

# SIFD NEWS



**MAY**  
**2001**

SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING

Internet Website: [www.sifd.org](http://www.sifd.org)

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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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This month's cover, showing a Caluș dancer from North Muntenia in Romania,  
is from the front cover of the "Romania" booklet produced by Nick Green and  
Liz Mellish.

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S.I.F.D. DAY COURSE - SPANISH WITH "STEVE" STEVENTON AND ANOTHER

<u>Date:</u> Saturday, 12th May	<u>Place:</u> Trefusis, Cecil Sharp House
<u>Time:</u> 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.	<u>Cost:</u> £6.00 for S.I.F.D. members £8.00 for non-members

Steve has kindly agreed to teach a couple of dances in the morning, and  
there will be further Spanish dances in the afternoon.

I hope you all had an enjoyable Easter break, and look forward to seeing  
you on 12th May.

HELEN EZRA

The next S.I.F.D. Day Course will be on 9th June.

MUSIC. On p.10 Nick Green has put together some melodies that can be used at the music workshop at the Eastbourne Festival.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Lily,

G.D.Towner's article referring to possible Nationalistic elements, apart from the efforts of a dedicated few to record and preserve their countries' folk music and dance, certainly applies very strongly to the continuity of Poland's enormous diversity of folk music and dance over the centuries.

Poland has had such a turbulent history, with frequent invasions, annexations and, during the late 18th century, partition between Russia, Prussia and Austria, that her folk dances were very important in keeping alive her people's feelings of still being a nation. During this period and the beginning of the 19th century, many Poles fled abroad and kept their music and dance alive there. Another exodus, for reasons well known, occurred during the last century, with similar results, so that here we have today Polish dance groups all over the country still keeping their Nationalistic feelings strong, although at the same time being solid British citizens. This is Nationalism in its true sense without unpleasant overtones.

In Poland after the Second World War an organization called PAGART was established to promote and control the Arts, and folk dance and music was state-subsidised under the Communist regime, but I don't know of any other organization set up specifically for recording folk dances.

Nowadays, there are still some truly authentic dance groups who continue to hand their dances from one generation to another, besides the more ambitious and "stage-orientated", although I fear they are diminishing somewhat. This is mainly due to Westernisation and the fact that Poland is now more stable and economically sound, I think. However, both the regional and the "great" or National dances are now largely being put on video and many books on the subject have been written, so I don't think these lovely dances will be lost.

BETTY HARVEY  
30 Regent Square, London E3 3HQ

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Dear Lily,

Once again, a most enjoyable day spent with the Newport International Folkdance Group on Saturday, 24th March, on one of their day courses.

This time, Maggie O'Regan was the tutor - and, Maggie, we understand now why you're so popular. A good selection of really interesting dances, with inspiring music, and yourself a "bundle of fun". It made the 250 mile return trip from Pembrokeshire well worth while. Thank you, and thank you too to Sue Oates and friends for organizing it all.

Happy Dancing.

SUE CLARK  
22 Church Road, Roch,  
Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire  
SA62 6BG

Dear Lily,

In the SIFD NEWS last month I studied the letter of G.D.Towner, who is interested in the origins of the various National Folkdance Movements in Europe and becomes more and more convinced that the motivation for folkdance revival in the last century is often based on nationalism. I can tell you how it was in Switzerland and why the revival came in our country around the year 1900.

After 1850, industrialisation came also to us. Our folk dances and costumes disappeared with this industrialisation more and more, especially in the towns. Julie Heierli found this a pity and she collected parts of still existing costumes, completed them and so was able to publish in 1896 thirty beautiful hand-coloured pictures (large photos) of the disappearing "Swiss Costumes from 1700 to 1900". She thought that her action was a kind of tombstone for our national costumes. It was, on the contrary, the revival of costumes. A Swiss organization with now more than 20,000 members was founded and the first lady running the secretary's office was Louise Witzig (1901-1969). Fortunately, this lady was not only interested in costumes but also in folk dancing and every other kind of folklore such as folk songs, folk theatre, folk music, "flag-throwing" and so on. Together with the professional musicians, Alfred Stern and Inge Baer (1902-1995) she organized holiday weeks for singing Swiss folk songs. In these weeks people could not sing the whole day and so they danced from time to time, and through the participants of her weeks Louise Witzig revived the disappearing Swiss folk dances.

Klara Stern (1901-1999) and Louise Witzig were inspired by their voyages to Scandinavia. Klara Stern had met Gotsch and Gardiner at a music meeting in Germany and she was delighted by the dances of the "English Dancing Master 1650". Finally, our folkdance pioneers discovered that in the remote valleys of Switzerland there could be found authentic Swiss folk dances.

It is important to say that in Switzerland the renewal of folk dancing came not from the rural regions. Important people of the towns, especially of the French-speaking part of Switzerland, were sorry that in the Alps folk dances, costumes and all kinds of customs disappeared in the years before 1900, so that it was more and more difficult to show our guests coming from other countries something typical of Switzerland.

Albert Gos (1852-1942) was a painter of alpine landscapes. He often lived together with the people in the Alps and as a very good violinist he played them their dance music in the evenings and invented similar pieces of music. He observed the dancers and wrote down what they danced. Pierre Border (1872-1958) who was also a musician, a high officer and alpinist, bank director and president of Versoix (near Geneva), worked together with Gos. He collected the Swiss folk dances they had found and wrote the four "Books of Bordier". They needed the dance music and the dance descriptions for good groups at Zermatt and other touristic places, where there were many holidaymakers coming from foreign countries. If in a tourist region a good folkdance group is not willing to show our different dances to interested foreigners, then a bad group will do it. But it must be done. For the hotels the revival and promotion of Swiss folklore was and is still a necessity.

Other scientific investigators were Hanny Christen (1899-1976). She collected about 12,000 forgotten Swiss melodies (to be published at the end of 2001 in ten volumes). Emil Jaques-Dalcroze (1865-1950), musician, composer of festival performances, songs and dances, Henri Esseiva (1901-1983), are other personalities.

Small Switzerland is not a homogeneous unity which can develop political nationalism. We are a group of more or less independent small nations. We have more than twenty cantons with a certain autonomy, four regions with different languages (German, French, Italian and five different kinds of Romantsch). Our regions have also different religions (but they get more and more mixed). Nevertheless, we want to be one nation. In every question it is very difficult

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to reach agreement.

Every region in Switzerland has its costumes and its folk dances. But today in our towns and villages the folkdance groups dance not only the dances of their own region. They try to learn also the style of all the others. And in the towns there are groups for international folk dancing. So I think we have in our folklore groups a positive kind of nationalism which does not work against anyone. We work for agreement between the different parts of our country and, even as you, between all nations.

Yours,

KARL KLENK  
Holzmatt 15, CH-8953,  
Dietikon-Zurich, Switzerland



FOR SALE

1 Gajda; 1 Kaval; 1 Small Panpipes; 1 Large Panpipes needing some repair.

Any offers considered. Proceeds to a Bulgarian charity. Contact Hilda Sturge, 10 Carmarthen Road, Bristol BS9 4DU. Tel: 0117 9621802.



YVES MOREAU BACK AGAIN IN SEPTEMBER

It is well over a year since Yves Moreau's first Bulgarian dance workshops in London but many of his dances not only endure but are as fresh and enjoyable as on the day he taught them. Balkanplus is delighted to confirm that Yves is returning to present another two workshops on the weekend of 15th and 16th September. As before, each day will be largely independent of the other.

We have the use of the main hall (Kennedy) at Cecil Sharp house for the whole weekend. This means that there will be no repeat of embarrassing restrictions on numbers for the Saturday evening Balkanplus party at which our favourite duo, Maddy and John, will M.C. and live music will be provided by Dunav. I am hoping that Dessislava Stefanova, our resident Bulgarian star, will be there too. Together, Dessi and Yves could be quite an act.

The workshops, which are sure to include dances for every level of experience, will commence at 11.00 a.m. and finish around 5.00 p.m. The party will be at the usual Balkanplus time of 7.00 p.m., finishing at 10.30 p.m. We would ask everyone to wear costume to the party, if possible. We have to limit the numbers at the workshops to about eighty per day so these will be ticket-only events. SO PLEASE BOOK EARLY TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT.

Prices will be the same as last year: Workshops £12.00 per day, Party £8.00, Weekend Package £25.00. For Balkanplus season ticket holders (who pay £35 per year) the workshops cost £10.00 per day, or £18.00 for both, and the party is free. Please send cheques, payable to Balkanplus, and s.a.e. to Frances Horrocks, 53 Southway, Carshalton Beeches, Surrey SM5 4HP. Tel: 020 8642 3629. For general enquiries, contact either Frances or contact me on 01992 582717.

Yves arrives just as the Barnet group starts its new season. I am planning to have an informal welcoming party for him at Church House, Wood Street, Barnet, Herts., from 8.00 p.m. on Friday, 14th September. Dunav will be playing, and the event will be open to all. The price will be £5.00 maximum.

BRIAN DOWSETT

## SAILORS' DANCES

Further to the letter last month from Sam Bayliss about Sailors' Dances, Peter Oakley rang to say that Gaye Saunte taught us a Danish sailors' dance some time ago and also, during his travels, Peter has come across sailors' dances from Finland, the Netherlands and Norway, so it seems there is plenty of scope for research into this type of dance. Ed.

Also, Betty Harvey wrote the following:

"I can't contribute anything to the actual origin of sailors' dance but when re-reading Margot Fonteyn's "Magic of Dance" recently I noted the little story about a very young American dancer, John Durante (born in Pennsylvania in 1768) who was fascinated when he saw a Frenchman, Roussel, dancing a hornpipe. At that time in the U.S.A. there were no dance schools of any kind to be found so Durante was entirely self taught.

Durante assiduously watched Roussel and quickly learned all except for a step called "pigeon wing" which remained elusive and which Roussel himself could not "break down". However, one night Durante had a dream in which he performed this step perfectly and to great applause before a huge audience. Next day he found he could indeed execute it! After that he apparently had a very successful career (he was then still only seventeen years old), performing this hornpipe along with singing, tightrope dancing, pantomime etc. He must have been a very clever and versatile young man".



BALKANPLUS, 12th May 2001, at Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, London N.W.1, 6.15 to 10.30 p.m. £5.00. M.C.s: Rosette Rosenberg and the Martenitsa Group, plus Dunav. Regular supporters will realise that this is not the usual month for Dunav to play but the dates have been re-arranged because of other commitments. As an added bonus, Rosette and friends are starting at 6.15 with a session of tuition, absolutely free - see below. It is hoped that as many people as possible will take advantage of this golden opportunity to learn and/or revise some more unusual dances.

FRANCES HORROCKS

## DELYAN'S OLDER DANCES - REVISION

The Martenitsa Group has somehow kept a lot of Delyan Demirev's older dances in our repertoire. From what people have said, we suspect that a lot of you remember bits of them and would like to "brush the rust off" dances which we find fun to do. So, when we are hosting this month's Balkanplus on 12th May we propose to meet earlier - say 6.15 p.m. - to go through as many as possible out of Vesilinovo, Paidushko, Trakiiska Ruchenitsa, Pazardiiska Kopanitsa, Trakiisko Nastroenie, Pirin Tantsuva and possibly Radomirsko.

This will be a "run-through" session rather than teaching from scratch. We then hope that others can pass these dances on. We are also time-tabling into our programme for Balkanplus a spot where three of these can be done.

TONI GUTMAN



LOST PROPERTY - left at Calver Village Hall after Yiannis Konstantinou's course, one pair of red leather Reebok trainers, men's size, in a Tesco bag. Ring Marina Wolstenholme on 01433 630183.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

S.I. June 3rd 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 8th/10th "FEST NOZ", A WEEKEND OF BRETON, FRENCH & CELTIC MUSIC AND DANCE at Thoresby Park, near Ollerton, Notts. For information ring 0115 952 2638.

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

S.I. June 24th S.I.F.D. WEST MIDLANDS BRANCH COTSWOLDS SAFARI. See below.

June 24th HUNGARIAN & GYPSY DANCES with Hilary Bolton at Imperial House, 22-26 Paul Street, London E.C.2. 10.30 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. £18.50. Organized by I.S.T.D.

July 2nd/8th LLANGOLLEN INTERNATIONAL MUSICAL EISTEDDFOD. Enquiries to Eisteddfod Office, Llangollen LL20 8SW, North Wales.

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.

Aug. 25th/Sept. 1st HF HOLIDAYS RESIDENTIAL WEEK IN HAYTOR, DEVON, with Phil and Brenda Steventon. A course aimed at Beginner/Intermediate dancers; all dances will be walked through. To book, ring 020 8905 9558, or for further details contact Phil or Brenda on 020 8397 9649.

S.I. Sept. 8th S.I.F.D. DAY COURSE.

Sept. 15th/16th YVES MOREAU AT CECIL SHARP HOUSE (and at Barnet the previous evening). See p.5.

S.I. Oct. 13th S.I.F.D. DAY COURSE.

S.I. Nov. 17th S.I.F.D. DAY COURSE.

S.I. Dec. 14th/16th S.I.F.D. WEEKEND AT DUNFORD. For information contact Jack Richardson, Dept. of Chemical Engineering, University, Swansea SA2 8PP. Tel: 01792 403153 (home), 01792 295194 (work).



S.I.F.D. WEST MIDLANDS BRANCH ANNUAL COTSWOLDS SAFARI, SUNDAY, 24TH JUNE

The Safari will start at 11.00 a.m. at Moreton-in-Marsh. From there we move to Broadwell (just off the A429 between Moreton and Stow-on-the-Wold) where we have again booked the village hall from 12.00-2.00 p.m. After lunch and dancing there, we will be dancing at a new venue - Old Course, Stanton (off the B4632 South of Broadway) as part of the Stanton Village Open Gardens Day. Costumes please. If you need further information, ring Maggie Kaye on 0121 608 1437 nearer the day.

MAVIS LOWE

## WINTERTOUR 2000 TO MACEDONIA

I joined the Wintertour 2000 to Macedonia organized by Martin Ihns from Holland. (SIFD NEWS, October 2000). We flew from Amsterdam a day earlier than planned because Macedonian Airways was seasonally crowded, and because of a threatened Netherlands rail strike I travelled via Eurostar a further day earlier. The party numbered twenty-five (Jill Waters, Maureen Fenton and me from the U.K., one from Sweden and seventeen from the Netherlands).

Arriving in mild weather on the Skopje airport concourse, we received the traditional welcome of bread and alcoholic rakija accompanied by tapan and two zurnas. Macedonian dancing began at once! Next, from the airport to a Skopje restaurant for lunch and where we paid for the entire holiday in Western currency. (Kompas Tours were providing three minibuses, the hotels and excursions). A sheet circulated on which we were asked to write the day and month of our birth but not the year. Curious.

After lunch we drove West and upwards for about an hour to the Janak hotel in the ski resort of Popova Sapka (the hat of the Pope), c.6000ft., for four nights. Fresh fallen snow made the winding road hazardous for vehicles. We abandoned them with the luggage and walked up the last slippery half mile. We were in the hills, with buildings widely scattered. Next morning dawned to bright sunshine with views of distant snow-covered peaks under a deep blue sky.

Dancing sessions began at 10 a.m. till 12.00 and again from 5 till 7 p.m. on a tiled floor. Our instructors, Jana and Oliver, were accompanied by Roma musicians - Mefo on tapan and Severdan on zurna. Tuition was often accompanied by characteristic banter in Macedonian among instructors, musicians and supervisory tutors. It was intriguing, entertaining and a welcome respite from the concentration and exertion of the steps practice.

About midday on 25th December we walked into the snowy village to see the newly-built church, the unfinished adjacent religious guest house, and to ride the specially run chair-lift. From the summit some walked down and back to the hotel across virgin snow. At lunch a small fir tree had appeared on a table and two sets of fairy lights haphazardly hung from fixed ceiling light globes ready for our evening Christmas meal. The Eastern Orthodox Christmas is on 7th January.

On our departure-for-Skopje day there was fresh snow so we walked down to an accessible point for the minibuses to take us via Tetovo to see the painted mosque. Inside was fully carpeted and we left footwear outside. A few small groups were scattered about studying the Koran or praying together. In the town the crowded shopping streets were mostly full of young people, for Albanian Macedonian families usually have eight children. The ethnicity of their villages is witnessed by the number of children about; the implications of education, politics and the economy are formidable. Macedonian families average two children.

Our hotel in Skopje, "Skala", for seven nights, was situated just out of town in a quiet wooded area. The rooms looked across to the rooftops of the town below. Our dancing room had deep-pile carpets.

At the end of our first day in Skopje we were privileged to be taken to see a display at a Macedonian dance school. It was in a large well-floored hall with a long (cracked) mirror down one side. This soon became steamed up and attracted writing fingers. Children pay for each attendance. About forty were present. Ages ranged from 5 to 15. There were plenty of boys to make good attempts at the male steps. The very youngest children in the lower group coped well with some of the intricate steps as the teacher accompanied them on tapan or zurna. The middle group had an accordion. At 7.30 the older children gave a choreographed performance of several dances as their

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young male teacher directed them on the floor. The repertoire in the syllabus is repeated each year. There was a tremendous atmosphere of effort at this event and Martin Ihns' apt and concise appreciation (in Macedonian!) brought smiles to their faces and all-round warm applause.

The minibuses took us to a monastery one day; on 29th December we travelled to Matka Gorge with its barrage holding back a long narrow tranquil reservoir. A small boat with an outboard motor sped a section of the party to the far end beneath towering ridges on either side. On turning round, the motor spluttered and died and there was no alternative but for the boatman to paddle us laboriously all the way back.

In Skopje the streets were crowded with shoppers prior to the New Year holiday. Yugoton did a brisk trade in recorded music. The museum specially admitted an interested group to an excellently displayed collection of meticulously hand-made folk costumes. In the Turkish quarter of the town, which escaped the 1963 earthquake, are many restaurants for inexpensive and pleasant dining. When an itinerant brass band group saw us they immediately found a spot to play and some danced.

The mystery of the list for our birth day and month was solved one evening at dinner when a musical procession emerged from the kitchen with two separate large cakes and rakija to celebrate two birthdays.

The New Year was the climax of celebration, with a dinner and dance in the hotel. The band consisted of accordion, saxophone, clarinet, percussion and singers. All were connected by radio microphones to the main amplification and any musician could move about and play at tables, still linked to the main ensemble of sound. The volume of sound made talk impossible. People danced regardless of the service of courses at the table; waiters deftly chose the moment to manoeuvre by the spiralled lines on a crowded floor. At an interlude session, Mefo and Severdan played for our group's repertoire of dances and they were traditionally festooned, and their instruments, with currency notes in appreciation of their music. The class wallchart listed seventeen dances in Cyrillic and Roman alphabet showing rhythm and region. Following the midnight greetings, further courses were served as dancing continued. At about 3 a.m. numbers began to thin out. I left but dancing went on.

At dinner on the last night (the band was again powerfully there) a tribute was paid to Martin Ihns, his many Macedonian contacts, and to Anki Bilj, the assistant leader. The speaker described the holiday as one long highlight. Indeed it had been a complete change and contrast in enjoyable company, totally immersed in all things Macedonian.

DENNIS TURNER

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#### BALKANFOLK TOURS

Balkanfolk announce two cultural tours for this summer, 2001:

- 1) Veliko Tarnovo, 29th June to 8th July, to include the 4th International Folk Festival. Veliko Tarnovo is the ancient capital of Bulgaria.
- 2) "Pirin Pee" (Pirin sings), 13th to 20th August in Bansko.

For further details, send 20p and s.a.e. to Marina Wolstenholme, "Robin Cottage", 4 Commercial Road, Grindleford, Hope Valley S32 2HA, or visit their website on [www.balkanfolk.com](http://www.balkanfolk.com) e-mail [info@balkanfolk.com](mailto:info@balkanfolk.com)