting the stage for the all-night dance sessions and performances that now take place in Karmiel" (pronounced Karmi-el).

The dances that were emerging at that time were inspired in the main by the Bible and the more secular celebrations of the many festivals and agriculture-related activities, e.g. 'Shibolet Basade' (Wheat in the Fields) or 'Hora Mamtera' (Hora of the Water -Sprinkler). It is interesting to note that the only authentic Hassidic European dance to be accepted into the repertoire was "SHERELE", but Hassidic music has been the inspiration for innumerable dances, and for this we owe a great debt to, surprisingly, a Yemenite choreographer who is known to us all as Moshiko (Moshe Yitzhak Halevy). To him we are also indebted for the many Yemenite dances he created for the traditional Yemenite songs, many of which I heard, to my surprise, sung by elderly Yemenites after the Sabbath meal. But even before the emergence of these dances, the popularity of Yemenite dances began to grow steadily from the late 1940s, due in part to the success of the Yemenite 'Inbal' dance troupe founded by Sara Levi-Tanai of which Moshiko was a member.

Another strong influence on Israeli folk dance were the Arab and Druze dances, e.g. 'Debka Uria' (choreographed by Moshiko in 1959) and 'Debka Dalia' and later the many cultural influences of immigrants, e.g. Turkish, Greek, Ladino (Spanish origin) and many more.

In 1945 the Israel Folk Dance Committee was established, and it remained linked to the Arts and Culture Division of the General Federation of Labour who organised classes throughout Israel both for dancers and dance instructors. It was responsible for selecting the dances deemed worthy of incorporation into the repertoire of Israeli folk dances.

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In the late 1960s Israeli folk dancing changed course dramatically and irrevocably - it entered the private sector. An increasing number of dance sessions sprang up across the country run by professional choreographers and dance teachers and often funded by local councils who also began sponsoring local folk dance troupes. All this gave Israeli folk dancing a revitalising boost with the result that it became one of the most popular recreational activities for all age groups. Today Israelis, irrespective of where they live, have a choice of venues and levels on any evening of the week.

It is believed by many that it was Yoav Ashriel (pronounced Yo-av Ashri-el), the creator of 'old' favourites such as 'Erev Ba' and 'Ta'am Haman' who steered the course which led to this transformation when, in 1968, he opened the Centre of Folklore, later to become the Centre for Israeli Folk Dance. There he offered private seminars for dance teachers and further revolutionised the scenario by abandoning the custom of live music (e.g. the accordion) in favour of recorded music. Whether he single-handedly turned the Israeli folk dance scene upside down, or whether others contributed to the change, the pyramid effect became unstoppable.

There can be no doubt that modern popular music has had a great influence on the Israeli dance styles of the 1980s and 1990s. However, it is also true to say that, whereas the music might be modern, the dances themselves are always created around the well-established folk elements of the steps we are so familiar with, e.g. the grapevine (in Israel called the 'mayim' step), Yemenite step etc. No matter how modern the music, there is no way in which anyone familiar with disco dancing or such like could join in in an Israeli folk dance session, that is to say the music might sound somewhat familiar in its rhythm, but the step combinations and formations would be totally alien. The dances themselves are without a question folk dances.

Traditionalists maintain that the changes of the past 3 decades have put the Israeli folk dances into a totally new category, far removed from the original ideological basis of the early dances. More progressive cognoscenti like Yonatan Karmon (a choreographer and the artistic director, from its inception, of the biggest annual Israeli folk dance festival at Karmiel), Moshiko and Yoav Ashriel maintain that artistic freedom is all-important. "What are 'folk dances' if not the dances the nation is dancing?" comments Yonatan Karmon.

What about the 'rest of the world' including us in England? Prior to the explosion of the Israeli folk dance scene in the late 1960s you could come across the hora at festivities such as weddings and bar-mitzvahs, and people would dance the same steps in a circle for hours on end (does 'Hava Nagila Hava' ring a bell?). Today there are innumerable Israeli folk dance classes, workshops, seminars etc. organised in many far-flung places (Moshiko has recently returned from teaching in Hong Kong, and not for the first time). Those among us who are dedicated enthusiasts will not be put to shame at any dance session in Israel. The 'lapsed enthusiast' will still find many familiar dances, particularly at dance marathons which take place frequently all over Israel, when thousands of dancers attend and dance the night through.

The ever-increasing number of dances created, added to the older ones, makes it impossible to go through the entire repertoire other than at the dance marathons mentioned above, and it is up to the teachers to teach whichever dances they prefer or their dancers demand. Thus you may find, for example, that one of the current favourites 'Ahuvati Bat Hamishim' (my beloved [country] is 50 years old) by Shmulik Govari, one of the most popular and prolific Israeli choreographers, danced at almost every venue in England, will remain almost unknown in some parts of Israel. One could draw a parallel to the various villages in Europe where a 'popular' folk dance in one village would be unknown in another neighbouring one.

Even when attending a dance session every day of the week, there isn't enough time to dance all the dances regularly. Which dances will survive into the future? On paper and on tape they will all survive. Which ones will continue to be danced? That is for the 'folk' to determine!

Judy Ingram



A CHANGE OF NUMBER For people wishing to contact Roger Wicksteed, please note he has a new telephone number - Oxford 451890.

2ND TO 4TH JULY 1999 - MILTON KEYNES INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

Friday night: Alpana Segupta Dance Company or Meet The Groups
Saturday afternoon: Macedonian workshops
Saturday evening: Concert by Macedonians, Koreans, Scots and Kiribatis
Sunday afternoon: Concert by local groups
Sunday evening: Concert by Macedonians, Koreans, Scots and one other.

Box Office: 01908 322568. Festival Office: 01908 610564.

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Yes, the Macedonians are still coming. They are coming by coach and will avoid both Serbia and Albania by travelling via Bulgaria. They were supposed to get their visas from the British Embassy in Belgrade but that has now been changed to Sofia. So all should be O.K. They are bringing two professional dance teachers so we are running workshops. (See Rachel Gray's article below).

I hope the Festival leaflet will be printed in time to go out with this SIFD NEWS. If not, then it will be with next month's. The Festival now has a Friends organisation. It costs £4.00 a year and gives you discounts on various things including tickets bought before 1st June. If you would like to join, then send a cheque to MKIF at 30 St. John Street, Newport Pagnell MK16 8HJ.

DON ALLISON

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MACEDONIAN DANCE WORKSHOPS, SATURDAY 3RD JULY 1999

As part of the Milton Keynes International Festival, two qualified dance teachers who are accompanying the Macedonian dance group have agreed to run two workshops in the afternoon on 3rd July at Stantonbury Campus in Milton Keynes from 2.00 to 3.30 p.m. and from 3.45 to 5.15 p.m. Price: £4 per class (concessions £3). People attending both workshops will be able to get £2 off the price of a ticket for the evening concert (usual price £9/£6). Audio tapes and notes will be available and there will be time at the end of each class for you to make your own video tapes if you wish.

For further details, ring the Festival Office on 01908 610564, or Rachel Gray on 01908 502347.

RACHEL GRAY

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BALKANPLUS. 8th May at Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, London N.W.1, 6.00 to 10.30 p.m. £4.00. M.C.: Frances Horrocks.

In February, we had great difficulty in gaining access to the building, resulting in a very late start (many thanks to those who bravely waited in the cold) and forcing the cancellation of the pre-dance course, so this month I am going to try again. The proposed dances are as before - Bavno Horo, Bucimiš, Schioapa and Memede, starting at 6.00 p.m. at no extra charge. I shall also try to include the dances that had to be abandoned last time.

FRANCES HORROCKS

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Lily,

I'm wondering if there are any other members of S.I.F.D. who run an International Dance Study Group for the U3A (University of the Third Age). As S.I.F.D. has a few members who are nearing the autumn of their days, I thought it might be a chance to extend our activities. I started a group over a year ago and it was a real chance to introduce International to people who had never heard of it, let alone tried. It is not easy at first to manage a roomful of people who are not used to moving around or holding hands comfortably, but do persevere.

I enclose an article I wrote for the Bromley U3A Magazine (see below) which shows how things do improve. (It is written in layman's terms for a general readership). I hope this may encourage the formation of other Study Groups in many areas.

Shalom,

FIONA HOWARTH
17a Ravensbourne Road, Bromley
BR1 1HN. Tel: 0181 460 2305

"BEST FOOT FORWARD" - An article written for Bromley U3A Magazine

More than thirty "mature persons" are circling the room; the music changes from lively pipes to strange Oriental singing and drumming, then to a haunting melody in 7/8 rhythm. Most of the time the people are smiling or even laughing, but from time to time expressions of intense concentration are seen. Can this be some ancient pantheistic ritual? Are we watching a television documentary from some far-flung corner? No; it is the Bromley U3A Dance Group in action on their International Dance repertoire.

Over a year ago I waited to teach the first meeting of this Study Group, which I had agreed to lead in tandem with Pam Honour. I had prepared a set of what I considered easy and achievable dances. It soon became apparent that dancing in a circle and learning step patterns was not a major part of most participants' life experience. Everybody had a go, and we had a larf, but I must admit that I left that meeting thinking that "dumbing down" was the only option, and we would never cope with more than a few very simple dances. How wrong I was!

I should like to pay a tribute to U3A members. They have worked so hard, and made so much progress. They change (almost) effortlessly from dancing a lively Israeli hora to a very stylised Japanese dance; they can follow the changes of step in a Greek open-circle dance by responding to signals from the leader, then form long sets for an elegant French branle. As for the Russian dance in two concentric circles, everyone finds their niche in time for "arms over". We now have more dances in our repertoire than we can do in a two-hour class. I enjoy it and I think everyone else does too; they certainly keep coming back.

Pamela Honour had to leave us for health reasons, but four members of the group who attend Line Dance classes have now started to lead a session each time.

If you have enjoyed the music when on holiday in foreign parts, and are intrigued by the idea of joining us, do come along. But I must warn you that this is essentially a participatory group, very hands-on (or should it be feet?). We meet every first and third Thursday afternoon, 2.00 to 4.00, at St. Luke's Church Hall in Raglan Road, Bromley Common.

FIONA HOWARTH
International dance tutor

"THE WAY BACK" by Paul Bradley

I think it all started in 1952 when, as members of Chase Rover Crew at Romford, we were told to go into the world and "participate", otherwise it was feared we would all end up as "beer, baccy and baloney" according to Ralph Reader of The Gang Show fame.

We already did some youth hostelling, so it was decided to join the Hornchurch Y.H.A. group who met in an upstairs room behind a pub. It was half-pints of cider, lots of chat, who's that girl over there, and where are we going next weekend? But there was also square and country dancing to records; no-one taught, you just joined in. On enquiring, "How do you get to know more about this dancing lark?", we were told of a large group of people in East London known as the Harrow Green Folkdance Group. It was said they practised other country dances and had folk costumes too, besides doing square and English country, Scottish, and Kolos (what on earth is a Kolo?).

Wednesday saw half a dozen of us cycling down to Forest Gate where the action was (very little traffic on the road in 1952 and we cycled almost everywhere). Nice venue, nice hall, nice girls, but we were totally ignored! Did we need an invitation to join, we wondered? But it was good fun; even as forced spectators we could see that. The tunes, the steps, the apparently total dedication and effortlessness left us gasping. Cycling home that evening, we decided that it was so catching we had to go along next week too. By the third Wednesday, three or four of the girls took us under their wing for some of the simpler dances to see if we could manage them. Two of them we had met previously at Youth Hostels, so there a beginning was made.

Princess Margaret came to a "do" at Cecil Sharp House (we had heard of the House by this time) and her hosts composed a brand new dance called "Princess Margaret's Fancy" in her honour. Well, suddenly square and country dancing "took off" and people were queuing to become members of the E.F.D.S.S.

About this time we came across a couple of girls from Elm Park who were members of the Woodcraft Folk. Ivy (now Romney) was one of them; still a keen member of E.F.D.S.S. and a tremendous teacher. She was shortly to meet and later to marry the rather dashing young Army Officer called George.

Time passed swiftly; we attended every Dance everywhere, went to demos and rehearsals, and eventually became backbone members of the club and into the prestigious demonstration team! We had arrived! Between various clubs and venues we did International, English Country, Playford, Scottish, Circle and Squares. Mike Lawrence invited some of us to join him in the AngloGerman Friendship Club meeting at the Swizzerbund Club, Tottenham Court Road, where we learnt the Tyrolean Schuhplattler dances and performed at venues such as Consulates, Embassies, Night Clubs, Charity Balls and "Open" Garden Parties for foreigners in London. We also danced at the Royal Albert Hall for the S.I.F.D. and the E.F.D.S.S. for several years running; a really great get-together.

Love crept in, I suppose it was bound to, and folkdance weddings began to punctuate our calendar. We still went youth hostelling; in fact Jim Titheridge and his wife ran High Roding Y.H.A. They were both dance musicians and we went there several times a year but especially for dancing around the Maypole which was set up outside each Spring. Usually we cycled to events at Cecil Sharp House or Inns of Court for S.I.F.D. dances but, if not, the "new" electric trains were good, Romford to Liverpool Street in 20 minutes, and we would do a jig on station platforms as someone would have a harmonica in their pocket. Harry de Caux was one. He also taught himself to play the accordion and mandolin. Maurice Pfeffer was the other more established musician for the S.I.F.D. Other passengers were delighted to see the young bloods and their girl friends "doing their stuff". (May I add here, for those readers who edge towards 70 as opposed to 17, we did not dance just once a fortnight as some clubs do, nor even once a week, but were

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out several times a week, every week. Oh, that I could do it all again!)).

Towards the end of 1955, due to change of job, I was working 60, 70 and on one occasion 82½ hours in one week; folk dancing? what's that?. Eventually, however, I joined Hitchin F.D.C.; very nice people, very genteel, but we longed to dance Hopak, Karapyet, Windmill and Landler as at Harrow Green. Those days had gone, apparently, for ever.

1960 saw me in Bristol, where I danced with the Students Union Folk class. The dancing was simple but good to get back into. 1965 saw me in French Canada, where I saw an advertisement for "new folk dancers" and so went along, but did not stay, and in 1970 I was in Hamburg where I thought I would be able to dance the German dances learnt years before but that was out. But I did hear of the Caledonian Society who met at the International School in Othmarson. Great - Good Man of Balangee, Petronella, 51st Highland Division Reel, here we come! What a great bunch they were, mostly ex-pats with a sprinkling of Germans, always ready to make a man welcome. There were about 6,000 Brits in Hamburg at that time, mostly Oil Company members, and about 60 of us in the newly-developing Aircraft Industry.

1972 saw me back in the Bristol area; folk dancing seemed to drop out of focus. 1989, down came the Berlin Wall and a third of West Countries industry based on the M.O.D. was out of work, including me. I decided to move to Frinton in Essex and in 1995 saw advertised "Country Dancing at Lawford". I gave them a ring and this was the start of "The Way Back". The Phoenix F.D.C. at Lawford made me most welcome, a really good bunch of people.

One evening on the "Notices" table there was a leaflet advertising the Colchester Day of Dance at Ardleigh Village Hall. The day arrived, I found the place, and danced all day, thanks to expert tuition given by various callers and wonderful musical back-up. Come the evening Dance and spare ladies were going to be difficult to find, but then Ivy Romney walked in! We said, "Hello, not you again" and reminisced all night - fantastic conclusion to a fantastic day.

At this point I decided to change my allegiance and join the Touchstone F.D.C. who met weekly, whereas Lawford met fortnightly. I am happily ensconced at Touchstone and there is good tuition from both inside and outside the club but I still miss the International scene, so if there are any ex-Harrow Green or S.I.F.D. members out there in North East Essex who would like to form an International Group, give me a buzz on 01255 678966. It would be run to complement the existing groups and interchange with them on as many social events as seemed possible.

PAUL BRADLEY

Ed.Note: This is an abridged version of Paul's article. The full version was published in the March issue of "Essex Folk News".

PEN-PAL Is anyone interested in a pen-friendship with a young man in Iran? If so, please contact Kay Kedge who has the details. We don't know whether he is a folk dancer but he mentions Lambada dancing. Write to Kay at 9 Barnes Rise, Kings Langley, Herts. WD4 8AN - but only young girls need apply!!

MUSIC. Recent releases on C.D. and cassette on the "Steel Carpet" label include music and songs from Romania, Ireland, Sweden and Eastern Europe. For full information, contact Steel Carpet, 190 Burton Road, Derby DE1 1TQ. Tel: 01332 346399.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

June 4th/6th FEST NOZ at Thoresby Park, Nottinghamshire. A weekend of French and Celtic music includes workshops in Breton singing, French dancing, Scandinavian dancing, Breton dancing and various kinds of music. For details contact Gail Cooke, NCC (Arts), Trent Bridge House, Fox Road, Nottingham NG2 6BJ.

S.I. June 6th ISRAELI DANCE WORKSHOP with Anat at Stone Cross Memorial Hall, near Eastbourne. 10.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. £12.00 (concessions £7.50). Shared vegetarian lunch. For bookings/information/map, contact Rowena Martin, 01323 503991.

June 12th S.I.F.D. DAY COURSE. Dances from Billingham Folk Festival. A mixture of couple and circle dances. 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. in Trefusis, Cecil Sharp House. More details next month.

June 18th/20th S.I.F.D. DANCING/WALKING WEEKEND at Ammerdown Study Centre, near Radstock, South of Bath. A few vacancies. Details from Roy Clarke, 33 Cedar Park Road, Enfield, Middx EN2 0HE. Tel: 0181 3672649.

June 19th MARTISORUL ROMANIAN FOLKDANCE GROUP at Victoria Embankment Gardens, London, at 12 noon (may be changed to 3.00 p.m.).

June 19th GREEK DANCE COURSE with Maggie O'Regan, organized by Barlow I.F.D.G. 2.00-5.00 p.m. at St.Ninian's U.R. Church Hall, corner of Wilbraham and Egerton Road South, Chorlton, Manchester. Followed by shared supper and FAMILY EVENING DANCE, 6.15-9.30 p.m. £4 Course only; £6 whole event. Further details from Joan Wood, 0161 881 1077.

June 27th CENTRAL LONDON INTERNATIONAL FOLKDANCE GROUP, 3.00 p.m. at Victoria Embankment Gardens, London.

July 2nd/4th MILTON KEYNES INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL. See p.6.

July 6th/11th LLANGOLLEN INTERNATIONAL EISTEDDFOD.

July 11th BALATON HUNGARIAN FOLKDANCE GROUP and PHILHELLENES GREEK FOLKDANCE GROUP, 3.00 p.m. at Victoria Embankment Gardens, London.

July 15th/21st LE GRAND BAL DE L'EUROPE at Gennetines, France, includes workshops from many different countries. For details, contact Le Grand Bal de l'Europe, les Gauthiers, 03400 Gennetines, France.

July 17th OXFORD BALKANSKO DRO SUMMER PARTY, 7.00-10.30 p.m. at St.Margaret's Parish Institute Hall, Polstead Road, off Woodstock Road, Oxford. No price given.

July 18th MERTON PARK and WOODVALE INTERNATIONAL FOLKDANCE GROUPS, and the IBERIAN FOLK SONG & DANCE SOCIETY, 3.00 p.m. at Victoria Embankment Gardens, London.

July 31st/Aug.6th EVENT AT HALSWAY MANOR. In addition to English dancing, there will be German dancing with Eriwin Lutmann, a dance teacher from Kreepen, near Bremen, with musicians Henning & Heyo Spekker from Bad Zwischenbahn. Details from Halsway Manor, Crowcombe, Taunton, Somerset TA4 4BD.

Aug.14th/21st BILLINGHAM INTERNATIONAL FOLKLORE FESTIVAL.

Aug.14th/21st HF HOLIDAYS RESIDENTIAL WEEK IN ST.IVES with Phil and Brenda Steventon. A course aimed at Beginner/Intermediate dancers; all dances will be walked through. To book, ring 0181 905 9558, or for further details contact Phil or Brenda on 0181 397 9649.

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S.I. Aug.27th/30th MINI DANCE FESTIVAL by local groups at Roedean School, Brighton. International Folk, Circle Dance and a country walk. Live music from "Labyrinth" Band on Saturday evening. Full board, mostly single rooms, swimming pool. £110 (deposit £20). Please send s.a.e. for details and booking form to Rowena Martin, 60 Anderida Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN22 0PZ. Tel: 01323 503991.

S.I. Sept.12th DAY OF BALKAN DANCES with Frances Horrocks, 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. at Stone Cross Memorial Hall, near Eastbourne (at junction of B2104 and B2247, map on request). £6.00. Drinks provided, please bring packed lunch. Ring Rowena Martin on 01323 503991 to reserve your place.

Oct.22nd BRISTOL I.F.D. 25TH ANNIVERSARY PARTY.

S.I. SUNDAY, 13th JUNE. S.I.F.D. WEST MIDLANDS BRANCH ANNUAL COTSWOLDS SAFARI starts at 11.00 a.m. at Moreton-in-Marsh, followed at 12.30 p.m. by lunch and perhaps a few dances at Bledington Village Hall. We then move on to Blockley, where we are joining in the village charity open gardens day. Ten gardens will be open from 2.00-6.00 p.m.; we shall be dancing at Mill Dene Garden in the centre of the village at 3.00 p.m. and 4.00 p.m. Though there is a charge for garden visitors, dancers will not be charged, but please come in costume. Blockley is three miles from Moreton-in-Marsh, a short distance to the right off the A44 towards Evesham. Car parking will be at Park Farm, a few minutes' walk from Mill Dene. For anyone from further afield who wants to join us, B. & B. is available at Mill Dene at £25.00. Tel: 01386 700457.

MAVIS LOWE

Events covered by S.I.F.D. insurance are marked "S.I." in the margin. Please remember that the onus is on you to mark each event when sending in the notice if your event is covered by our insurance.

ORIENTAL DANCING

Christine Hall has published a full list of her regular classes, shows, workshops, residential weekends, summer schools, in Oriental Dancing, up to July 2000. To apply for a copy, or for more information, contact Christine at Finchden, Sandhurst, Cranbrook, Kent TN18 5JS. Tel: 01580 850687.

ARMENIAN TEACHER

There is currently in London a genuine Armenian (i.e. one from Armenia rather than London or Paris) dance teacher who has been invited by the Armenian community to form a performing dance troupe. He does, however, have time to spare so if any groups(s) would like to have him for an evening, please contact me, Dalila Heath, on 01707 642774 (telephone) or 01707 665091 (fax). He is a lecturer at the Armenian Ethnographic Institute and a very able teacher.

DALILA HEATH