

# SIFD NEWS



*La Sandunga*

# JULY 2003

SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING

Internet Website: www.sifd.org

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The typing was done by Heather Edwards and the printing, packaging  
and posting by Dalila Heath.

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This month's cover was produced by Simon Guest from a photograph taken by  
Ken Poynton. It shows a group of dancers from Croxley Green I.F.D.G. dancing  
the Mexican dance "La Sandunga" which is from Tehuantepec and is danced to  
music from the mid-nineteenth century. The Tehuanas dance without a smile  
on their faces and their erect carriage is the result of the custom of  
carrying baskets and jars on their heads. The dance was performed by  
Croxley Green group at the Royal Albert Hall in 1966 (the date of the  
photograph) and was taught and arranged by Kathleen Monroe-James.

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PLEASE NOTE

Lily will be resuming the editorial chair for the  
August issue of the SIFD NEWS. All material for  
inclusion must reach her IN WRITING by 17th July.  
Please write in BLOCK CAPITALS all names of  
people, places and dances if not typewritten.

## Francis Feybli Teaches July Day Course

Saturday 12th July 2003

At Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regents Park Road, London NW1 7AY

10.30 am to 4.30 pm

Members £6 Non-members £8

Francis is an inspiring and meticulous teacher with an amazing repertoire of dances. He will be teaching from his new CDs which include dances from about 15 countries ranging from Armenia to the USA via Finland, Romania, Italy, Poland, Russia, Switzerland, the Caribbean etc.

Many of the dances taught to us in the past by Francis are now SIFD favourites. Don't miss this opportunity to spend a very rewarding day.

Simon Guest

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### A MORNING WITH MAGGIE HEAD

It was delightful to find that the rather glamorous lady in dark glasses was the eighty-four year old teacher of the Gosport group. (She whispered "I'm not trying to look like a film star, I have to wear these because I've just had an eye operation.") Maggie has been teaching International Folk Dance in Gosport for over fifteen years, before that she had a group in Stubbington. She told me it all started when she trained as a teacher with the Keep Fit Association forty-five years ago. To add variety to her classes she introduced simple international folk dances and gradually, over the years, the emphasis shifted away from Keep Fit with more and more folk dances taking up the lesson. These days she has two classes, one for International Folk Dance and the other for Keep Fit.

Maggie has enjoyed dancing at Earnley (Bognor Regis) on SIFD courses and particularly likes Israeli dances as taught by Fiona Howarth. Maggie's tips:

1. For a successful group - plenty of different dances for variety will maintain interest.
2. To arrive at eighty-four looking and feeling great - keep dancing.

We danced Djacko Kolo, the Russian Lyrical dance, Kuma Echa, Black Nag and a couple of others. The Keep Fit training showed itself during a short sit-down break, (a good time to do sitting exercises for neck, shoulders, etc.) Maggie said she shouldn't jump about too much after the operation - (it seemed to be greeted with relief). She may retire in a year or two, but hopes to keep the group together. Perhaps she will be able to persuade one or two of her group to sign up for the next SIFD teachers' course so that her club will continue to flourish under her watchful eye (if she wants to sit down for a moment!)

JANET DOUGLAS

Ed. On a personal note I would like to congratulate Janet Douglas and Jan Muireany on running their first Eastbourne International Folkdance Festival most successfully. No signs of panic were seen amidst all the busyness and everything proceeded in a pleasant atmosphere. Many thanks for all your hard work and hopefully you will feel encouraged to organise the event again.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Heather,

I read with interest John Walford's letter about the English Country Dance "Newcastle."

When I have been to classes and on courses, teachers of International dances have always seemed most particular in doing dances as authentically as possible. However, when it comes to our own dances, teachers blindly follow Cecil Sharp (to whom we do in fact owe a great deal) and other later callers who have produced their versions.

Anyone who cares to read the original, "The English Dancing Master", published by John Playford in 1651 will find that Newcastle is not a square dance, but a "Round for Eight."

In the second figure of Newcastle, it does not specify how the hands are held, but does say they meet, lead out again, then hold up the hands, the other four cast off, etc. It is possible to lead out and turn to face each other, making the arch, giving a wider space so that heads can be turned to greet the other dancers, and then turn to face in as they go through. This would avoid "not very sociable" backs.

In the third figure, after the arming, "Every man is with his own Wo. in the Co. place." I assume this means still in a circle. "Then fall back from each other foure and foure a brest to each wall." Thus each curve of the circle is now a straight line. The centre people move very little and the ends further.

Anyone caring to read the original will have a shock to read some of the dances.

Nonesuch How can the instruction "Sides all, that again, set and turn single, that again" be altered to siding (Cecil Sharp, two centuries later) and cross over and loop? In the last figure, coming out of the line, the instruction is to the left, i.e. on opposite sides. This does work if the first figure is done until the set is upside down, so that 1st couple stop in 4th place, 2nd couple in 3rd, etc.

Shepherds Holiday Last figure - 1st man cross with 2nd wo., his wo. into 2nd man's place, etc. - How can "etc." be translated into "3s cross and go round the set"? I recommend people to read "Night Peece" which precedes it in the book. The last figure begins the same, but goes on to 3s crossing. Spare music is used by "Set all and turne single."

Hit and Miss Why change the tune? The original is quite jolly.

Step Stately Again, why change the tune? The original is so good. "Jack Pudding" is an interesting dance anyway. Why abandon it?

Please do not think I don't appreciate the work Cecil Sharp and others have done, but they often altered things they did not understand, not having done the research that members of the Early Dance Circle have done. In the late 16th and early 17th centuries movements were always to the left, then right - hence shoulder to shoulder siding.

Yours sincerely,

KATHLEEN DICKINSON (Mrs.)  
26 Harcles Drive, Halcombe Brook,  
Bury, Lancs. BLO 9UE

## THE MALTESE EXPERIENCE

Continued from the June SIFD News, pages 6 and 7.....

The Sicilians were from Messina, a lively group of varied ages which made for an attractive mix of dances and dancers. Their opening item was most striking - ten men with goat or sheepskin coats and waistcoats over white shirts, with red neckerchiefs, sheepskin "chaps" over loose black calf length trousers and soft leather shoes. They carried long staves and sang in close harmony. The other dances were lively forms of tarantellas accompanied by songs, shouts and whoops of joy in fiesta mood, so lively that at times the music was too fast and the girls in particular experienced some difficulty in keeping in time. Apart from the accordeon and various tambourines they also had a small, wooden, high pitched flute, a jew's harp and a clay jug, frequently tossed into the air and otherwise used for percussion. The men discarded their sheepskin over-clothes for the rest of the programme while the girls wore full skirts of different, bright colours with a deep black band near the hem, lace edged petticoats and pantaloons. Their blouses were white with a black bodice on top and flowers in their hair. The group were very keen to express their high spirits, but apart from the opening, their programme lacked contrast and the music tended to overpower their otherwise excellent singing.

Whereas the groups up till now had given us a list of dances, we were now presented with a programme from the Russians which included titles like "Little Goose" and "The Lake, my small lake." They were all young, beautifully trained dancers who performed with permanent smiles on their faces and not a foot out of place. The "Lake" dance was performed by six girls dressed in shades of blue trimmed with silver, gliding gracefully across the stage, making beautiful choreographed patterns. The costume expert thought their costumes were wonderful. The most interesting thing about this group from Lubertsy, near Moscow, was their music. The main programme was accompanied by a button accordeon, a small tambourine, a wooden flute and wooden spoons. However, during a costume change we had a real treat. There was an accordeon with the bellows in two halves so that left and right hand both operated bellows independently. On the left side were two bells, like bicycle bell covers, with a small hammer operated by pressing a key. This gave a gentle tinkling sound during the melody. As far as I could gather this was called a Saratovski Akkordeon. There was also a wooden flute with a single reed ending in a piece of horn which gave quite a piercing sound, half way to a zurna, but most intriguing of all was a type of hurdy-gurdy which, apart from the strings, was made entirely of wood. It was about the size of a violin but without the waist and even the keys down the side looked more like wooden pegs. They said it was called a "wheel lyra" but I don't know what the translation of that would be. It had the same drone strings as a French vielle but was altogether softer in sound. This musical interlude was really quite delightful.

The Bulgarian group came from Nessebar where I had been on a dance course in 2000 prior to Koprivchtitsa Festival and after enquiring exactly which dances they would be performing the Director seemed to think he had met me before. We had items like "Mother Bulgaria" and "Northern Young Men's Dance" which had bits of Eleno Mome, Dajchovo and Ručenitsa all mixed up with a built-in encore to finish. Naturally, their footwork was superb with a set of costumes to match, straight out of the factory. It does seem such a shame that with the wonderful example of Koprivchtitsa Festival on their doorstep that these groups mangle their own dances with scant regard to their origins. They did, however, keep to traditional folk instruments - kaval, gajda, gadulka, tambouritsa and tapan - the most authentic part of the ensemble.

The Czech group were called "Hlubina" from Ostrava, close to the Polish border whom I have left till last because they were the best. They managed to incorporate everything into a folk ensemble that one could wish to see. They

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gave us a list of dances and stuck to it. When the next performance was slightly different they came and said so, and they kept to the time limit. Their musicians were two fiddles, one clarinet and a double bass who kept to exactly the right tempo for each dance and who kept an eye on the dancers and each other throughout. One of the fiddlers was a real folk player with the instrument held on its side so he bowed up and down rather than across. Many of the dances were accompanied by songs but there was also a soloist which then allowed for a costume change. The main costumes for men were navy blue trousers with black boots, white shirts with a red neckerchief, a neat fitting navy waistcoat or a jacket and a brimmed hat like a slightly flattened bowler. The girls had ankle length, full blue skirts with a delicate white motif, pale blue aprons with a neat embroidered border, white blouses with full puffed sleeves caught at the elbow with red ribbons, black bodices, red socks and black shoes. These weren't the only costumes but were the most frequently worn. Their programme was varied and interesting, from a miner's party with the young men flirting with the girls, a little polka duet and a girls snaking line dance with only a song accompaniment. The footwork was neat, the couples remained in couples and the dancers enjoyed themselves as much at the end of the weekend as they did at the beginning.

After a lengthy, and at times heated, discussion the final results were as follows:

Dance	1st	Czech Republic	2nd	Greece	3rd	Turkey
Music	1st	Czech Republic	2nd	Greece	3rd	Bulgaria
Singing	1st	Sicily	2nd	Czech Rep.	3rd	Cyprus
Costume	1st	Russia	2nd	Czech Rep.	3rd	Turkey

The teams were presented with a flame shaped piece of solid glass about eight inches high with different colours forming a swirling pattern inside and made at a glass factory in Malta, and also a certificate. Perhaps fortunately they were no given marks or an adjudication but they all seemed delighted with the results anyway.

This is a very new festival and several points need clarifying for all concerned. The organiser would like to expand, but that will depend on the support of Air Malta and that will depend on the tourist trade. Despite one or two glitches along the way, the dancing itself was delightful.

As for next year, who knows?

FRANCES HORROCKS

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#### FOLK DANCING IN SWITZERLAND

In addition to the two Dance and Music Weeks in Switzerland mentioned in the April SIFD NEWS, there will also be a week in Fiesch (South Switzerland, in the mountains) from 27th September to 4th October 2003.

The week will include not only folk dancing but singing, music, alphorn playing, lace making, embroidery and other folk crafts, swimming and sports. Special programmes in the evenings and at the end of the week a festival.

For further information contact Schweizerische Trachtenvereinigung, Thunstr.164, Postfach, CH 3074 Muri, Switzerland. Tel: 031 950 25 29.

Karl Klenk has sent in the above information, but says that participants should be able to understand French or German.

## SERBIAN WEEKEND IN MANCHESTER.

The choice couldn't have been better as a bit of relief from the constant caring for my mum. Such a long time since I've 'been anywhere – done anything', but despite the fact that Sula was far from well (brought on by desperate overtiredness with all the finals and lack of sleep from coughing etc.) we both HAD A BALL.

Yes I am often a bit over enthusiastic I know, but .... really the weekend couldn't have been more of a tonic – from the lovely Opanka Group (hosts led by Helen Clancy and her friendly organising), Barlow Group (like Julie Korth, Philip & Greta) our kind host Kath Beech (great to get news of Galina down under – still dancing naturally and enjoying life, Jackie and James Webb coming from Nottingham and of course most especially THE SUPERB DUO themselves – Vladimir Tanasijevic and Aleksandar Smrekic/Sasha – presenting a stunning variety of dances AND not to waste the lunchhour a well known patriotic song too 'Tamo daleko...' Vladimir used to lecture at the University on some impossible scientific area. He's been dancing since 14 years old and led Kolo for many years, but now he is Director of a multigroup ensemble in Belgrade founded by the great Branko Krsmanovic. It includes a choir, orchestra, theatre, folk and dance groups assisted by Sasha his great friend and musician of note.

In the past Sula and I have always had Delyan on a pedestal as being the most energetic, good natured, indefatigable clear teacher exuding enjoyment and love of the dance every minute of the day ... well he has to move over now to make room for Vladimir – with of course Sasha. Vladimir's command of English was so impressive, his understanding of English humour and his ready joking had us all laughing so often. I wholeheartedly endorsed his idea of a rest after a fairly hectic dance – another dance of slower tempo or simpler steps. He carried everyone along and just didn't stop dancing for a minute himself. He effortlessly made points while we all danced and he seemed to 'read' the mood and energy level of the group to choose faultlessly as we notched up dance after dance, still recapping and adding variations, but always so clearly and always making sure we knew which dance we were doing and the region. His soulmate Sasha hardly needed any hint at all and seemed to play (accordion) exactly what was needed no matter what. He seemed to be smiling all the time and made us all laugh at his little musical jokes as when he mimicked a mobile phone tune (which we heard more than once!!) We all smiled when he altered the music's pace, style, left a gap, or added an oompah pah. The ease with which they launched off in any direction was superb, like the illustration of kolo and step evolution.

Delightful – wholly delightful. The feeling of enjoyment, appreciation, good humour and brotherly love was palpable. You certainly missed a real treat.

Maybe they could be invited to Swansea?? Olivera's visit was back in the 60's so long time no Serbian!! Helen really made a find bringing this treasure to notice. This was their first trip to Britain, although several other countries have had the pleasure and they are very keen to come again, so I do hope they join the now quite considerable pool of regular visiting favourites.

The weekend was full of marvellous touches too as for example Sunday afternoon when several children appeared, which led him to get them all dancing a simple kolo and Vladimir like the Pied Piper led all out of the fire exit, round the building and back in again to take a bow and the applause of their parents and friends..

Yes it was a real feast for the spirit as well as the mind and body!!  
A big thankyou to all the lovely kind, friendly people there,  
a long lasting round of applause and vociferous cheering for Helen's leap of faith  
organising the weekend and a special golden star with bar & roses for Vladimir and  
Sasha. - the nonpareil duo. 'Haste ye back.

DIKI GLEESON

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### LYKION'S SPECIAL REGIONAL GREEK SUNDAY WORKSHOPS.

For anyone at all interested in Greek dancing, Lykion ton Hellinidon offers a twice a year treat, bringing over experts from the various regions for a workshop in the handsome ballroom at the Hellenic Centre (just behind Madame Tussaud's!) There are usually videos, cassettes, notes CD's to ensure accurate retention of style and step. The most recent one, last month, concentrated on Romylia and was presented by Nancy Harmanda and George Cotsos, which added a dimension for the male participants. Nancy is a very well known, experienced teacher, taking a totally serious view of the 'problems' and issues of passing on traditional dances accurately and genuinely; always very concerned that we replicate as an integrated whole, the style and feeling as accurately as the basic steps themselves. Certainly she could have delivered a 'paper' on such topics to good effect.

As always they are very generous allowing people not attending previous courses to buy tapes etc. Already there have been interesting, colourful days featuring Macedonian, Epirot, Islands, Pontic ... These delights are usually on offer Spring and Autumn (April/May and October/November). If there is a particular style/region you hanker for, let Anita or Marianthe know. They aim to satisfy a need and fulfil a desire and deserve full support and encouragement. It really is a most attractive venue with friendly welcoming atmosphere, usually well supported by a sizeable range of SIFD as well as Greeks and Greek dancing 'fanatics' from various groups.

Sorry it was not possible to give advance warning of the Romylia workshop this time, but, as they are already organising the next one I am sure there will be plenty of warning, so you don't inadvertently miss it!! I think when they are repeating a region so to speak there will be a conscious effort to include short breaks of more difficult variations to build on earlier workshops and add to the value. They are very willing to listen to any of your pleas or concerns..... so DO REMEMBER ....

if you want to give any feed back/requests either ring

Anita on 0207 229 4086 or Marianthe on 0208 368 8893, or me (Diki Gleeson) on 0208 363 1506.

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### MAGGIE COMES TO MARTENITSA

Maggie O'Regan will be coming to our regular class on Monday 7th July, 8.15-10.00p.m. at 12 Lisson Grove, London N.W.1 (nearest tubes, Marylebone and Baker Street).

She will be teaching us some fresh dances and perhaps one of her Japanese dances. All are welcome.

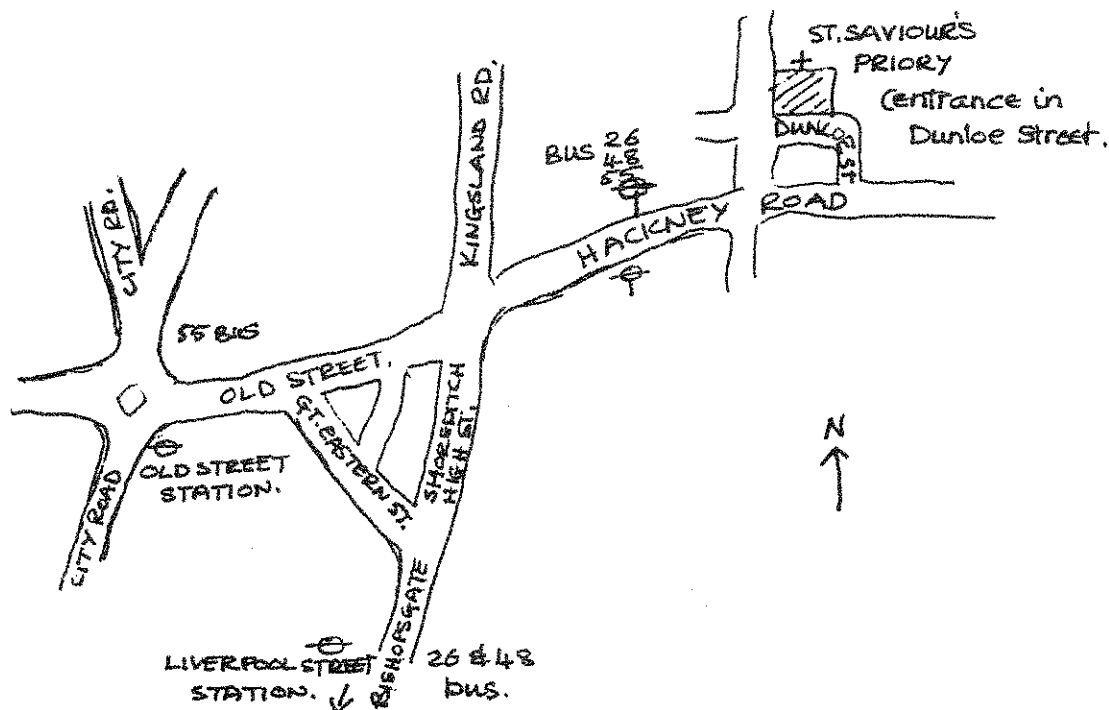
ANTONIA (TONI) GUTMAN



Date: Sunday July 6<sup>th</sup>.  
 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.

#### IMPORTANT NOTICE - S.I.F.D. TEACHERS' ASSESSMENT

Anyone planning to dance on July 6th who was not at the Assessment Day on June 14th, PLEASE contact Sister Pam at St. Saviour's Priory first on 020 7739 9976.

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#### FOLKDANCE BOOK

One of our ex-members has been having a clearout and has sent me some books that she no longer wants. Among them is one of the "Handbooks of European National Dances" series published by Max Parrish & Company - "Dances of France I: Brittany and Bourbonnais". It gives dance instructions, music and coloured illustrations of the costumes. The book is in good condition though the jacket cover is a little worn. If anyone would like to have it I should be pleased to send it on.

LILY AVERY, 01424 845866

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

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.

Dec.6th ŽIVKO FIRFOV FOLKLORE GROUP will be holding their Party at Moorfields Primary School, London. Contact: Irene Keywood, 020 8592 4427.

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### ***SIFD Music on a CD- ROM***

You might not be aware that a lot of the folkdance music currently available on the SIFD tape cassettes (available from Eleanor Gordon, 020 8942 9834) is *also* available on a CD-ROM.

*Edinburgh Multimedia* has produced a CD-ROM using SIFD cassettes, and other sources, to produce a comprehensive package which includes music sheets, songs, dance descriptions, video clips, quizzes— and “134 dress images”! It is advertised as being particularly suitable for several Key Stages in both the music and PE curricula.

It costs £16, and a percentage of the profit comes back to the SIFD.

I can send you more information on this (and/or the cassettes and books available) if you send me an SAE.

Or you can contact *Edinburgh Multimedia* directly on 0131 339 5374, or check out their web site at [www.edinmult.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk](http://www.edinmult.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk).

Alison Scrimshaw

22 Sherwood Park Road, Sutton, Surrey, SM1 2SQ 020 8642 3385

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

July 6th (in Trefusis) M.Cs.: Mike Gilbert  
with members of Cambridge I.F.D.G.

No Sunday dance in August

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

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WHAT'S ON IN JULY

- S.I. July 5th PHILHELLENES GREEK DANCERS performance. Fitzroy Square, London W.1. at 3.00p.m. (approximately).
- S.I. July 6th S.I.F.D. TEACHERS' ASSESSMENT DAY. See p.9.
- July 7th MAGGIE O'REGAN AT MARTENITSA. See p.8.
- July 7th(8th)/13th LLANGOLLEN INTERNATIONAL MUSICAL EISTEDDFOD.
- S.I. July 11th BARNET SUMMER PARTY. Dunav Balkan Group contributes to the high spirits as Barnet International Folk Dance Club have their end-of-season party. £4.00 includes refreshments. 8.00p.m. at Church House, Wood Street, Barnet, Herts. Details from Brian Dowsett on 01992 582717.
- S.I. July 12th S.I.F.D. DAY COURSE - Francis Feybli. See p.3.
- S.I. July 12th BALKANPLUS at Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, London N.W.1. 7.00-10.30p.m. £5.00. M.C.: Brian Dowsett with Dunav and our special guests the Živko Firfov Folkdance Group. We are delighted to welcome guests from Živko Firfov who will be leading a variety of dances from various regions of the former Yugoslavia. To add to the occasion some of the members will be wearing their beautiful authentic costumes, an opportunity not to be missed. There is no dance in August and the next Balkanplus will be on September 13th.
- S.I. July 13th PHILHELLENES GREEK DANCERS performance. Embankment Gardens, London W.C.2, 3.00-5.00p.m.
- S.I. July 19th OXFORD BALKANSKO ORO SUMMER PARTY with "Vuhpros". 7.00-11.00p.m. £5.00 at the door. St. Margaret's Parish Hall, Polstead Road, Oxford. Contact: Website [rwicksteed.oxfree.com](http://rwicksteed.oxfree.com)
- July 27th/Aug.1st "MACHOL EUROPE 2003". Residential Israeli dance course organised 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.

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