

SIFD NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2003



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 Peter Bransby from a photograph of some of
the musicians from Sakha Republic taken at the Eisteddfod by Jill Bransby.
See Jill's article on pp.6 & 7.

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S.I.F.D. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The A.G.M. will take place on Sunday, 7th December 2003, at Cecil Sharp House,
2 Regent's Park Road, London N.W.1 (near Camden Town Underground Station).

Motions should be proposed and seconded and should be received by the Secretary
(Janet Douglas, Oak Cottage, 92 Rose Green Road, Bognor Regis, West Sussex
PO21 3EQ on or before the last day in September.

Please try to attend; your Society needs you!

JANET DOUGLAS

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ASSOCIATED CLASSES AND AFFILIATED GROUPS

Up to now, I have received most of the forms back and they will be listed in
the forthcoming leaflet. Thank you for your prompt response.

Please note that the latest date for inclusion is at the end of September, so
to avoid a last-minute scramble please could I have the few remaining forms.

ALAN MORTON
Membership Secretary &
Groups Liaison Officer

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Lily,

The Central London Group's dancing in Victoria Embankment Gardens on 26th July was quite the most lovely International Folkdance performance that I've had the pleasure of watching. I'm probably biased as I learned my dancing with this group some ten years ago, but my word they've gone from strength to strength since then.

The dances came from seventeen countries and none danced better than the Czech Starodavny, though Reinadio from Portugal, the dance with the most counter-intuitive raise of the foot on the first beat of the bar, ran it close. The group dances were interspersed by a variety of smaller ensembles, a welcome variation for the performance, and the highlight for me was Przodek, danced by Janet Woolbar and Tony Latham. I know this dance, the Polish "airplane", for its fearfully difficult two-handed twisting lead of the lady behind the man's back in quite quick rhythm, and of course they made it look simple and effortless, and maintained the calm elegance of the dance throughout.

Central London were sharing the spot with Croxley Green and there must have been more than forty costumes on show in all their finery. Pride of place has to go to Anne Leach's veil, a Marama, which sent me down memory lane to, I think, a young Elizabeth Taylor in Cleopatra, or was it one of the Grace Kelly films? Probably a quite inappropriate reverie, but what a lovely way to pass the time.

So, make a note in your diary for next year - the last Saturday in July - Victoria Embankment Gardens in Central London, or, perhaps more to the point, vice versa.

Yours sincerely,

TONY SMITH
20 Kensington Park Road, London
W11 3BU

Ed.note: What a pity it is that, apart from the Philhellenes Group, those dancing at Victoria Embankment Gardens this summer did not advertise these events in SIFD NEWS. I am sure that members who did not hear of the performances by word of mouth would have enjoyed seeing these colourful demonstrations by some of the S.I.F.D. groups if they had known about them.



MARY PEMBERTON. APRIL 1933 - MAY 2003

Mary Pemberton, from Bristol, started dancing in 1984. She "got the bug" and as well as dancing with Bristol groups she attended workshops in London, South England, Devon, Wales and several of Cathy Meunier's weekends. Outside England there were dance holidays in Albania, Greece, Bulgaria, Romania and Holland. Several times Max went with her.

In her obituary it was said "her gentle and outgoing nature was balanced by a self-deprecating humour". Whether in her job as Practice Manager, her drama activities or to family and friends, she gave time and love unstintingly. She is much missed.

DAPHNE ALLEN

LETTERS, Contd.

Dear Lily,

It was interesting to read tributes to Harry de Caux in the August issue of SIFD NEWS. My memories began just a tad earlier, around 1949/50.

As one of several Senior Scouts due to go on to Rover Scouts in the Romford area, I was asked to attend the initial meeting of the newly-formed Chase Cross Rover Crew. Seven or eight chaps turned up at Collier Row to meet our new leader, Harry de Caux. We spent many interesting and happy hours together as a close-knit crew.

As mentioned last month, Harry was an enthusiastic Roman archaeologist and he took the crew to the Eynsford Villa in Kent to see the (then) recently excavated mosaic tile floor, said to be the best discovered so far. He was also well versed in Roman water heating, plumbing etc. and we all concluded that we were two thousand years behind the times as England did not then have central heating or showers.

Ralph Reader, of "Gang Show" fame, said to the Rovering fraternity, "Go out into the world and participate or you will become "Beer, Baccy and Baloney", and so we did, enlarging our interests in the Y.H.A. hostels, camping etc. and, in time, square and folk dancing. Then we met the girls of the S.R.S. "Flamingo" (Sea Ranger Ship) and things became a lot more interesting. I still have a photo of Harry and Gill (the Sea Ranger Skipper) striding purposefully along with the rest of us "smootching" along behind them.

Folk dancing became very popular; where else could you cuddle a pretty girl in public? The "fenster" (kiss through the window) in Bavarian Landler was A1, as was the flirting in the Swedish Fjallnas Polska - great stuff! In order to keep up with his "gang", Harry taught himself and made a mandolin but this instrument is not effective in a crowd, due to its soft tones, so he then taught himself the accordion and, taking a leaf out of Mourie Pfeffer's book, he took to keeping a mouth organ in his top jacket pocket for a tune while we were waiting for a train or 'bus, to the amusement of other travellers as a Kolo or Hopak was executed with relish on a platform or a 'bus station.

There are many interesting tales which could be told but this is for Harry so I will conclude with my visit last year to the Thaxted Morris Ring's annual event in that village. In the Guildhall was a photographic history of the Thaxted Morris Men and there was a picture of Harry's wedding to Dorothy, with a guard of honour of the Thaxted Men with crossed sticks making the triumphal arch. I had been out of the folkdance scene for something like 35 years, so I made enquiries to re-establish contact. Dorothy replied to my letter and brought me up to date with their news and we exchanged cuttings which she read to Harry during her daily visits, and from time to time his face would "light up" as something stirred his memory. In December last year I was sent the original Chase Cross Rover Crew log book which recorded details of all crew activities. This I sent to Dorothy and again she said that Harry's face would light up at the mention of something he remembered, especially the reference to "Mr.D" which we all called him out of respect for his position among us.

When he became musician for the Thaxted Morris Men, he had acquired a melodian, which still remains with them today and, strangely enough, another Morris man has an identical melodian with the very next serial number to Harry's.

It is rumoured that Harry plays again for past folkdancers in the sky.....!

"TRAPPER" (Paul Bradley)
9 Chequers Park, Elmsett,
Suffolk IP7 6LY

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Lily,

My comments in the June SIFD NEWS have produced two apparently opposing views, but I basically agree with both of them! Many researchers have established that dances change with time in the past; revivalists made step changes, like Sharp with the Playford dances, through lack of knowledge and/or modifying them to suit changed social circumstances and their own ideas. The traditional dances in this country were regional, evolved with time, and many are now identified by the locality being incorporated in their current names. When people emigrate they become more enthusiastic for their homeland customs and in preserving them; the evolution process virtually ceases, making them a rich source for research into the earlier forms of dance of their homelands. I believe this explains why Scottish dancing is so popular in England. Terms like "authentic" are difficult to apply to evolving traditions unless related to a specific time and location.

The Royal Scottish Dance Society came about through Sharp's demonstration team of English dances in Glasgow resulting in a Miss Milligan undertaking to revive the Scottish dances. It is reputed that she did not love the wild, un-disciplined ways of the untrained village hall or kitchen floor dancers with whatever footwear they were wearing, or bare feet in the summer, and decided on a "correct style" for the dances, specifying footwear and the "position" based on classical ballet. She subsequently became the co-founder of the RSCDS, publishing books on the "proper" way to dance and freezing this style of Scottish dance. The Fletts researched the earlier Scottish social dances and published many of them and their background in "Traditional Dancing in Scotland" by J.F. & T.M.Flett.

Cecil Sharp's achievement is recorded on the Foundation Stone of the building where many of the S.I.F.D.'s London events take place: "This building is erected in memory of Cecil Sharp who restored to the people the songs and dances of their country, Midsummer Day 1929". Whilst Sharp made changes to the Playford dances he published, it did not stop some evolution by "the people" in the early years. By the second half of the 20th century, this evolution of the English folk dances appears to have ceased, probably due in part to the much greater mobility of the folk-dancing public, enabling dancers to enjoy the dances they knew anywhere. I generally disapprove of simplifications and alternative versions that a few M.C.s have made to dances whilst retaining the same name.

There are some people who like performing dances of an earlier period; I am one of them, having been in a group that performed dances collected by Tom and Joan Flett and the earlier forms of English traditional dances, many having stepping that is not taught or is generally unknown. However, as there are people dancing the Playford dances which have evolved since Sharp's publications and who also dance in the S.I.F.D., I think the S.I.F.D. should teach the current versions of these dances. The "Objects of the Society" in the Constitution of the S.I.F.D. state: "3(a) To preserve folk dances of all peoples, to make them known and encourage the practice of them in traditional form" which, to me, means current and not earliest known form.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN WALFORD, Reading.

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BALKANPLUS, 13th Sept., 7.00-10.30 p.m. at Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, London N.W.1. £4.00. M.C.s: Madeleine Chpaman and John Riley. Start the new season with a delightful programme of old favourites and new dances; be sure to come along for a most enjoyable evening. The next Balkanplus will be on 11th October.

FRANCES HORROCKS

Report on Instrumental Folk Group/Solo (Competition no.18) at Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod, 9th July, 2003.

The heats of this competition were held on Wednesday morning at the Dinas Brân School where we were privileged to hear nine entries (groups and solos) performing folk air, song or dance music on traditional regional instruments. The musicians were asked to demonstrate an understanding of their own country's instrumental folk tradition. The countries represented were Iran, Northern Ireland, India, China, Russia, Turkey, Lithuania, Brittany and Sakha Republic.



The adjudicators were Elinor Bennett, a renowned Welsh harpist, and Francis Feybli, who needs no introduction to most members of the SIFD, who respect his knowledge and expertise in traditional folk dance and music.

This year five of the entries were chosen to go forward to perform in the main Pavilion, instead of the usual three, perhaps as a result of members such as Roger and Hilda Sturge writing to complain about the low profile of this exciting competition. The entries this year were all of a very high standard, so it was especially gratifying that a larger audience could hear more of this fascinating competition.

The entrants that didn't go forward entertained us very well. They were: *Fiddler's Galore* a young Northern Irish Group who played two harps, two fiddles, bodhran, and flute/pipe. It is always good to see young musicians playing traditional music, but I felt that their playing lacked attack and dynamic range, and their articulation could have been clearer. They played quite well together and were particularly appreciated by the school children who were allowed to listen to the competition heat.

Heritage Group from India started quietly on a bowed stringed instrument (*Saranghi*). This, I gather, is very difficult to play, since it has no frets or fingerboard, so the player creates the pitch by sliding his fingernail against the strings, which float in the air. The *Saranghi* player was joined by mainly percussive sounds from: a large double-ended barrel-shaped drum (*Dhol*); tambourine (*Khanjari*); very small hour-glass drum (*Damaru*); and a one-stringed lute (*Ektar*), to build up rhythm and volume to create an exciting conclusion.

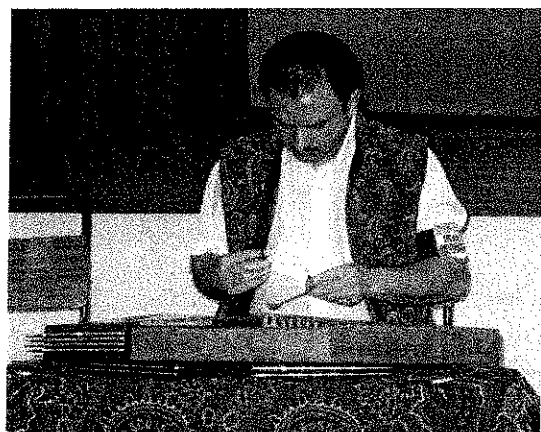
Lai Kim Kam, a young woman from Hong Kong, representing China, played a harp like instrument called a *Zheng*. The instrument was laid flat and plucked by hand and the two tunes that she played expressed, the happiness of villages in He-Nan, and, remembering a time when there was no water. I enjoyed listening to these pieces and admired the speed changes, varied dynamic range and the occasional bending of the notes that made the music distinctive. (I do not know whether a *Zheng* is a folk instrument, but I include a photo so that members can decide for themselves.)



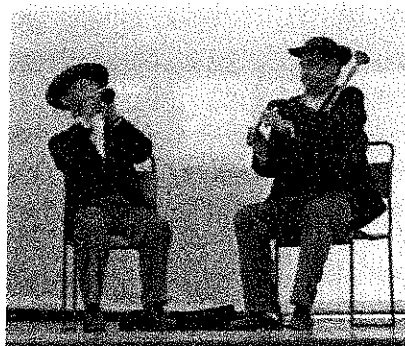
Pynimelis from Lithuania first played a lyrical piece on two zithers (*Kanklés*) and four horns (*Birbynė*), which was followed by a lively tune on panpipes (*Skudučiai*) and *Kanklés*. (Those who attended the York Summer School in 1998 would have remembered those 'merry polkas'!) I felt that they were a little unlucky not to be invited to go forward as their rendition was very direct and playful, especially in the second piece, and they played together very well.

Those who were invited to play again in the Pavilion had to wait until late afternoon, after the Dance Competition, when many of the audience had left the stifling heat of the tent. The latter missed a real treat.

Saeed Niakowsari, a doctor of international medicine from Iran, played a hammer dulcimer called a *Santoor*.



He played two pieces of his own composition. The first was dedicated to his wife and the second to his daughter. Both were expertly played, with great precision creating a rich sound. At the end of both his morning and afternoon performances he clapped the audience for listening. The adjudicators complimented his highly skilled and musical performance and awarded him 91 marks (third place).



which included the call to dancers, the formation of couples and the chain during the dance. (Members who were at Sibylle Helmer's Breton workshop, at Durham Summer School, would have had no difficulty in recognising this.) The duo were awarded 89 marks for their 'no nonsense' but evocative performance.

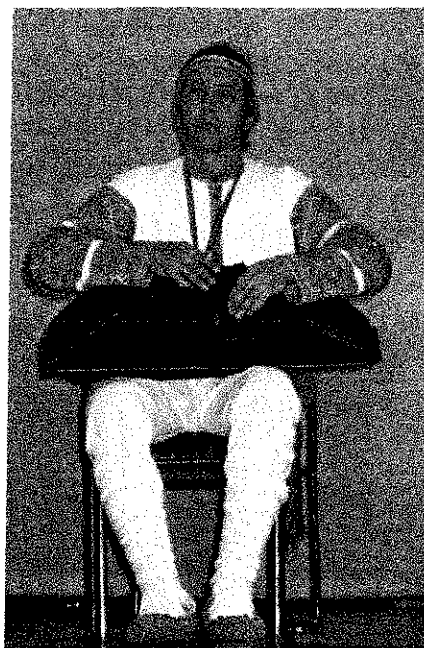
Last, but not least, were the group from Sakha Republic called *Tetim* whose music evoked a vast landscape of natural sounds with their voices and instruments – jew's harps, rhythm sticks, bones, horns,



drums, and stringed instruments that were bowed. The first piece described a hunter going out at sunrise with many bird and animal noises. The second tune was a blessing 'Peace be with you'. The latter didn't sound very peaceful with pounding horses' hooves beating across the soundscape. The piece built to an exhilarating crescendo with the whole group evoking a fast gallop. I noticed that the music that they performed in the morning was slightly different from that played in the afternoon so I suspect that improvisation comes into play with this talented group. Their dynamic and imaginative performance was rewarded with 94 marks, gaining a well deserved first place. The adjudicators commented on their unique sound picture that described the proximity of humans to nature and created a sense of the 'wide open spaces'.

I was pleased to be asked by George Sweetland and Lily Avery to cover this event for the *News* as it enabled me to find out more about the music. I always enjoy listening to this competition and I found it a particularly rewarding experience this year with so many wonderful performers. This compensated for the rather disappointing Adult Dance Competition which George covered last month.

Jill Bransby.



Another solo instrumentalist was the Russian *Sergy Kungurov* who plucked a zither type instrument which he had revived, called a *Kreish*. He played plaintive tunes delicately with great feeling. The first was a waltz which he had composed and the second a fantasy - a dream of the country. The adjudicators awarded him 90

marks, commenting that it was a very musical and well thought out performance that was 'direct to the heart'.

The Turkish Group *Özel Fatih Lisei* played a range of instruments – *Bağlama* (guitar like instrument), *Kaval* (pipe), *Kabak Kemane* (violin), *Bendir* (tambour). They created a real sense of ensemble playing and produced a wide dynamic range. I enjoyed the variety of moods from plaintive to exciting. The three pieces



they performed were: a tune about a man who leaves the mountains in time of war; a women's spoon dance; and a piece about the Black Sea which evokes the movement of fishes. This group was awarded 93 marks (second place) and their music was said to be 'sophisticated but in touch' as well as exciting and powerful.

A duo from Brittany *Sonerien Daou Ha Daou* played *Bombard* and *Bimiou* (bagpipes) with apparent enjoyment and directness. The first piece was a wedding march – nothing like Mendlessohn's! This was followed by a set of dances from central Brittany

*(the musician's own spelling. Ed.)

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- S.I. Oct.10th/12th LES PANARDS DANSANTS present a TRADITIONAL BRETON AND FRENCH MUSIC & DANCE FESTIVAL with Krampouezh Lipous, Gars du Nord and Solenn Boennec at Westfield Lodge, Moorside Lane, Oxenhope, near Haworth. Friday night Bal; Saturday dance and music workshops; Saturday night Fest-Noz; Sunday workshops and mini-Bal. Early booking (before 3rd October) full weekend ticket £68 (£53 concessions) includes accommodation in bunk barn; food to purchase separately on site. Details and booking forms available on LPD website or telephone 01943 463804 or 01274 833473. www.frenchdanceleeds.co.uk
- S.I. Oct.11th BALKANPLUS.
- S.I. Oct.17th RAINMAKERS 27TH ANNIVERSARY DANCE at Parish Hall, Broadway, Letchworth. 8.00-11.00 p.m. Music by Martin Butler and friends. M.C. Jill Bransby. Tickets £4.00. For details/tickets please contact Richard Thom on 01438 316651.
- Oct.18th/19th "DANCE WITH THE WORLD" at Cecil Sharp House. See p.13.
- Nov.1st/2nd Back by popular demand! SERBIAN DANCE COURSE in Manchester with Vladimir Tanasijevic and Sasha Smerkic. £35.00. Contact: Helen Clancy, 18 Aylesbury Court, Chorlton, Manchester M21 0US. Tel: 0161 881 0442.
- Nov.7th/9th RESIDENTIAL MACEDONIAN COURSE with Paul Mulders at Whitby. Comfortable en-suite accommodation, full board, General or Advanced course, or both courses. Excellent area for Walking/sightseeing. Non-dancing friends and family welcome. Full board and accommodation £107. Each course £18. Full details and booking forms from Cathy Meunier, 115 Chetwynd Rd., London NW5 1DA. (s.a.e. please)
- Nov.15th SIFD DAY COURSE with Maggie O'Regan. See p.13.
- Nov.21st/23rd RUSSIAN & UKRAINIAN DANCE WORKSHOP with Hennie Konings at Chisenhale Dance Space, East London. Details from Janet Wilks, Creative Energy Circles, 1388 Portobello Rd., London W11 2DZ. Tel: 020 7229 9387. £45 for the weekend.
- Nov.22nd BRISTOL, 2.00-9.00 p.m. Afternoon BALKAN DANCE WORKSHOP with Brian Dowsett, followed by a meal (please bring food to share) and dancing to live music by Dunav. St.Ursula's School, Brecon Rd., Henleaze, Bristol. £7.00 (£5 for SIFD members). To reserve a place please send cheque made out to BIFD to K.Green, 64 Coronation Rd., Downend, Bristol BS16 5SL. For further details, 'phone Pat Skinner on 0117 9672493.
- S.I. Nov.29th SIFD WEST MIDLANDS BRANCH ADVENT PARTY, 7.30-10.30 p.m. at Solihull Methodist Church Hall, Blossomfield Road (B4102), Solihull (corner of Station Approach, by bus and train stations). M.C. Maggie Kaye. £2.00. Bring-and-share supper. Further information from Maggie on 0121 608 1437.
- Dec.6th ZIVKO FIRFOV FOLKLORE GROUP PARTY, 7.00-10.30 p.m. at Moorfields School, Bunhill Row, Old Street, London E.C.1. Nearest Underground Station: Old Street. Dances from Croatia, Serbia and Macedonia; also from Bulgaria, Greece and Romania. ADMISSION BY TICKET ONLY, £6 including refreshments, from Irene Keyword, 133 Third Avenue, Dagenham, Essex RM10 9BD. Tel: 020 8592 4427. Cheques to be made out to Zivko Firfov Folklore Group (s.a.e. please).
- Dec.7th S.I.F.D. Annual General Meeting.
- Dec.19th/21st SIFD DANCING/WALKING WEEKEND AT DUNFORD. See p.10.
- S.I. Dec.31st SIFD WEST MIDLANDS BRANCH NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY. 8.00-12.15 at Downing Hall, Knowle. M.C.: Grace Pittman. £2.00. Bring-and-share supper. Further information from Maggie Kaye on 0121 608 1437.

TURKISH REMINISCENCES: LANGUAGE AND DANCING

Last year, after reading an article in SIFD NEWS, I contributed a few thoughts on Chinese fiddles. Now it's the turn of Turkish fiddles! I enjoyed the interesting account by Frances Horrocks of the Malta International Folk Art Festival and I should like to make a few comments on the Turkish part of her article. My meagre qualification for so doing is that in 1972-3 I spent a year teaching at a university in Ankara, as a "foreign expert" (in mathematics, not folk dancing). I joined a beginners' course organized by one of the dance groups but they could not understand why a non-Turk wanted to do Turkish folk dancing, so I was not invited to join the group or perform with them, although I did well in the practical and written exam at the end of the course. (My memory tells me that I came top of the class, but perhaps I exaggerate!).

In her book, "The Greek Dances", Dora Stratou writes, "The daouli is now rather rare in Greece but still used to accompany the zurna....". The Turkish version of the word for this type of drum is "davul", the Turkish v having a soft sound midway between English v and u, and davul/zurna was a very popular folkdance accompaniment in Turkey. Readers of Frances' article may get the impression that "Silifke" is the Turkish word for a spoon, but in fact it is the name of the town on the Mediterranean coast where one of the spoon dances comes from; its old name was Seleukeia, founded in the third century B.C.

I was able to chat to Dora Stratou some years ago after a performance of Greek dances in London. I asked her why her group had just performed a Turkish spoon dance and she explained that dances from places that were Greek colonies long before the Turks arrived, and that had maintained a Greek tradition, are regarded as Greek dances. In her book she mentions a spoon dance from Pharassa in Cappadocia, which I think must be in the middle of Turkey near Kayseri. So, some dances are claimed by both Greeks and Turks. Was this mentioned at the Malta Festival I wonder?

By travelling around Turkey, I was able to acquire a collection of 37 picture postcards of dances from different regions. My two pictures of the Silifke dance show a team of men only, with pointed white hats, accompanied by davul and a wind instrument. I also have a picture of a mixed group from Kirsehir in central Turkey dancing with spoons. (As well as the familiar dotted i, the Turks use an undotted i which is pronounced rather like e in "the"; ş is pronounced sh; and "şehir" means town or city). Perhaps this is the Pharassa dance; it's in the right area but I have not been able to pinpoint Pharassa on a map of modern Turkey.

I'm not sure that "kabak kemane" is quite correct; "kabak" means marrow or pumpkin, and "keman" is a type of fiddle, so the instrument that Frances refers to is presumably shaped like, or made from, a pumpkin, and "kabak kemani" with a possessive ending would satisfy the rules of Turkish grammar. My dictionary tells me that the word "davul" is derived from Arabic, whilst "zurna", "keman" and "saz" are derived from Persian. This perhaps tells us something about the distant origins of the instruments.

JOHN RIGBY

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SWANSEA 2004

Please note that the dates have changed. In order to accommodate self-caterers, for whom bookings have to be Saturday to Saturday, the dates of the Summer School are now SATURDAY, 24TH JULY, TO SATURDAY, 31ST JULY 2004. Enquiries to Roger Sturge, 10 Carmarthen Road, Bristol BS9 4DU. Tel: 0117 962 1802.

S.I.F.D. DANCING AND WALKING WEEKENDS AWAY, 2003/2004

We shall again be visiting our customary locations of Dunford in December and Halsway Manor in May. Dot Bradbury has very kindly agreed to take over the organisation of Dunford and I hope that you will show her the strong support that you have always given to me in the past. She is not proposing to deviate significantly from the long-established pattern. I look forward to seeing you there. Once again, Gordon Adie and I will be working together at Halsway. Weekends commence with dinner on Friday evening in both cases and terminate after tea on Sunday at Dunford, and after tea on Monday at Halsway (with the option of extension to Tuesday morning). The main dance leader, as in previous years, will be Janet Woolbar. Neither house has yet given us a firm price but last year's prices are quoted as a guideline - with expected increases of about 3-5%.

Dunford, Midhurst, West Sussex, 19th-21st December 2003, is a well-furnished house in beautiful countryside at the foot of the Northern slopes of the South Downs. It was once the home of Richard Cobden of Corn Law fame. Accommodation is in single, twin and double bedrooms, all en-suite. Walking (or otherwise) in the mornings (or Midhurst market on Saturday morning), dancing in the evenings and Sunday afternoon. Also carols and Christmas dinner on Saturday evening. (Guide price £113). Further details and bookings: Mrs. Dot Bradbury, 32 Aylward Road, Merton Park, London SW20 9AF. Tel: 020 8540 3464.

HALSWAY MANOR, CROWCOMBE (between Taunton and Minehead, West Somerset), 30th April to 3rd May 2004, is an interesting house now devoted to folk dancing and music, situated at the foot of the Quantocks with beautiful views across Somerset. Accommodation is mainly in double, twin and larger rooms - just a very few singles and en-suite rooms available. The extra day allows a full-day outing on the Sunday, with picnic lunch and coach transport provided. About two-thirds of the participants usually also stay on until the Tuesday morning to avoid return travel on the Bank Holiday. (Guide Price £138 for 3 nights). Further details and bookings: Gordon Adie, 14 Adelaide Terrace, Truro TR1 3EJ. Tel: 01872 276511, or myself.

A warm welcome to regular participants and newcomers alike!

JACK RICHARDSON
34 Mayals Avenue, Swansea
SA3 5DB
Tel: 01792 403153 (home)
01792 295194 (work)

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HIGHLY RECOMMENDED CHRISTMAS COURSE IN SWITZERLAND

This year, Francis Feybli's Christmas course will run from 27th December 2003 to 1st January 2004 at Beckenried on Lake Lucerne. Slavica Mihailović will be teaching Serbian and Bill Litchman will be teaching Traditional Western Squares and Circles. As always, Francis himself will be running the (wonderful) evenings.

The flier giving full details exists as a Microsoft Word document. For a copy please e-mail me at squest@iee.org or 'phone for a printout (01992 577065).

SIMON GUEST

BEXHILL INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCE GROUP - 10th ANNIVERSARY

In 1993 Lily Avery and I thought it would be worth trying to start an international folk dance group in Bexhill-on-Sea and just see what happened. Amazingly, 25 people turned up to our first meeting on 2nd September and, although we never scaled those dizzy heights again, some of them are still with us! Numbers have varied slightly but we average 12-14 at our twice-monthly meetings. Most also belong to or run other dance groups or keep fit classes and come from Eastbourne and Hastings as well as Bexhill.

Jack and Midge Carter come all the way from Seaford and Jack keeps up the native input by teaching a couple of English dances each session. Beryl Hartley has started composing some very enjoyable English dances and uses us as guinea pigs occasionally to iron out any wrinkles. Rowena Martin and Debbie Collins contribute a lot of dances mainly from the Balkans, Israel and Armenia but also from Russia, Rowena's other love. I like to keep up general international, especially couple dances, but throw in the odd Chinese or Japanese or the Tahitian canoe dance, Hoe Ana, taught by Cory Verheijen at the last Eastbourne festival - a hit, and you could sit down!

Lily, our official tutor, was out of dancing for a year, unfortunately. After her return she decided that she no longer wished to teach - a great loss for the group but at least we have her in a consultant capacity. Consequently we will be affiliated to the SIFD rather than an associate group in future.

We are a friendly sociable gathering of busy people with other interests so have never taken part in displays. During our ten years visitors have dropped in including a New Zealander (twice), Per-Erik Boij from Toronto who gave us a write-up in the Ontario Folk Dancer September 1994, and SIFD members Grace and John Pittman and Fiona Howarth. There have been two weddings of group members - Tom and Audrey Turner and Beryl and Ken Hartley - and a golden wedding for Jack and Midge Carter who held a huge dance for family and friends from all the dance groups they were associated with - a great evening.

As we don't meet at the beginning of September we are having a special evening of celebration on Thursday 2nd October, 8.00-10.00p.m. at Little Common Methodist Church Hall, Church Hill Avenue, Little Common, Bexhill. Any SIFD member in the vicinity will be welcome to join us for our favourite dances, food and chat.

HEATHER EDWARDS



THE OXFORD INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCE GROUP wish to announce that after seventeen years of leading and inspiring the group, David Mowat has, for family reasons, decided to move to the South Coast. The group would like to thank him for all his efforts over the years and to wish him very good luck for the future.

The group will re-start on Wednesday, 3rd September, at 8.15 p.m. at St.Giles Church Hall, with members of the group leading dances and a rota for M.C.s. They hope to hold frequent party evenings. All visitors, whether beginners or experienced dancers, will be welcomed. Price £2.00 per session, with 12-session tickets available at £22.00. Contact: Diana Hitchins, 01865 763096.

ROGER WICKSTEED
p.p. Diana Hitchins

SWEDISH WORKSHOPS AND DAY COURSE - 20TH & 21ST SEPTEMBER

On Saturday, 20th September, Mats Nilsson and Ingegerd Sigfridsson will teach a Swedish dance workshop which will concentrate on traditional couple dances, such as polska, schottis, snoa etc. At the same time, Mats Berglund will be teaching a music workshop (for details, contact Tania Simon, 020 8341 1454).

The dance workshop will be at St.Mark's Church at the corner of Regent's Park Road and St.Mark's Square (going from Cecil Sharp House towards Primrose Hill, the church is on the left at the first intersection, just past the canal. There are no parking restrictions on Saturday or Sunday on Regent's Park Road. The course will run from 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. The course fee will be £10.00 (£8.00 for SIFD and Skandia members). Tea and coffee will be available. There are restaurants nearby, or bring a packed lunch.

In the evening there will be a concert at Cecil Sharp House followed by a dance. The concert will include a dance demonstration by Mats Nilsson and Ingegerd Sigfridsson. The concert will start at 8.00 p.m. and will be preceded by a short dance workshop starting at 6.45 p.m. The dance workshop will teach some basic steps for some of the dancing after the concert. The fee for the evening will be £6.00 (£5.00 for SIFD and Skandia members and participants in the Saturday dance workshop; £4.00 for participants in the fiddle workshop). The fiddle students will provide some of the music for the dance after the concert.

On Sunday, 21st September, Mats Nilsson and Ingegerd Sigfridsson will teach an SIFD day course - details below. The dances taught will be primarily for two or more couples (figure dances) but will also include the hambo.

CASPAR CRONK

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A CHANGE OF DATE FOR THE SIFD DAY COURSE IN SEPTEMBER

SWEDISH DANCES

Date: Sunday, 21st September Time: 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

Cost: £6.00 for SIFD members Place: Cecil Sharp House
 £8.00 for non-members

Tutors: Mats Nilsson and Ingegerd Sigfridsson

Mats is from the Department of Ethnology at Göteborg University, where his speciality is Swedish dance.

This day course has been arranged in co-operation with the Scandia group, to take advantage of Mats' visit (see Caspar's article above). Mats taught in very good English!

PAM RADFORD

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

Sept.7th M.C.s: Jeanette Hull and friends.

Oct.5th M.C.s: Woodvale I.F.D.G.

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

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WHAT'S ON IN SEPTEMBER

S.I. Sept.13th BALKANPLUS. See p.5.

Sept.20th SWEDISH DANCE WORKSHOP, MUSIC WORKSHOP, CONCERT at Cecil Sharp House.
See p.12.

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

Sept.21st S.I.F.D. SWEDISH DAY COURSE. See p.12.

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

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ADVANCE NOTICE OF SIFD DAY COURSES IN OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER 2003

18th and 19th October

Instead of our own SIFD Day Course in October, we'd like to encourage everyone to participate in the "Dance With The World" event at Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, London N.W.1. This event happens on two days - Saturday, 18th, and Sunday, 19th October. There will be plenty of workshops to choose from and performances to enjoy as well. More details will be available later.

15th November

The SIFD Day Course in November will be taught by Maggie O'Regan, so we are guaranteed an excellent day. Maggie will write about the day course later.

PAM RADFORD

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All material for the October issue of SIFD NEWS must be received by the Editor IN WRITING by 17th September. Please write in BLOCK CAPITALS all names of people, places and dances if not typewritten.