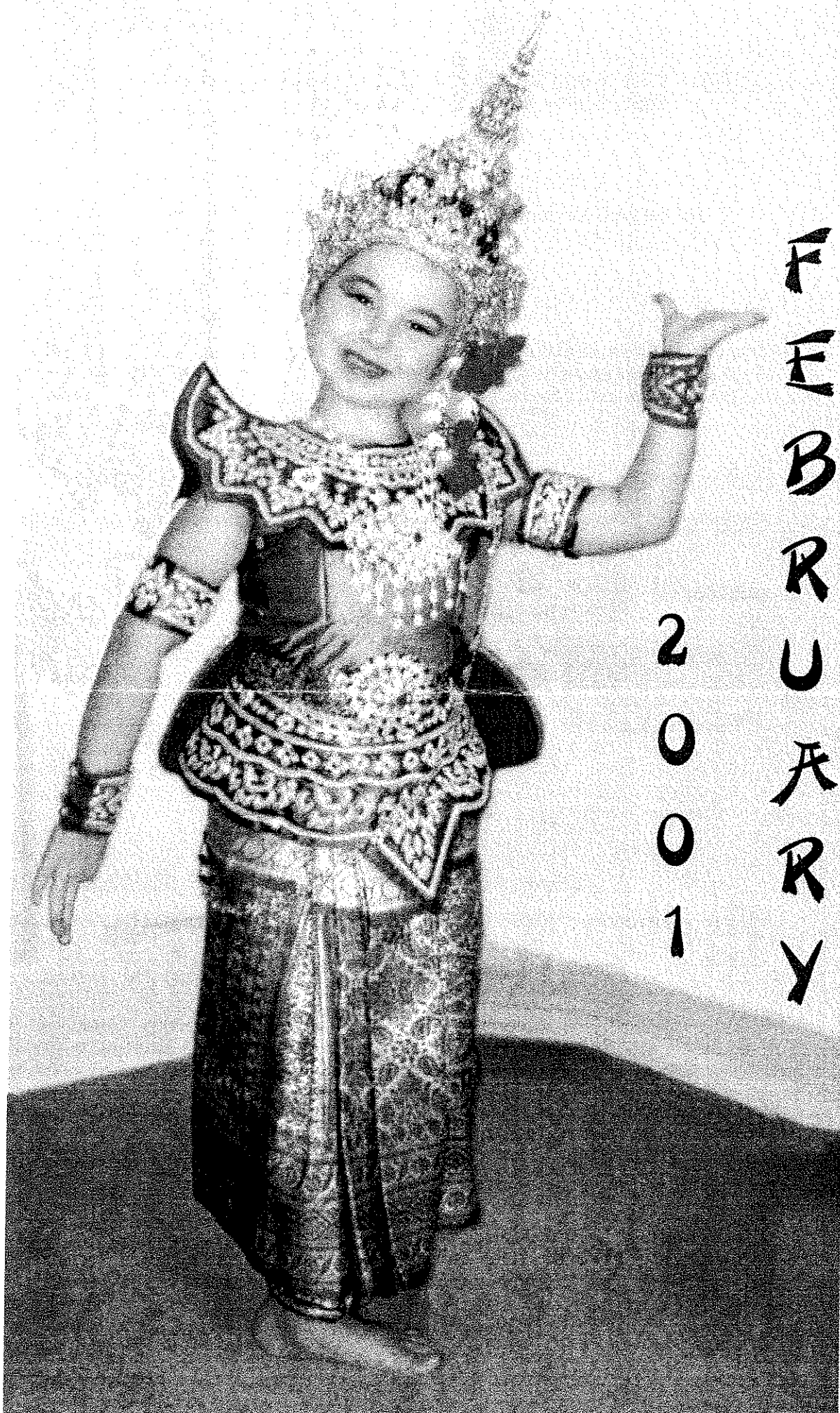


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SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING

Internet Web Site: www.sifd.org

EDITOR: Lily Avery (Mrs.), 16 Willow Drive, Little Common, Bexhill-on-Sea,
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The typing is done by Lily Avery. The printing, packaging and posting
is done by Dalila Heath.

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The cover this month was produced by Simon Guest from a photograph of
8-year old Soumaya El Arfa in Thai costume, taken by her mother, Tanya
Allen. (See article on p.5).

--oOo--

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S.I.F.D. DAY COURSE - BULGARIAN, WITH GALINA TURKER

<u>Date:</u> Saturday, 10th February 2001	<u>Time:</u> 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.
<u>Place:</u> Trefusis, Cecil Sharp House	<u>Cost:</u> £7.00 for S.I.F.D. members £9.00 for non-members

Galina has kindly agreed to revise the dances which she taught at York.
If, like me, you were unable to attend York, now is your opportunity to
come along and learn them. Hope to see you there.

The next S.I.F.D. day course, on 10th March, will be SWEDISH.

HELEN EZRA

--oOo--

S.I.F.D. books and cassettes are available from Eleanor Gordon, 70 Chestnut
Grove, New Malden, Surrey KT3 3TS. Other S.I.F.D. goods are available from
Claire Steeley, 34 Broadwater Avenue, Letchworth, Herts. SG6 3HF.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Lily,

May I add my personal thanks to Wilf Horrocks for his efforts over the years in transcribing so much dance music and for his generosity in making it available to other musicians through the SIFD NEWS?

This source of music has been invaluable in widening the repertoire of musicians beyond the tunes published in books. Certainly, well over half of the "international" music used by "Cloudburst" is from Wilf and it is hard to imagine how we could have managed without it.

From my own limited experience, I know that listening to recordings of tunes and capturing them in musical notation requires a lot of patience and that it is sometimes hard to decide what to include and what to leave to interpretation. It is also very difficult to produce by hand the neat and clear music that is Wilf's hallmark. I am very grateful to Wilf for all the time, trouble and expertise that he has dedicated to this work.

Although Wilf has decided to "hang up his pen", I think it important that SIFD NEWS continues to include music, perhaps from a range of contributors. To kick things off, here is one of my efforts; a dance from Denmark that I understand was taught at the York Summer School.

Best wishes.

MARTIN BUTLER
96 Townfield Road, Flitwick
Bedford MK45 1JG

Ed. Note: Martin's music is on p.9. Mike Gilbert has also sent in a page of music for future publication and has a few more which he will submit from time to time. If anyone else would like to send in a page of music too, I should be happy to include it and perhaps we can keep the tradition going. Folk dance instructions would also be welcome.

::::::::::

Dear Lily,

Seeing Beverly Maton's advertisement in the November SIFD NEWS for her two (!) copies of Philip Thornton's book, "Dead Puppets Dance", reminded me of an incident which occurred when I first joined the Committee of Harrow Green Folkdance Group in about 1954 as librarian. The group had just lost their much-prized copy of this book and were desperate to replace it. The book was long out of print and not even Philip knew where a copy could be obtained.

"Do whatever it takes - money no object" I was told. So for a couple of months I prowled around the bookshops without success. Then - there it was! Sitting in the middle of a table display outside a rather scruffy secondhand bookshop in Ilford. Price: One shilling (5p to our younger members). I hastily purchased it and bore it in triumph back to the Committee.

I don't know whether Philip was ever told the secondhand value put on his masterpiece.

Yours sincerely,

ROY (OSCAR) HAYCOCK
74 Cowleigh Bank, Malvern,
Worcs. WR14 1PH

Dear Lily,

This is a very belated "Found" item for the SIFD NEWS.

When I got home from the Summer School, I found a cassette that had been left by mistake in one of the tape players. It carries a label on each side with "The Society for International Folk Dancing" printed in green italic letters at the top and "CASSETTE NO.6" rubber stamped at the bottom.

I apologise to the owner for the long delay before writing to the NEWS about it.

Yours sincerely,

RICHARD G. MELLISH
15 Lancaster Road, North Harrow,
Middx. HA2 7NN
Tel: 020 8863 7807



The role of the SIFD – AGM Discussion

In view of the difficulty we are having in attracting people to serve on the committee and various sub-committees of the SIFD the general discussion after the last AGM was on the role of the SIFD. What is it for and what would be the consequences if it did not exist? (I am fairly optimistic that it is not about to disappear, but we only had twenty-one members present at the AGM where a quorum of twenty is needed, so we are not nearly as healthy and vibrant as we need to be).

These days, it was felt, most (but not all) members can get most of their dancing directly from their local groups. The role of the SIFD is therefore to provide service which local groups cannot do. This includes running the summer school, running the day schools, taking part in festivals such as Eastbourne, attracting new people to dance, providing specialist teachers from abroad (not just teachers on the SIFD teachers list) acting as a co-ordinator for foreign teachers visiting this country and encouraging co-ordination and co-operation between groups. We should also support local groups with the provision of information, insurance, equipment, costumes and new material as well as providing teacher training and encouraging higher standards of dancing.

The regular opportunity to dance together provided by the Sunday dances in London could be used, it was felt, as a means of allowing specialist groups to share their specialisms with others

Looking at this list and comparing it with the services we are providing or are trying to provide, they are pretty similar, so we are certainly operating on the right lines. It is just a question of making ourselves more widely known. Specific suggestions that came out of the AGM itself include subsidising group representatives to attend day school or the summer school, offering free membership to any-one who introduces a new member and publicising ourselves and our activities at festivals and other suitable venues (including our own). This is something all members can help with. Badges, for those willing, were suggested, identifying members as sources of information about us and what we do.

This summary is based on notes taken at the meeting. If anybody feels I have missed anything or if you have anything to add about the role of the SIFD (whether or not you were at the AGM) please write in. In the meantime, the committee will be doing what it can to turn these ideas into actions.

Mike Gilbert

Chairman

BLUE PETER

My daughter, Soumaya El Arfa, who is just eight years old, sent a picture of herself in Thai traditional costume to the Blue Peter programme. She was then lucky enough to receive a telephone call from the assistant producer asking if she would like to appear on the programme and dance 'live'.

Soumaya was delighted to be able to perform her Thai classical solo dance which is based on the Manohra Bird. I was also very pleased, as the producer, who came down to look at my vast collection of Thai costumes and head-dresses decided to use a number of them to 'dress the set'.



We arrived at the BBC Television Centre in Wood Lane, London, at about 10.30 a.m. Soumaya had her own private dressing room, with her name on the door! After a short run through, we were given a tour of the Blue Peter gardens and the CBBC studio. Soumaya, although quite young, is very mature for her age and kept very calm throughout the whole event. After performing her solo dance live, she tasted Catherine wheel cookies with one of the programme presenters, Liz, and played the Friday Challenge with the famous pop group 'Westlife'. We will never forget our wonderful day at the BBC. It was so magical.

Tanya Allen

*

The Imperial Society for Teachers of Dance has a National Teachers Group which is open to anyone, not just I.S.T.D. members. They are organizing the following two events:-

Sunday, 25th March A CLOGGING DAY with Pat Tracey

Sunday, 24th June HUNGARIAN AND GIPSY DANCES with Hilary Bolton

Both events are from 10.30 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. and are at the I.S.T.D. Headquarters, Imperial House, 22-26 Paul Street, London E.C.2. Fee for the day: £18.50. Welcome is extended to anyone interested.

ROBERT HARROLD

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*

FOR SALE. Tickets for the Eisteddfod at Llangollen for Friday, 6th July 2001. One front row seat for the day session £10.00, and one ditto for the evening concert £12.00.

Apply to Hilda Sturge, 10 Carmarthen Road, Bristol BS9 4DU. Tel: 0117 962 1802.

ARE SOUTH AFRICAN DANCES FOLK DANCES?

That depends on how you define folk!

The conscious development of a stock of National Folk Dances would appear to run counter to the generally accepted folk processes. The "borrowing" of dances from a foreign source that has no traditional links to one's own country certainly does so.

Broadly speaking, folk dances are understood to be those dances of a past era that were enjoyed by a mainly rural population. A qualifying term, "traditional", that is often applied, reinforces the idea of continuity with a distant past and suggests universality across a given population. Such dances have a particular set of characteristics that identify them with a particular population and can be said to belong to that population.

Until the original folklorists searched out and recorded these dances, the dancers were unaware that they were "the folk" or that they were performing "folk dances". Ignorance was Bliss! But until the dances were promoted and taught to a wider population there could be no National Movement, and without a National Movement there could be no National Folk Dances. Thus in England Cecil Sharp, through the E.F.D.S.S., provided the required impetus; in Sweden the students of Uppsala, through Philochoros (see note 1); in South Africa Dr. Pellisier (see note 2). I have no doubt that other National Folk Dance Organizations depended on similar processes, i.e. collection followed by active promotion Nationwide.

Without a source of folk dances to draw on, there can be no National Folk Dance Movement! Though Dr. Pellisier initially launched his South African Movement on the back of four Swedish dances (plus another three subsequently), I assume that among the thirty-two dances described in the first Handbook of 1941 there were dances that originated as "picnicgames" ("Ons Eie Volkspeler" is a bit vague on this point). Several dances have been newly choreographed, but to traditional South African tunes. Undoubtedly, some of the picnicgames would have originated in The Netherlands, though I can only identify one by common title, viz. "Jan Pierewet" (a variant of the wellknown "Varsovienne"). (See also note 3).

The remaining question concerns the all-embracing qualifying term, "South African". The dances are those of a particular section of the South African population, at least in 1955, viz. the Afrikaners. Indeed, during the late 50s I could never get any information on the dances from the occasional English South African visitor to the Cambridge Club because of this association with Afrikaner Nationalism. It would be interesting to learn how they are regarded today.

Thus in conclusion I would be prepared to regard the dances as genuine folk dances, given that the Swedish dances have been eliminated. That they include specially created dances is no different from the position in England and other countries today. These cannot, however, be considered traditional. The dances are Afrikaans rather than South African but belonging to South Africa alongside, say, Zulu dances and others.

G.D.TOWNER

Notes:

1. See "Swedish Folk Dance - Traditional or Ballet?". June 1999.
2. See "South African Dances - Swedish Dances?". January 2001.
3. The publication, "More Dutch Dances" by H.M.Watt (CCPR & PEA) (n.d) includes the South African dance title, "Tant Hessie si Witherd" but further examination reveals that it is "...danced by Dutch emigrants to South Africa".

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

S.I. Mar.10th S.I.F.D. SWEDISH DAY COURSE.

Mar.10th ARMENIAN DANCE WORKSHOP with Shakeh Avanesian, 11.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. at Bishop's Cleeve Tith Barn, nr.Cheltenham. Details/bookings: Chris Lee, Phoenix Meadow, School Lane, Shurdington, Cheltenham GL51 4TF. Tel: 01242 706582. No price given.

Mar.10th BALKANPLUS.

S.I. Mar.17th SIFD WEST MIDLANDS BRANCH DAY COURSE with Marina Wolstenholme. EASTERN EUROPEAN including RUSSIAN. 10.30 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.; 2.00 to 4.30 p.m. at Weoley Hill Village Hall, Weoley Hill, Selly Oak, Birmingham (off Bristol Road South). £7 all day, £4 half-day. Further information from Maggie Kaye, 0121 608 1437.

Mar.23rd/25th WEEKEND AT HF, FRESHWATER BAY, with Bob Neal. Dances from Balkan countries including ROMANIA, RUSSIA and ISRAEL. THIS WEEKEND IS NOW FULLY BOOKED. THERE IS A WAITING LIST. Enquiries to Pamela Le Goaziou, 55 Mitchell Road, Bedhampton, Hants. PO9 3QA. Tel: 023 9264 1028.

S.I. Mar.24th/25th WORKSHOPS IN WESTERN MACEDONIAN DANCES with Yiannis Konstantinou at Manchester and Calver, Derbyshire. Organized jointly by Barlow I.F.D.G. and Derbyshire Dancers. Earling booking essential. £12 for one day, £20 for the whole course including a Dance on the Saturday night. Further details from Bill Croft, 0161 445 2140. (See December SIFD NEWS for details about Yiannis).

Apr.6th/8th ARMENIAN DANCE COURSE with Tineke Van Geel at Haytor, Dartmoor. Choice of general or advanced course, or both; social dance evenings. Delightful area for walking and sightseeing. Non-dancing friends and family welcome. Full board en-suite accommodation £88.00. Each course £15. Details and booking form from Cathy Meunier, 115 Chetwynd Rd., London NW5 1DA. (s.a.e. please).

Apr.27th/30th LONG WEEKEND AT GREAT ALNE, WARWICKSHIRE. Details in January SIFD NEWS. Enquiries to Andre Hobro. Leave name, address and telephone number on Answerphone 02476 418949.

Apr.29th DAY OF ARMENIAN DANCE with Shakeh Avanesian at Bergh Apton Village Hall, near Norwich, Norfolk. Contact: B.Campbell-Johnston, 01508 480195. No times or cost given.

May 4th/7th EASTBOURNE INTERNATIONAL FOLK FESTIVAL. Booking through Judy and Richard Wright, 01273 835759.

S.I. May 4th/7th S.I.F.D. WEEKEND AT HALSWAY MANOR. Details from Jack Richardson, Dept. of Chemical Engineering, University, Swansea SA2 8PP. Tel: 01792 295194 (work), 01792 403153 (home).

S.I. May 12th S.I.F.D. DAY COURSE.

S.I. June 9th S.I.F.D. DAY COURSE.

Aug.5th/10th ISRAEL FOLKDANCE INSTITUTE SUMMER SCHOOL, "MACHOL EUROPA 2001" at Bedford. Guest teachers: Gadi Bitton, Shmulik Govari, Moshiko Halevy, Moshe Telem, Yaron Carmel. Details from IFDI, Balfour House, 741 High Road, London N12 0BQ.

S.I. Aug.24th/27th MINI FESTIVAL at Roedean School, Brighton. Some sessions taught, some informal, so bring your favourite Folk and Circle dances to share. Full board; mostly single rooms; swimming pool. £120 (Deposit £20). Send s.a.e. for detailed booking form to Rowena Martin, 60 Anderida Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN22 0PZ.

"MUKKA" AT ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL, SUNDAY, 18TH FEBRUARY

Some readers will have already heard "MUKKA" at Cecil Sharp House - a gypsy style band with Dana, the singer, and Beatrice, the dancer. They will be performing in the open foyer at the Royal Festival Hall, London, on Sunday, 18th February 2001, between 12.30 and 2.00 p.m. Come along and enjoy Balkan rhythms, Klezmer and North African tunes. Since their last performance at this venue a year ago, "MUKKA" have been busy in such places as the Spitz, Glastonbury, Cornwall, Southern Ireland, plus a broadcast on the John Peel show. The line-up is as follows:-

Violins: Frank Biddulph and Kate Hands
Flute: Sarah Chilvers
Accordion: Philippe Wittwer
Bass: Oliver Baldwin
Percussion: Frazer Watson

"MUKKA" will also perform at the Portsmouth Arts Centre, Reginald Road, Southsea, at 8.00 p.m. on Saturday, 24th February 2001. There is a North African dance workshop run by Bea from "MUKKA" in the afternoon.

OLIVE BALDWIN



BALKAN BASICS

There is now an informal gathering of dance and music enthusiasts who meet regularly in Ulverston, South Lakeland. Going by the name of "Balkan Basics", we dance simple line and circle dances from the Balkans and beyond, sometimes singing or playing a little live music as well. We meet on the first Monday of each month, except when that falls on a Bank Holiday, in which case we meet on the second Monday. Ulverston is just a few miles South of Windermere, and visitors to the Lake District are welcome to join us. The venue is Owl Barn, Back Lane (off Church Walk), Ulverston, Cumbria. For more information, ring 01229 889 362.

CLYDE OLIVER



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