

SAGA NEWS



June 2009

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 sent in by Tony Latham. See Tony's article on p.4.



BACK TO SWANSEA IN 2004!

The Summer School planning team are delighted to announce that

The 2004 SIFD Summer School
will be held at
The University of Wales, Swansea
Friday 23 - Friday 30 July 2004

After more than a decade in the North and lengthy investigation of possible venues we are returning to the original home of the Summer School where it grew up under the vision and loving care of Jack and Joan Richardson. Old hands will know the delights of the Swansea site and access to the beauty of the Gower. We hope that many new dancers will come and enjoy the excellent facilities and the beautiful surroundings.

The programme will include the specialist courses in the dances of an East European country and a West European country as well as a General Course, a range of afternoon options and an outing. We shall let you know the details as soon as we can.

Planning team:

Pam Radford, Maggie O'Regan, Roger Sturge, Janet Woolbar and Caspar Cronk (SIFD Committee link)
contact: SIFD Summer School, 10 Carmarthen Road, Bristol BS9 4DU, rogersturge@onetel.net.uk

JENIA GRAMAN

Jenia died in April, aged 94. Born in Odessa of Russian and German parents, she lived in Berlin before settling in London. She was a woman of many talents, artistic, creative, passionate and courageous. She danced with the Balalaika group and made many of their beautiful costumes, some of the textiles being hand-painted by her. Later, she formed a dance group known as "Kalinka". Many enthusiasts of the folk dances of the former USSR have benefited from her teaching, experience and extraordinary knowledge about the folklore and dance styles of those countries. Over the years, the SIFD NEWS has published several of her articles and letters. She also sang, wrote and translated books and spoke four languages fluently. To combine so many talents in one person is exceptional.

CAROLINE THOMAS

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GAYE SAUNTE

Members will be very sad to hear that Gaye Saunte died on 3rd May after a short illness. Gaye was an excellent teacher and shared with us her love and her knowledge of Danish dances. She also ran a very successful, happy Israeli group whose members still keep in touch with each other. She was a loyal member of the Society and will be missed by all who knew her and who benefited from her teaching and her friendship. We send our sincere condolences to her family.

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MILTON KEYNES INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

28TH/29TH JUNE 2003

Workshops

We have made a slight change to the Saturday workshop programme. We have swapped Marina Wolstenholme and Anne Leach, so Marina's workshop will be at 11.30a.m. and Anne's at 1.30 p.m. Marina will teach Japanese; Anne will teach Western European; Maggie O'Regan will teach South Eastern European.

Groups

There seems to be a rumour going around that one group is not coming. Let me assure everyone that all the groups on the programme leaflet are coming. This includes "Pipacsok" from Romania and "Halychyna" from Ukraine.

Tickets

When you buy a weekend ticket you have to say which workshops you want to attend. The earlier you buy tickets, the better seats you will have at the concerts as seats are now numbered and reserved.

DON ALLISON
Tel: 01908 610564

VARSOVIANA NATIONALE

This month's cover is taken from a music sheet of the 1850s, a lithograph by S. Rosenthal for the Varsoviana Nationale composed by Alphonse Leduc "with the Theory of this Dance adopted by the most Eminent Parisian Professors".

The costume here depicted is very reminiscent of that in which, in 1839, Fanny Elssler danced her show-stopping Pas de la Cracovienne in the ballet "La Gipsy" at the Paris Opéra described by Théophile Gautier in his review of the first performance of the ballet (translated by Cyril Beaumont):-

"She dances in the most coquettish and roguish costume that could be imagined: an officer's tunic sparkling with buttons and a vivandière's skirt, boots with steel spurs....."

(Elssler's title role in "La Gipsy" was a nobleman's daughter who was kidnapped and brought up by gipsies and her donning such a costume to dance a krakowiak in an Edinburgh square was by no means the most astonishing incident in this ballet d'action set two centuries previously during the English civil war).

The "Theory" that heads the music of the Varsoviana Nationale is:-

1st FIGURE. STEP OF THE VARSOVIANA. The gentleman makes a glissé with the left foot, then a coupé with the right foot, a jeté with the left foot and an assemblé with the right foot making a pause. The step is recommenced starting with the right foot. This figure is repeated four times successively.

2nd FIGURE. STEP OF THE POLKA MAZURKA or THE REDOWA. The ordinary step of the Polka Mazurka or Redowa is used at discretion, making a pause on the 4th bar. This figure is repeated twice successively.

The most striking difference between this description of the Varsoviana step and others encountered is that it prescribes a pause with the feet together, after an assemblé, rather than with the weight on one leg while the other is held apart in an open position.

TONY LATHAM

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S.I.F.D. TEACHERS' ASSESSMENT

This event will take the place of the regular S.I.F.D. Day Course in June.

<u>Date:</u> Saturday, 14th June 2003	<u>Place:</u> Cecil Sharp House
<u>Time:</u> 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.	<u>Cost:</u> £3.00

This will be a good opportunity -

- to meet the prospective new teachers
- to learn some new dances
- to enjoy a day of dancing at a bargain price
- to help the Society

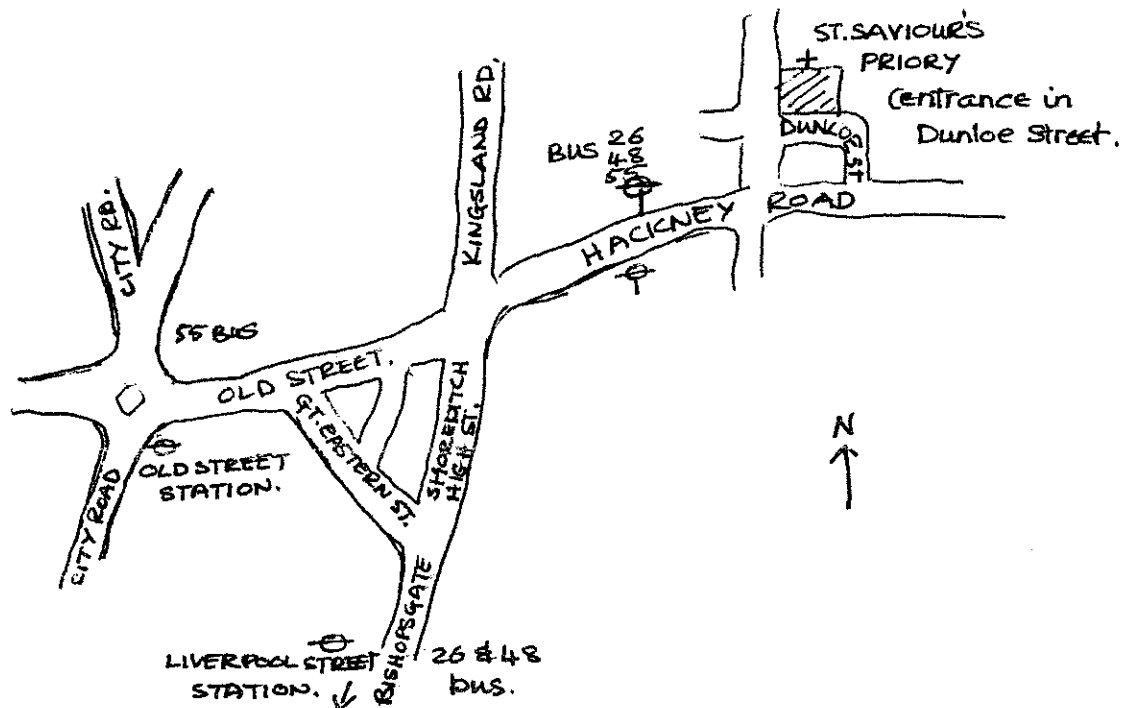
The date of the second assessment will be 6th July, when volunteers will also be required. That assessment will be at St.Saviour's Priory in Hackney. See p.5.

JANET WOOLBAR

Date: Sunday July 6th.
Time: 10.30am – 4.30pm.
Cost: £3.

Place: St. Saviour's Priory
Queensbridge Road,
Hackney.

*This will be a second opportunity to meet the prospective new teachers
to learn some new dances
to enjoy a day of dance
to help the society.*



Public transport: 26 bus from Waterloo or Liverpool Street (Bishopsgate entrance)
48 bus from London Bridge or Liverpool Street (as above)
55 bus from Old Street.

Alight at Queensbridge Road by the Mecca bingo hall.

S.I.F.D. DAY COURSE - 12TH JULY 2003

We are very pleased to announce that Francis Feybli, who is coming to Britain to adjudicate at the Llangollen International Eisteddfod, has offered to come to London to teach a course on dances from his new CD.

This is an exceptional opportunity to enjoy Francis' teaching and is a bonus course for the month of July.

The venue will be Cecil Sharp House and we hope to publish details of the dances next month.

JANET WOOLBAR

THE MALTESE EXPERIENCE

Those of you who have been members of the S.I.F.D. since pre-1960 may remember Dorothy Sloan, a staunch member of Pug Cyriax's Swedish demonstration team, who married and promptly emigrated and who now lives in Toronto, Canada. She is still very much involved in the folkdance scene and makes regular visits to Scandinavian festivals. In January, she contacted me to ask if I would be interested in co-adjudicating at the Malta International Folk Art Festival at the end of March, just the second time this event has been organized.

Owing to the unsettled political situation and also to an impending general election in Malta itself, there were some doubts as to whether the festival would take place. However, having been curtailed by one day, it commenced on Friday, 28th March, with a parade through the main street of Valetta on a bright, sunny day with plenty of people to enjoy the spectacle and cheer them on.

The teams came from Russia, Bulgaria, Turkey, Greece, Cyprus, Sicily and the Czech Republic and each team performed three times during the weekend. The only team who didn't arrive, and not from want of trying, was from Nigeria, who encountered insurmountable visa problems. The teams and adjudicators were sponsored by Malta Airlines, who supplied air tickets and accommodation, an extremely generous gesture on their part.

The rules of the competition were very simple, here slightly abbreviated:-

- 1) Each group must be from 6 to 7 couples.
- 2) Each group must be accompanied by 4 or 5 musicians.
- 3) Each group must perform for 30 minutes on Friday and Sunday and for 35 minutes on Saturday.
- 4) For the prize given (sic) ceremony all groups must be present.
- 5) During their performance each group can change costumes.
- 6) The competition is for dancing, music, costumes and singing.
- 7) There are three prizes for 1st, 2nd, 3rd for each category.
- 8) The decision of the judges is final and it is not contested.

As Dorothy pointed out, if the organizers want to attract competitors from Scandinavian and Western European countries, the rule of 6 to 7 couples would exclude many dances based on quadrilles. Although 4 or 5 musicians were allowed nothing was mentioned regarding the use of taped music. The only team to use tapes was the Turkish group, who lost standing, if not marks, in the eyes of the adjudicators. It does make it a trifle difficult to award a prize for music under these circumstances.

Apart from Dorothy and myself, the other adjudicators were all residents of Malta. Mrs. May Vassallo is an expert in costumes, particularly theatrical, whilst Ms. Tanya Bayona is director of a dance school and a life member of the I.S.T.D. Our music expert was Maestro Joseph Sammut, formerly a bassoon player who trained as a conductor under Sir Malcolm Sargent and who was most intrigued by the zurna player's circular breathing technique.

The festival was part of a travel trade fair with about 80 exhibitors. We arrived on Friday evening for the start of the competition to find that the stage at one end of the exhibition hall was still under construction. Nobody seemed particularly perturbed and the competition got under way about an hour behind schedule. By the time the six teams for that evening's programme had danced, all the trade exhibitors had gone home. The last team to dance was Cyprus, cheered on by Greece, who were sharing the coach back to their hotel.

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The Cypriot group, named "Dionysos", were most entertaining. Their leader gave a short introduction explaining the background and traditions of the dances, that women were modest and demure and never made physical contact with the men who executed their steps with great control and expertise. The men were dressed in very baggy trousers, black boots, white shirts, a variety of mainly sombre waistcoats and a more colourful cummerbund. The women had long chemises over baggy trousers, a coat with split side seams and a headscarf in various muted and neutral colours. They were accompanied by a violin, lute and a drum and were the only musicians to be acknowledged by the dancers at the end of their performance. They had two novelty items performed by a man with a mischievous glint in his eye. One involved a sickle which he whirled around himself at great speed, narrowly avoiding amputation to various parts of his anatomy. He demonstrated its effectiveness beforehand by neatly dicing a carrot. His second offering involved balancing a glass of wine inside the rim of a garden sieve, and then swinging it around with various twists and turns and even in full circles. When it came to rest, the glass still intact, he rewarded himself by quaffing the contents. No wonder he had a glint in his eye!

The Greek group were called "Boula", the Cultural Association of Naoussa in Macedonia. They started their performance with "Zalistos", a dance many will have seen at Llangollen with the men wearing masks and with a breastplate of coins which jingle when shaken. This dance is slow, requiring a great deal of control, and was beautifully performed. Their other dances often started slow and then speeded up in the second part. The women's dances were generally fairly simple but gracefully performed. The last dance included a man/woman character, Has anyone ever investigated the number of countries where this figure appears? It would make a fascinating study. The men were dressed in the traditional foustanella of the Greek guards, a short pleated skirt, white shirt and dark, braided waistcoats. They had white tights showing off some well-muscled thighs and those fascinating shoes with pom-poms on the toes. The ladies wore long pleated skirts in silk damask of various colours, short black velvet jackets, beautiful belts with large pufta (buckles) and neat little flat hats. Their aprons matched their skirts and they wore black stockings and shoes. They had just two musicians, father and son, playing zurna - an oboe-like wind instrument - and dauli - a large drum similar to the tapan, the motif on our Balkanplus T-shirts. The zurna player used circular breathing to great effect while his son followed the steps of the lead male dancer with great concentration. On the Sunday we discovered it was the boy's birthday. The compère got everyone to sing "Happy Birthday" to him and he was presented with a special individual certificate for musicianship. He was all of nine years old.

The Turkish group came from Ankara and were the only group to use some taped music. With half an hour to fill, they included some very varied items including belly dancers, a deer hunt enactment where the hunter eventually let the deer escape, three Whirling Dervishes and half a dozen dauli players. Their programme began with seven girls performing a dance with spoons (silifke). They danced beautifully, but unfortunately the taped music was too loud and one could barely hear the spoons. We were entertained by an excellent exhibition of drumming by six men with dauli accompanied by the zurna. They danced and played simultaneously in perfect rhythm, while the three belly dancers shimmied to the great appreciation of the general public. Their last and probably the best dance was a typical line dance in a tight shoulder to shoulder formation. The men wore black baggy trousers, high-necked white shirts, cross-over style waistcoats with plenty of gold braid, striped cummerbunds and a flat hat with a tassel hanging down the side. The girls for the most part wore red baggy trousers, a flowered overdress and blue waistcoat and coin-decorated pill-box style hats with scarf attached. They were accompanied by a zurna, saz (long-necked, plucked stringed instrument) a kabak kemane (a type of three-stringed bowed spike fiddle that is not tucked under the chin), a dauli and a darabukke (drums).

FRANCES HORROCKS

(To be continued next month)

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

June 1st (in Trefusis) M.C.: George Sweetland

July 6th (in Trefusis) M.C. to be announced.

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

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

S.I. July 6th S.I.F.D. TEACHERS' ASSESSMENT DAY. See p.5.

July 7th(8th)/13th LL'ANGOLLEN INTERNATIONAL MUSICAL EISTEDDFOD.

S.I. July 12th S.I.F.D. DAY COURSE. See p.5.

S.I. July 19th OXFORD BALKANSKO DRO SUMMER PARTY with "Vuhpros". 7.00-11.00 p.m. £5.00 at the door. At St.Margaret's Parish Hall, Polstead Road, Oxford.
Contact: Website rwicksteed,oxfree.com

July 27th/Aug.1st "MACHOL EUROPE 2003". Residential Israeli dance course organized by Israel Folk Dance Institute at De Montford University, Bedford (Lansdowne Road campus). Advanced and Intermediate classes, workshops, evening dance sessions; accommodation in mainly double and triple bedded rooms. For full details and bookings contact Israel Folk Dance Institute, 741 High Road, London N12 0BQ. Tel/Fax: +44 (0)20 8446 6427 or +44 (0)20 8445 6765.

Aug.2nd/9th ANGLO GERMAN FOLKDANCE WEEK at Halsway Manor, including dancing, dance workshops, music workshops, local walks. £309 (Bookings before 1st June £304). Details from Halsway Manor, 01984 618274, or from Jack Richardson, 01792 403153.

Aug. 9th/15th BILLINGHAM INTERNATIONAL FOLKLORE FESTIVAL AND INTERNATIONAL FOLKDANCE COURSE.

S.I. Aug.23rd/25th WILLINGDON I.F.D.G.'s MINI FESTIVAL at Lodge Hill Centre, Pulborough, West Sussex. Shared teaching of International Folk and Circle Dances, also English caller. Full board £110 sharing, £130 single. Please send s.a.e. for detailed booking form to Rowena Martin, 60 Anderida Road, Eastbourne BN22 0PZ.

Sept.20th/21st RUSSIAN AND UKRAINIAN DANCE WEEKEND with Hennie Konings at Bognor Regis. £32.00. Optional meal on Saturday evening £12.00. Further details from Janet Douglas, Oak Cottage, 92 Rose Green Road, Bognor Regis, PO21 3EQ. Tel: 01243 265010.

S.I. Sept.26th/28th S.I.F.D. WEST MIDLANDS BRANCH WEEKEND at the Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester, Glos. Dance sessions with several teachers over the weekend; dancing each evening; time for walking or visiting the area. All inclusive cost for the weekend is £100.00 in en-suite or £80.00 in standard single or twin rooms. Details and booking forms from Maggie Kaye. Tel: 0121 608 1437 or, preferably, e-mail margaretkaye@blueyonder.co.uk

Nov.7th-9th RESIDENTIAL MACEDONIAN COURSE with Paul Mulders at Whitby. Comfortable en-suite accommodation, full board, choice of General or Advanced course, or both courses. Excellent area for walking and sightseeing. Non-dancing friends and family welcome. Full board and accommodation £107. Each course £18.00. For full details and booking form please send s.a.e. to Cathy Meunier, 115 Chetwynd Road, London NW5 1DA.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Lily,

Re: Public Entertainment Licensing

Our local M.P. holds weekly surgeries so I made an appointment to go and see him. The local Morris group had already done so, so he was well aware of our concern. The M.P., Tom Brake, had already sent me some information after my visit which I passed on to Caspar and I have now received nineteen pages of more information. I give below a copy of Amendments which I think are relevant to the S.I.F.D. Events such as the Safaris, held in the open air for which no charge is made, will require only permission to use the venue. No licence will be needed and no offence will have been committed. I hope this will set people's minds at rest.

I will bring the document to the June Day Course so other people can read the lot if they so wish. There is no mention of busking, or of how much money changes from covering expenses to making a profit, so keep up the pressure.

Best wishes,

FRANCES HORROCKS
53 Southway, Carshalton Beeches
Surrey SM5 4HP

Amendments

The Government has already made or accepted a number of amendments and commitments to assist the promotion of live music. We have -

amended the Bill so that provision of entertainment or entertainment facilities at places of public religious worship will be exempted from the need for any authorisation.

amended the Bill so that the provision of any entertainment or entertainment facilities at a garden fete, or at a function or event of a similar character, will not be regarded as the provision of regulated entertainment where it is not promoted with a view to applying the whole or part of its proceeds for purposes of private gain.

amended the Bill to make it clear that entertainers who performed at unlicensed venues and did nothing else in relation to the provision of regulated entertainment would not be committing an offence.

accepted the spirit of amendments made in the House of Lords which exempt live music incidental to other activities and amended the Bill so that the performance of live music or the playing of recorded music is not regarded as the provision of regulated entertainment when incidental to other activities which are not themselves entertainment or entertainment facilities.

amended the Bill so that there is no confusion about whether entertainment would count as being provided for consideration and with a view to profit under the Bill in circumstances where a charity intended simply to cover costs of a private event. Events that were not intended to make a profit but only to cover costs would not be licensable.

We have also made plain our intention to exempt church halls, chapel halls or other similar buildings occupied in connection with a place of public religious

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worship, and village halls, parish or community halls or other similar buildings, as well as schools and sixth form colleges where the entertainment or facilities are provided by the school from the fees associated with the provision of entertainment or entertainment facilities under the Bill.

Department for Culture, Media and Sport

Dear Lily,

I'm just back from Budapest, where I attended a concert that was really something extra special.

Some years ago I wrote a note for the SIFD NEWS to tell of the death of Martin György. On 25th April this year, there was a concert to celebrate what would have been his 70th birthday. He was a researcher of great renown and reputation in Hungary. The programme assembled in his memory was in recognition of his work. Each section was introduced with some archive film on a screen at the back of the stage and each was from a different area of his research. It was followed by a group from that specific region showing original dances of that area. It was so very rewarding because not only were the dancers "speaking" their own language in dance, but were dancing in their own "dialect", so that one was very aware that it was a part of their lives and hearts. Although some were teenagers, some also were obviously two generations: their seniors - all totally immersed in their own dance type and style.

The theatre was bursting at the seams, with many standing down the side aisles. I reckon 80% of the audience was under 40. Martin György was a very shy and unassuming man and many of the audience will have been taught, as I myself was, by him. The others will have been taught by, or worked with, those he taught. It was with great respect that the finale was concluded with a picture, held on the screen for two minutes, of Martin György talking with an old villager. Dance was his life, and the evening was his legacy.

My dear friend, Magda Ossko, known by many in our Society, arranged the tickets and her daughter drove us there. A night to remember indeed. The following is a brief translation of the programme.

With best wishes,

SYBIL CHAPMAN
20 Pelham Road, Droitwich Spa
Worcs. WR9 8NT

MEMORIAL PERFORMANCE FOR MARTIN GYORGY'S WANDERINGS FOR RESEARCHING
AUTHENTIC FOLK DANCES. BUDAPEST, 25TH APRIL 2003

1. "Csángó" bál Klézse (Moldva)
2. Shepherds' Stick Dance (Szatmár)
3. Gipsy dances (Szatmár)
4. Dances from West Transdanubia (Rábaköz)
5. Lads' dances from Kalotaszeg and Gyorgyfalve (Transylvania)
6. Dance from Middle Hungary (Jászszág)
7. Transdanubian Jumping Dance (Somogy)
8. Dances from Bag (County Pest)
9. Round Dance and Stamping (East Hungary)
10. Man's Dance from Middle Transylvania
11. Dances from Northern Transylvania
12. "Bosnyak" (Balkan) dances from South Hungary (Pécs)

Dear Lily,

Update on the Public Entertainment Licence: The proposed legislation is out of Committee and will be going to the Commons for the final reading before going back to the Lords. Some key amendments have been reversed at the Committee stage. There is work going on to re-introduce some amendments that will allow folkdance events in open spaces. Please write to your M.P.s asking them to support amendments that allow the performance of small scale folk activities without special licensing.

Yours,

CASPAR CRONK
8 Langbourne Avenue,
London N6 6AL

Ed. note: See also p.9.

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Dear Lily,

I notice you wrote about Maltese costume in the April issue of SIFD NEWS.

The black hood you mentioned in your article is called a Faldetta and was often made of satin or taffeta type black material and was actually stiffened into this "box effect" of the head by inserting a whale-bone through the piece which was held over the head and in place by a loop caught on the finger.

I am very fortunate in actually having one of these Faldettas; it is quite an amazing costume piece.

Best wishes,

TANYA ALLEN
Allenova School of Dancing,
"Rivendell", Pond Lane,
Hermitage, Thatcham, Berks.
RG18 9RN

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**FOR SALE
BULGARIAN COSTUME**



Man's costume, embroidered shirt, red waistcoat embroidered in black, black embroidered trousers, red cummerbund
Chest about 38inches, inside leg 30inches.

£150

contact: Roger Sturge, 0117 962 1802, rogersturge@onetel.net.uk

S.I.F.D. DAY COURSE REVISION OF SUMMER SCHOOL DANCES

Last month's S.I.F.D. Day Course was a revision of some dances taught at the Summer School at Durham. The dances were well taught and it was an enjoyable day. I was, however, surprised by a couple of variations in the one dance that I knew, "Newcastle".

In the second figure, the head couples (of the square set) make an arch with inside hands, having led away from the centre of the set, for the side couples to pass through. I have not previously maintained this arch until the head couples divide. Standing with backs to the set is not very sociable and maintaining an un-used arch seems pointless, especially as it was not done by the side couples.

The re-forming of the square set after arming, as indicated by Playford (1st edition 1650 of The English Dancing Master) in the third figure is much more interesting. Cecil Sharp (The Country Dance Book part II, 1911) specifies this and then requires the side couples to join hands with those beside them, to form lines of four facing across the set, then to fall back and come forward a double. The line must start in a very distinct arc but there is no indication if this shape should be maintained or the lines straighten. For the last four bars of the B1 music "each man turns the woman opposite and changes places with her", (presumably one and a half turns). On the Day Course, the side couples waited for the ends to fall back to make a straight line, which took nearly all the music and the lines then came forward for the usual turn single and cross over (again re-forming the square set).

In my experience, the arming is finished in two straight lines close together (up and down the set with the head couples at the ends); lines fall back and come forward a double, all turn single and cross with the person opposite to re-form the lines across the set (middles going to the ends and ends to the middle). Repeat and finish in original places. The third figure is usually the difficult one for those who do not remember the dance and forming the two lines close together prevents people attempting to go forward and back, which would leave them out of position with no time to recover.

Sharp's original publication had the first figure repeated opposite handed, so the dance has clearly evolved in a number of aspects, which I suspect happened in the early years. My knowledge of Playford dances comes mainly from people who I think were second generation disciples of Cecil Sharp and their influence has covered the whole of England. I cannot recall this dance changing, or variants of it from other sources, in my experience from the 1960s.

JOHN WALFORD

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CIMBALOM FOR SALE

Tom Bethell, the cimbalom player for The Beskydy Dancers Czech and Slovak Folk Group for thirty-three years, is retiring! He would like to offer his cimbalom for sale to any group or individual through the pages of SIFD NEWS.

The cimbalom is of all wood construction, has a very mellow sound compared to contemporary, steel-framed instruments, and was made in the famous Shunda/Budapest workshop in about 1930-32.

If interested, please contact Tom on 020 8859 2032 for details and offer.

HEDY FROMINGS

