

SIFD NEWS

November 2002



SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING

Internet Website: 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 was produced by Simon Guest from a photograph of
of Joseph Chu taken at the Eisteddfod by Jill Bransby.
(See Jill's letter on p.6).

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SUMMER SCHOOL AT DURHAM

Time flies and winter seems to have already arrived but it seems like only
yesterday that we were coming away from another successful Summer School, held
at Durham for the first time.

Attendance was good but there was plenty of room for more, and those members
who did not attend missed an excellent week of dancing. As always, the teaching
was of a very high standard and the introduction of the general courses added a
new and very welcome dimension to the whole thing.

So, on behalf of the whole S.I.F.D., I should like to thank Roger Sturge and all
his team for another success and an excellent week in Durham. Long may the
Summer School continue.

Many people are involved in the organization of an event like the Summer School.
Roger, as well as being the driving force behind everything, bears the burden of
overall responsibility. I should also like to single out Richard Mellish for
his contribution. As a result of the introduction of the general courses, as
well as the short courses introduced in 2000, the number of dances for which
recordings are requested has increased tremendously. This year there were in
the region of 75 tracks which need to be put on to cassette or CD and distributed.
Doing this is time consuming but this year chasing the copyright has been a
nightmare. Negotiating with the holder of the copyright can be difficult but in
many cases finding the right person to negotiate with is an even bigger problem.
So, a big thank you to Richard and Roger and the rest of the team.

MIKE GILBERT (Chairman)

EASTBOURNE INTERNATIONAL DANCE FESTIVAL, 2003

The programme for 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th May next year is taking form. We are delighted to be able to introduce Ibrahim Rizevski, a Macedonian, to Eastbourne to teach Macedonian dances. He has led workshops in several countries but this will be his first in Britain. Some of us danced with him in Belgrade and were very impressed. He will be assisted by Claudia Zwicki, who will also be taking a session of Macedonian singing.

Those of you who danced with Cory Verheijen, who gave us such pleasure at this year's Eastbourne Festival, will be glad to welcome her back to teach three more sessions of dances from various countries around the world.

Leslie Haddon will give us Czech and Slovak, partnered by Sue Chipp. They will bring Doina group with them to perform on the Sunday evening and at a "meet the team" session on Sunday afternoon.

Yes!...for the observant, Sunday is not the usual day for performance. It has been decided that traffic and other problems make Sunday expedient for the May procession in Eastbourne. Apart from that, the format will be much the same as before; a Welcome Dance on the Friday evening with Frances Horrocks as M.C. and "return" spots with Cory, Jan Mulreany and Kerry Fletcher. Frances will be arranging "something for Saturday" with a few of you. Kerry will also be giving us some more Swedish during the weekend.

The Saturday costume evening will be with Helen Ezra and "Jacob's Ladder" for General International Dances. Sunday evening will again be with Marina Wolstenholme and "Dunav". The Balkan evening this year was a colourful affair, with several costumes. Let's make Sunday a "Balkan Costume Evening" - or part costume, if you only have socks! The Eastbourne Festival is your chance to show us two different costumes (opinions on this will be welcome). There may be more of interest to come, but not all wrinkles have been ironed out!

I am also trying to beg, borrow or steal posters with which to bring an international ambience to the room. Any offers of posters, or help putting them up, or stewarding over the weekend will be appreciated.

Of course, the Eastbourne International Dance Festival needs you to make it complete.

JANET DOUGLAS

Tel: 01243 265010

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BALKANPLUS, 16th November at Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, London N.W.1 7.00-10.30 p.m. £4.00. M.C.s: Sally Fletcher and Malcolm Shaffer. Between them Sally and Malcolm have a very wide repertoire which makes for a delightfully varied programme, with some of the old favourites and some new dances from recent courses.

FRANCES HORROCKS

The next Balkanplus will be on 14th December when I shall be M.C. and I hope to "rush through" a lot of the dances to make it user-friendly. At the moment there isn't an official live band booked but who knows who/what may turn up.

As this is the nearest Balkanplus to Christmas, I should like to give it a slightly festive tweak. The message is "Tinsel Up A Bit" to brighten the gloom as we near the Winter Solstice. Why not give it a try? We had a huge crowd at the Weekend of Traditional Dance, and newcomers from the "I-only-do-couple-dances" lobby are most welcome (I will even include some couple dances under the "plus" umbrella).

FIONA HOWARTH

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Lily,

I attended the S.I.F.D. Summer School in Durham this summer and had such a brilliant time.

I am a primary school teacher in Pembrokeshire and as part of P.E. in the curriculum I teach dance. (Well, that's somewhat of an exaggeration; I should say I have a repertoire of four basic Welsh folk dances!). When Sue Clark sent a flier to schools in our county, advertising the Summer School, I thought now's my chance to learn a few more dances. I could have a relaxing time without my family and my class of seven-year olds! Relaxing! - wrong adjective; demanding, exhausting, difficult, would be more accurate words, but the course was also inspirational, fun and educational.

Being a pupil is a good lesson for any teacher. It just reminded me of how difficult some aspects of learning can be for some children. When steps were difficult I felt frustrated and sometimes confused, e.g. if I wanted my leg to point to the left, occasionally it would thrust itself to the right and completely ignore any instruction from my brain!

Everyone I encountered was friendly and helpful, but I would have to mention by name Geoff and Jane from my group. They never got fed up with me going in the wrong direction and counted steps so much for me they must have been counting in their sleep. I know I did; I couldn't brush my hair without counting and humming a tune.

I had such a steep learning curve during the course. I had very little dancing vocabulary before the summer school. I didn't know terms like "progressive" and "measures". I didn't know how to waltz (I knew it had something to do with the count of three) or polka. Geoff made me aware of the ballroom position. I didn't know that there was a different arm position for men and women. I only became aware of this fact when I partnered Geoff and we were told to hold the ballroom position. It was only after Geoff had untangled his arms free from mine and said that he would prefer to be the man that I realised there were some rules to follow.

The three teachers I encountered were inspirational. I learnt an awful lot from their teaching methods. Thanks to Anne, Maggie and Sybille for their patience and encouragement. I wish you all lived nearer. I'd invite you into school to run workshops. I've been back in school for a month and my class and I are currently learning Poseyala Baba (Russian), Sepastia Bar (Armenian), Oige Ja Vasemba (Estonian) and today we listened to the music for Branle de Cosnay (French). The children love taking part. The majority learnt Poseyala Baba quite quickly. They love the Armenian music and at present we're working on the arm movements for this dance. I look forward to our dance lessons and the children do too. Sometimes we walk to assembly using the Russian folkdance steps. I think I could safely say we all love the folk dancing and we're hooked! I've joined the Pembrokeshire International Folk Dancing Group which meets every Tuesday, so I'm able to practise footwork with people who know what they are doing; and keep my confidence topped up. I'm hoping to meet up with my friend Jane and join her dancing group "Rainmakers" for a dancing evening.

Before I went to Durham I had no idea that there was this wonderful and exciting world of International Folk Dancing. Of course I knew that countries and regions had their own dances but I didn't know about the S.I.F.D. Thanks again to Sue Clark for sending the flier to the school. Thanks to Roger Sturge, if I may say so the organization of the event was excellent. Thanks to anyone

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who danced with me - your encouragement and kindness were very much appreciated.

JULIE DRINKWATER
6 West Lane Close, Keeston,
Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire
SA62 6EW

P.S. When I registered for the Summer School my surname was Charles. I married a week before the Summer School and didn't change my name on my badge. So, if anyone remembers me by name they'll remember me as Julie Charles (I'm sure many people will remember me as the lady who wasn't sure what she was doing but tried very hard!).

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Dear Lily,

Our first time at an S.I.F.D. Summer School was a most enjoyable and happy week; a very big thank you to all those who were involved in the organizing. Margaret (Mags) as a non-dancer especially enjoyed the Bulgarian singing and the evening dances with helpful tips from everyone.

Eve learnt a lot of new dances, which our group are already enjoying, and I especially want to thank Janet Woolbar for bringing the Swedish costume for me to wear. I am now the proud owner of a beautiful Portuguese costume, thanks to Mona Graham. Thank you, Mona.

We made lots of new friends and hopefully will keep in touch with them and see them at summer school in 2004 D.V.

EVE BRENNAN and MARGARET WARE
Tynewydd, Llanfurnach,
North Pems. SA35 0BB

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Dear Lily,

I read with interest in the September SIFD NEWS the report that the Adlington Dancers at the Llangollen Eisteddfod danced "Sellenger's Round" in "late medieval styles". It is not clear whether the dancers themselves gave out this information of whether it is the reporter's interpretation. However, the medieval period ended in the late 1490s with the beginning of the "renaissance" so "late medieval" would be mid 15th century, but it is unlikely that "Sellenger's Round", which is in the Playford format, would have been danced before the second half of the 16th century, well into the renaissance as the first edition of Playford was 1651. Most early dance groups do these dances in early Stuart or Civil War costume or, at a pinch, Elizabethan.

I do not know "The Adieu" but assume from the title that it is a Baroque dance and could very well have still been performed in Regency times.

Yours sincerely,

KATHLEEN DICKINSON
26 Harcles Drive, Halcombe,
Brook, Bury, Lancs.
BL0 9UE

Dear Lily,

It's always good to read George's detailed report about the Eisteddfod (in the September *News*) as it brings back a feast of memories of the action and sounds that make the event such a rich feast. I would like to assure George that the young Chinese musician, called Joseph Chu, did play in the preliminaries, before going forward and winning the final of the Folk Music Competition.

What happened was that the 'organiser' (I use the word advisedly), who couldn't be heard, said that there would be a 10 minute break before we heard the last of the entries. These included an Irish soloist and two more Romanian groups. Last, but not least, was the very talented twelve year old from Hong Kong, who had been shivering in the Church, waiting his turn since 9.15 a.m. He had a hand warmer to keep his fingers mobile and a Mickey Mouse jacket over his Chinese costume, the former his family stripped off before he started playing. His music was electrifying. He played two pieces, the first was a celebration of north-west China called 'Long Lost China' played on an *Er-hu* and the second piece was entitled 'My brother returns home' and was played on a similar instrument called a *ban-hu*. I don't remember the difference, but I asked afterwards what the instruments were. On the front cover is a photo of Joseph, taken at the preliminary, in the Church, playing (I think) the *Er-hu*.

The individual Folk Dance Competition, for dancers over 16 years, seemed to me to throw up a few problems. The heats were held at the Dinas Brân School where many pupils avidly watched the dancers. The Loughgiel Folk Dancers from County Antrim were there in force and after I had watched six entries from them, each a soft shoe and a hard shoe dance, I wondered if the whole troupe were going to perform! Obviously this competition favours certain styles of dances more than others and these competitors were very skilled. Perhaps the organisers should limit the number of entries to 'so many' for each team? I would have chosen two of the Irish to go forward, based on their dance ability and musicality, rather than the balance that the judges went for (One Irish, one Romanian and one Ukrainian). The Ukrainian trio *Metelyk (Butterfly)*, based in the UK, that George mentioned in the music competition, finally got their chance to perform in the Pavillion, as one of their group, Michael Buriak, performed a Ukrainian Axe dance, with some well controlled spinning, especially in the heat. This was placed third. The Romanian, Petran Cosmin, who was placed second in the Competition, performed much better on the large stage than he did in the heat. Leisa McIntyre danced the Irish musical phrases with great feeling and won.

I missed the dance workshops that were not organised again, but I was pleased to learn that Francis Feybli was teaching workshops to the school children. Well done Francis, they are the future!

Jill Bransby,
Red Gables, Benslow Path,
The Avenue,
Hitchin,
Herts, SG6 9RH.

Dear Lily,

Thank you for publishing Uri Gerson's teaching notes (September SIFD NEWS). Most of us teachers/leaders would do well to read and inwardly digest these notes. Now, before anyone jumps down my throat, this is not a criticism of the many very fine teachers we have amongst our membership but a realisation that we are all human and as such slip into bad or "over familiar" ways. A bit like driving a car. I hope also that the non-teachers/leaders will take note for I am sure there must be quite a few of our members who simply do not know how much work and dedication goes into running a group or class. In my book, the more care taken in preparation, the less obvious it is.

Most of what Uri says I go along with but not all. For starters, he was writing from the privileged position of a large class. I, on the other hand, have a core membership of six or seven, one of whom is registered blind, and so EVERYONE who opens the door is made very welcome whether they are good dancers or not, whether they are one-off visitors or casual members. Everyone is vital to the survival of the others. If someone is already a dancer, that is a bonus, but most people who come to us describe themselves either as a non-dancer or a "when I was at primary school" dancer, so I assume they know nothing but also assume they are capable of learning everything - or almost - and they are given plenty of help and encouragement. After all, a student is only as good as the teacher, generally speaking. Fortunately, the P.I.F.D. group are in a privileged position too because each of the members believes that newcomers and visitors are vital and as such go out of their way to help them.

Sadly, Uri is no longer with us but his enthusiasm for dance will long be remembered by many of us.

Happy dancing, and please visit us.

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

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S.I.F.D. DAY COURSE - SINGING/DANCING

<u>Date:</u> Saturday, 16th November 2002	<u>Place:</u> 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

This course will be taught by Frank Dowling. His aim is to restore the lost art of singing/dancing. Because this needs stamina, both the songs and the dances will be easy to pick up. They will be from the former Yugoslavia. You don't need a "good voice" - just a good pair of lungs!

PAMELA RADFORD

I have had confirmation from Dessi Stefanova that she is able to come along and work on the singing part of the day, so it should be great fun and very rewarding for everyone - even for folks who are shy about singing out loud!

The dance part of the day will be easy to accommodate the singing, so people who enjoy singing but are not such capable dancers should also be able to cope well.

Should anyone need further information, my 'phone number is 01642 247 916.

FRANK DOWLING

After reading Uri Gerson's notes for intending club leaders which I published in the September issue of SIFD NEWS, Karl Klenk from Switzerland, whom some of you may remember from the 1983 S.I.F.D. Summer School, has sent me his own notes on "What Makes A Good Folkdance Teacher". Geoffrey Windsor, who dances with the Bristol group, has kindly translated them from the German. Ed.

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"WHAT MAKES A GOOD FOLKDANCE TEACHER?"

It is always extremely illuminating to watch other dance-leaders at work. Everyone involved in teaching of any kind makes use of their own personal method to various degrees of success. Through the comparison of various teachers, it is evident that no one method is the only correct one. Anyone who is teaching folk-dancing always does so in accordance with their own gifts and leanings, to a greater or lesser degree, with confidence and thoroughness, with more or with less verve, emotion and infectious enthusiasm. As a result, those being taught are, to a varying extent, satisfied at the end of each lesson.

Many successful dancers think they are sufficiently well prepared and even predestined to be teachers simply because they can themselves dance well and are familiar with a number of "difficult" dances. But this is not nearly enough. There is also a need for methodological, pedagogical, didactic and psychological knowledge and ability. When foreign folkdances in particular are being taught, the teacher must be able to give the most important factual information about the dances, such as their land of origin, their region, the character of the dance and so on. Sometimes the occasion giving rise to the dance is also known (work or profession, celebration, season, birthday, wedding, jubilee etc.). If foreign dances are being accompanied by song, the teacher cannot be expected to understand every foreign language but he or she should be able to give a general idea about the kind of material the song refers to (satire, spring or love song etc.). If nothing is said about such things, the teaching is bound to be deficient. The giving of this information is important, but should not be done in over-extensive form. After all, the participants are there to dance and not to listen to lectures.

A good dance-teacher knows how to discover the potential of his class and assess them accurately, so as to give them a real feeling of success not only by choosing the type and sequence of the dances, but also by the careful and interesting way in which information is conveyed. A good teacher knows how to control the pace of a dance session and does not rush through things, is more concerned about the receptive ability of the participants than his or her own personal reputation as a gifted figure in the folkdance movement. He or she does not overdo explanations and always speaks so that everyone can hear and understand them, not simply those who happen to be standing in the line of the teacher's voice. This is particularly important in large halls with large numbers of participants.

It is also important not to try to cover too much at one time, not more than one figure or part of a figure. And what has been explained must be practised immediately until everyone has grasped the new element and feels confident about performing it. Good results can often be obtained by changing partners frequently.

As a rule, dance-teachers talk far too much and give long explanations of the whole first figure, and then without pause go on to the second one and even sometimes the third! The teacher can, of course, visualize the whole thing perfectly well because they know the dance, but people learning the dance cannot form any picture of the dance as they listen, and all the talk is pointless and of no help.

Practice is far more important than talk. We should observe the general rule that we should explain only the things which are most important and vital, while avoiding what is self-explanatory. So, we should talk less and practise more! If all

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the participants have heard and understood what has been said, and if all the parts of the dance and finally the whole dance has been learnt in practice and repeated several times, there should be no need of any questions to follow. If the introduction and practice have been effective, no-one will ask questions. Only if the dance-leader raises doubts about the quality of the teaching, will he or she need to ask, "Is everything clear?" or "Has anyone any questions?" If the teaching has been effective, it is certain that nobody will have a question to ask. Everybody will have understood everything and will have mastered the dance that was taught. If someone should nevertheless ask a question without being invited to do so, then the teacher must in no circumstances give a kind of private lesson in the corner where this person happens to be. If you do, other participants will start to chat among themselves or, what is worse, they will be annoyed that they are not sharing the explanation. The point raised by the individual must necessarily be explained carefully once more to everyone.

And now, just a few self-evident points. The teacher should never correct a single person alone. If an obvious error is spotted, the correct form must be practised with all participants. Further, the teacher must know the dance being taught in every detail. Only in the most exceptional circumstances should it be necessary to look up anything in the official dance description. Constant reference to dance notes indicates that the teacher has not mastered the dance. Naturally, the teacher must be friendly and patient and never appear too negatively schoolmasterly, and he or she should always be punctual.

Dance-teachers are just like all other teachers. There are those whose skilful teaching creates one successful experience after another for their classes, but there are also those who produce such experiences only for a few specially gifted people and for others just a feeling of inferiority. Too much is often demanded of those learning as a result of lack of precise and patient explanation and pushing people on too quickly. Worst of all, some teachers explain and practise some step or sequence of steps and then simply declare, "Now you all know how the basic step goes", and go on to demonstrate, for their own pleasure and to show off their skills, all kinds of complicated variants. The person still learning the dance and who still has some difficulty with the basic steps, sees these brilliant performances by the teacher and fails to follow them. This makes him or her feel small and incapable, which can destroy any pleasure in folk dancing and even make people give up this wonderful activity altogether. A striking number of basically effective teachers succumb, on occasion but only too frequently, to this temptation to show how excellent their dance skills are.

In the year 2002 I shall be 90 years old. I have been learning incidentally but regularly new native Swiss and foreign folk dances since 1930. So, over about 70 years, I have got to know countless folkdance teachers. There are only a few professional folkdance leaders who have benefited from methodological, didactic, pedagogical and psychological training. Their style of teaching is markedly more positive and helpful than that of amateurs and part-time teachers.

KARL KLENK



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

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

S.I. Dec.1st ISRAELI DANCE PARTY and REVISION DAY with Anat at Stone Cross Memorial Hall, near Eastbourne. 10.30 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. £12.00 (concessions £7.00). Shared vegetarian lunch. For bookings/enquiries/map 'phone Rowena Martin on 01323 503991.

S.I. Dec.7th DAY COURSE IN BROMLEY, at Widmore Centre, Nightingale Lane, from 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. "No Partners Required", a Sampler of International Folk Dance with tutor Fiona Howarth. Details and enrolment from Bromley Adult Education, 020 8460 0020.

Dec.7th ZIVKO FIRFOV FOLKLORE GROUP PARTY at Moorfields Primary School, London E.C.1. 7.00-10.30 p.m. Nearest Underground Station: Old Street. Dances from Croatia, Serbia and Macedonia; also from Bulgaria, Greece, Romania. £6.00 including refreshments. ADMISSION BY TICKET ONLY available from Irene Keywood, 133 Third Avenue, Dagenham, Essex RM10 9BD. Tel: 020 8592 4427. Cheques to be made out to Zivko Firfov Folklore Group. Send s.a.e. please.

Dec.7th S.I.F.D. WEST MIDLANDS BRANCH CHRISTMAS PARTY, 7.30-10.30 p.m. at Solihull Methodist Church Hall, Blossomfield Road (B4102), Solihull (corner of Station Approach). M.C.: Maggie Kaye. £2.00. Bring-and-share supper.

Dec.7th "BESKYDY" perform songs and music from Czechoslovakia, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Turkey and the Jewish Klezmer and Jewish-Hungarian traditions on clarinet, accordion violin and viola, with fine singing. At "Cellar Upstairs" Folk Club, Cock Tavern, 23 Phoenix Street, London N.W.1. Entrance £5.00 (unwaged £4.00). 'Phone 020 7281 7700 at least two days beforehand if you wish to attend.

S.I. Dec.13th/15th S.I.F.D. DANCING/WALKING WEEKEND at Dunford, Midhurst, West Sussex. Dancing, walks, carols, Christmas fare. All rooms en-suite (singles, doubles, twins). About £113.00 depending on numbers. For further details and bookings contact Jack Richardson, Chemical Engineering Dept., University, Swansea SA2 8PP. Tel: 01792 295194 (work), 403153 (home).

S.I. Dec.14th BALKANPLUS. See p.3.

Dec.31st S.I.F.D. WEST MIDLANDS BRANCH NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY, 8.00 p.m. - 2003 at Downing Hall, Knowle. M.C.: Grace Pittman. £2.00. Bring-and-share supper.

Jan.17th/19th ISRAELI & INTERNATIONAL DANCE COURSE with Fiona Howarth at Elm Park Hotel, Eastbourne. Non-dancing friends and family welcome. Full board and accommodation £73.00, course including social dancing on both evenings £10.00. For full details and booking form, send s.a.e. to Cathy Meunier, 115 Chetwynd Rd., London NW5 1DA.

S.I. Feb.2nd ISRAELI DANCE WORKSHOP with Anat at Stone Cross Memorial Hall, near Eastbourne. 10.30 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. £12.00 (concessions £7.00). Shared vegetarian lunch. For bookings/information/map 'phone Rowena Martin, 01323 503991.

Feb.15th/16th YUGOSLAVIAN DANCE WEEKEND with Paja and Madelon Milic in Bognor Regis. £32.00. Optional meal on Saturday evening £10.00 extra. Further details from Janet Douglas, Oak Cottage, 92 Rose Green Road, Bognor Regis, PO21 3EQ. Tel: 01243 265010.

S.I. Mar.15th/16th RUSSIAN FOLKDANCE COURSE with Hennie Konings at Chorlton, Manchester, and Calver, Derbyshire. Further information from Julie Korth, Holly Cottage, off Wigan Road, Aspull, Nr.Wigan WN2 1EF. Tel: 01942 831141. No price given.

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Mar.21st/23rd 10TH SPRING DANCE CELEBRATION with Bob Neal at Freshwater Bay, Isle of Wight. Cost of weekend £112, or en-suite £122. For full details and booking form send s.a.e. to Pamela Le Goaziou, 55 Mitchell Road, Bedhampton, Hants. PO9 3QA. Tel: 023 9264 1028.

Apr.11th/13th RESIDENTIAL BULGARIAN COURSE with Nina Kavardjikova (recommended by Yves Moreau) in the HF guest house at Brecon - an excellent base for walking and sightseeing. Comfortable en-suite accommodation, full board, heated indoor pool. Choice of General or Advanced course, or both courses. Non-dancing friends and family welcome. Full board and accommodation £107.00. Each course £15.00. For full details and booking form please send s.a.e. to Cathy Meunier, 115 Chetwynd Road, London NW5 1DA.



Events covered by S.I.F.D. insurance are marked S.I. 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.



DANCES FROM EPIRUS, 24TH NOVEMBER 2002

Lykion Ton Hellinidon have organized another workshop to which S.I.F.D. members are invited. Again in the lovely light and attractive hall in the Hellenic Centre at 16-18 Paddington Street (nearest tube Baker Street). Scheduled start 10 a.m. until 5.00 p.m. £17.00 a head. As usual, tapes and notes will be available on the day (videos later). Cheques/booking to Mrs. A.Williams, 6 Claremont Court, Queensway, London W2 5HX. Tel: 020 7229 4086.

Some of you will remember Nikos Zekis, who led the dancing groups at Lykion for several years and who also taught at the East Moseley group. Those of you who support the Lykion performances will have seen him leading many of those shows in great style. He has been away doing his National Service and this will be his first appearance since then. Himself an Epirot born and experienced teacher with an easy manner and ready sense of humour, this should be a workshop not to be missed.

Additionally, this is the first time a Lykion workshop has been solely featuring dances of the Epirus region of Greece. "Our" beloved Natassa Lemos, herself from Epirus, was the first to give us some of their lovely, haunting dances and wonderful music. Many will remember "her" superb week at Swansea back in the '80s and dances such as Zagorissio, Fissouni, Berati, Sta Tria, Sta Dhio and the men doing Kleftes with great panache. That was the one and only time I managed to get my family (not just Sula) to Swansea. A magic week.

Don't miss this chance of reviving those beautiful dances and adding to the repertoire on the 24th. Book now!!

DIKI GLEESON

ARMENIAN DANCE WORKSHOP WITH SHAKEH AVANESSIAN

This workshop, held at Cecil Sharp House in September, organized by the S.I.F.D. in conjunction with the Armenian Institute, was a day to remember, and not only for those dancing (more later!).

I was not sure that morning whether I really felt like waving my arms around trying to look floaty and lovely, but Shakeh's ready smile put me at ease. Shakeh is not only a beautiful dancer but a brilliant teacher. She made it clear that she would be teaching traditional and not choreographed dances. We learned seven dances embracing the elements (Hovs Bashi - "Around the Fountain" and "Nare" - after the goddess who could turn from water to fire and back), celebration and ritual (Tamzara, Mairam Govand, Papouri and Lourke), and the sentiment of longing (Gorani - longing for lost homeland or beloved). All the dances can be performed by women AND men, thus demolishing at a stroke all notions that the arm movements so typical of Armenian dances are the preserve of women. The handful of men who came to the workshop did not look out of place; Shakeh pointed out the necessary moves for them.

Shakeh is that rare individual with whom one can connect on many levels. Her approach is uniquely spiritual without being over the top. Noting the dignity of the dances, she would say simply "Respect it". I felt that whatever mood we might be in, be it meditative, energetic or lyrical, Shakeh accommodated us all. One of her other phrases, "less is more", made me feel that conserving energy is as important as expending it in the dance.

Present at the workshop were several members of the Armenian community, both adults and teenagers. Shakeh said that, as well as introducing the dancers present to her culture, she wanted to bring the Armenian community to us so that they would realise that there are people outside who are interested in their culture. But Shakeh's inclusive spirit really came to the fore in the second half of the workshop. We were learning "Mairam Govand", the first dance performed at a wedding, when she looked out into the garden. There was a wedding reception in progress. She said, "Wouldn't it be nice if they could come downstairs and join us". Toni Gutman sprinted upstairs and was back in a trice with the whole wedding party. Earlier Shakeh had placed a large white candle in the centre of the circle. The newly-married couple were invited into the centre, as is customary, and we danced and sang round them. (I watched the bride, the dress and the candle flame, afraid that they would connect in the most awful way imaginable but the groom was keeping an eye on this too). It was a treasured and memorable moment with spontaneous applause at the end. "Only connect" said E.M.Forster, and so we had.

It would be great if Shakeh could hold another workshop to teach us the other seven dances in her "Gorani" collection.

HELEN DE BRAY

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SANTORINI CLASS - A COURSE IN GREEK FOLK DANCE

The above course, led by Dimitris Triandafyllidis, will be held during the week of 13th to 20th May 2003. The course is based at the Hotel Star in Magalochori, a traditional Santorini village set among the vineyards of this famous wine-producing island. There will be a walking holiday to run concurrently, so please bring any non-dancing partner or friend if they enjoy exploring, especially as this is one of the more unique Greek islands. For information please contact Irene Cooper on 01243 786400.

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

Nov.3rd M.C.s Phil & Brenda Steventon and Merton Park

Dec.1st M.C. Anne Leach

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



WHAT'S ON IN NOVEMBER

- S.I. Nov.2nd ROMANIAN DANCE DAY COURSE led by Nick Green and Liz Mellish, organized by Nutbrook I.F.D.G. 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. at Stevenson Junior School, Wadsworth Road, Stapleford, Notts. Hard shoes preferred. Refreshments available but bring packed lunch (or visit local chippy or hostelry). All day £7.00, one session £4.00. Further information from Gill or John Morral, 0115 917 1831.
- Nov.2nd "Le Breizho" are organizing a "CELTIC NIGHT" at Cecil Sharp House from 7.00 p.m. with Celtic bands from Brittany, Ireland, Spain and Scotland. Concerts, light show, animation and folk dancing. Booking through Cecil Sharp House or through Le Breizho (contact Arnaud Rannou, Tel: 020 8932 2928). Cost: £15.00.
- Nov.2nd TATRY 40TH ANNIVERSARY at POSK, 238-246 King Street, Ravenscourt Park, London W.6. At 7.00 p.m. a performance by Tatry and guest Polish groups. PLEASE NOTE THE LATER STARTING TIME. Tickets £10.00 available at the door. Also at POSK, an exhibition of Tatry photographs and memorabilia from 27th October to 8th November.
- Nov.9th HALF-DAY WORKSHOP and SOCIAL BALKAN DANCE at Moor Allerton Memorial Institute, Stonegate Road, Leeds. General Balkan workshop with Frank Dowling 2.30 to 5.00 p.m. Social Dance with joint M.C.s 6.00 to 9.30 p.m. £4.00 for workshop, £4.00 for Social Dance. Facilities for making hot drinks; please bring own food. Map/directions and further details from Clyde Olliver on 01229 889 362.
- Nov.9th CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL CLUB 70TH ANNIVERSARY CEILIDH at St.Columba's Church Hall, Downing Place (off Downing Street) Cambridge. Music by "Jacob's Ladder". Admission £5.00 (t.b.c.) plus a plate of "international" food. Starting at 7.30 p.m. (also to be confirmed). For up-to-date details ring Mike Gilbert on 01223 700718.
- S.I. Nov.16th S.I.F.D. DAY COURSE. See p.7.
- S.I. Nov.16th BALKANPLUS. See p.3.
- Nov.24th DANCES FROM EPIRUS. See p.11.
- Nov.30th BALKAN DANCE DAY with Paul Boizot, 11.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. in Sheffield. £7.00-£20.00. For details/bookings, ring 0114 256 1708.