

SIFD NEWS



APRIL

2004

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, showing a Chinese dancer, was drawn by Janet Douglas.

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Helen Ezra



Anne Leach



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Alan Morton
(Membership Secretary)



Judith Payling
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Alison Scrimshaw



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(Publicity Assistant)

OBITUARY - DAVID MOWAT

Dancers at the Oxford International Folkdance Group were deeply grieved to learn of the sudden death of David Mowat at Hove on Sunday, 29th February, due to a brain haemorrhage. It is tragic that the dancers in Oxford and Hove will now be deprived of the wide fund of knowledge which for over a quarter of a century inspired and enlivened our folkdance experience.

David returned to dance in Oxford once since his departure for Hove last summer, and we were looking forward to other visits in order to consolidate some of his half-remembered dances, and to enjoy his enthusiastic and charming manner. We have decided to commemorate David on Wednesday, 7th April, at 8.15 p.m. at St.Giles Church Hall, by recalling some of his special dances and donating the takings to Amnesty International, his favourite charity. All who knew him are welcome.

ROGER WICKSTEED



S.I.F.D. SWANSEA SUMMER SCHOOL, 24TH-31ST JULY 2004

Enrolments are flowing in but there are still places left. All twin rooms have been taken but singles are still available in en-suite, and a few in standard and self-catering accommodation. It would be helpful if those who have paid a deposit or have let me know they wish to come but have not sent in their enrolment form could let me have it as soon as possible. Thank you.

ROGER STURGE
10 Carmarthen Road,
Bristol BS9 4DU
Tel: 0117 962 1802



HEART OF ENGLAND INTERNATIONAL FOLKDANCE GROUP IS MOVING

With various difficulties at Lyndon School, Heart of England have been looking for some time for an alternative venue and at last one has been found, only about a mile away. It is St.Giles Church Hall, Church Road, Sheldon, on the Eastern side of the A45 Coventry road. From Solihull, continue on the B425 to its junction with the A45 at the traffic lights by the Wheatsheaf and go straight ahead, or from the M42 turn right at the lights. The hall is on the right-hand side of the road, about a mile further on, just past a pedestrian crossing.

Our first meeting there will be on Wednesday, 21st April, at 7.30 p.m. and, as always, all are welcome. If you need more precise information, e.g. on car parking, please ring Malcolm Cox on 0120 783 8517.

MAVIS LOWE

SCOTTISH MOUTH MUSIC FOR DANCING /SCOTTISH BULGARIAN CONCERT - 13TH March, St. Paul's Church, London, NW1. Starring Talitha MacKenzie and Dessislava Stefanova

On one of her rare appearances in London, world-famous Talitha MacKenzie led a workshop on Scottish mouth music (**puirt-a-beul**) and accompanying folk dances. This was an exciting opportunity to learn Strathspey, reel and jig styles, singing in Gaelic at the same time. A literally breathtaking experience.

Talitha took us through **Dannsa Nan Tunnagan** - Dance of the Ducks - originally performed by young girls as they led the animals from the family living quarters to summer pastures. She demonstrated the children's version, squatting on the floor and walking forward in crouch position, but taught us the more sedate, adult version, a combination of setting and travelling steps.

The high spot of the day was learning **SAOR AN T-SABHAIDH - The joiner's song**. This begins gloriously with **Faca tu**. And yes, if you're wondering, this is pronounced like the "F" word, with a slight aspiration at the end. There's something very liberating about shouting this out at the top of your voice. **Faca tu** means "Have you seen?", the air being a fertility song about a joiner and his saw.

During the day we learnt many interesting facts about life in the Scottish Islands. Talitha demonstrated her vocal dexterity by imitating a bagpipe and a metal string harp, and told us about "**waulking**" songs, melodies sung when women were beating out newly woven cloth. The cloth, first soaked in urine to set the dye, was tied at both ends, and passed around a table. As each woman received the fabric, she would beat it twice on the table, and hand it to her neighbour, accompanying the song with claps and thigh slaps until it was her turn to thump the cloth again.

We drove out evil spirits with **CHAILLEACH AN DUDAIN - WOMAN OF THE DUST** - a chant associated with New Year and originally sung at Samhain, October 31st. An old wise woman would go into a trance and become a spirit medium. The villagers would surround the woman and stamp in an irregular beat towards her, singing to ward off evil forces.

We learnt the beautiful **FRAOCH A RONAIGH - HEATHER FROM RONAY** - a magical, haunting sailor's tune about the pain of leaving one's native land. Then a complete change of atmosphere, the lively Breton dance **CHANGERAIS-TU?**

This unusual, fascinating workshop was followed by a Scottish-Bulgarian concert. In the evening, the inspiring Talitha joined the amazing Dessi and the London Bulgarian Choir. Talitha sang a variety of Gaelic songs, occasionally inviting the audience to join in. The Bulgarian choir beautifully performed several favourites, and departed from their usual style by accompanying Talitha in two Gaelic numbers.

A truly memorable day.

Janna Eliot

Last Saturday Mummy took me to the Israeli day course at Cecil Sharp House. I really enjoyed learning all the dances. I had never been to anything like this before. My favourite dance was Hora Bikar as I like leaping about. Some of the dances were very exhausting and hard, but lots of people were friendly and helped me if I got stuck. I liked the way Fiona taught, it's a lot different to the way my dance teacher teaches. I thought dancing in circles altogether was good. At the end I wanted to come again.

By Hannah Wylie (aged 10.)

Solution to last month's puzzle

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S.I.F.D. AND BALKANPLUS DAY COURSES

Date: 8th/9th May 2004

Place: Cecil Sharp House
2 Regent's Park Road, N.W.1

Time: 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

Cost: £8.00 for SIFD members and
Balkanplus season ticket holders.
£10.00 for non-members

Tutor: Corry Verheijen

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On the Saturday, Corry will be teaching dances from the Balkans. She has travelled widely, especially in Bulgaria, attending many specialised courses, and has a large and varied collection of dances suitable for all. Challenge for the day will be Krajdunavsko Horo. She will revise the day's dances during the evening Balkanplus Dance which follows.

On the Sunday, Corry will be teaching General International dances. This day will be of special interest to group and class teachers looking for suitable material for their students and also for those who want an enjoyable but not too energetic a day. The sub-title for this day is "delightful dances for the more mature". Corry runs courses and classes in Holland especially for this age group and is very experienced in choosing just the right dance.

Those who have been to Eastbourne Festival will already have met Corry and will know the accuracy of steps, attention to style, and above all the enjoyment she brings to her classes.

Each day course will be followed by an evening dance:-

Balkanplus on Saturday, 7.00-10.30 p.m.

SIFD dance on Sunday, 7.00-10.00 p.m.

Cost: £5.00 to SIFD members and Balkanplus season ticket holders
£7.00 to non-members

The day courses will be video-ed by John Riley, expertly filmed and edited and promptly despatched. Cost: £10.00 to members, £12.00 to non-members.

Corry will also be teaching in Manchester on Tuesday, 4th May, and in Oxford on Wednesday, 5th May. Contact Julie Korth on 01942 831141 and Diana Hitchins on 0845 458 2893 respectively for further details.

FRANCES HORROCKS

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- May 1st Klezmer Klub - songs and tunes from Eastern Europe, at The Cellar Upstairs, The Exmouth Arms, Starcross Street, London N.W.1, 8.15 p.m. Ring 020 7281 7700 at least two days beforehand if you want to attend (to comply with club licensing laws).
- S.I. May 5th OXFORD INTERNATIONAL FOLKDANCE CLUB at St.Giles Church Hall, Woodstock Road, Oxford, 8.00-10.00 p.m. Only £2.00. CORY VERHEIJEN will be teaching a number of International and Balkan dances from her current repertoire.
- S.I. May 8th/9th SIFD AND BALKANPLUS DAY COURSES. See p.7.
- May 14th/16th FITNESS EXPO 2004 at Earls Court. See p.10.
- May 16th DAY OF ARMENIAN DANCES with SHAKEH AVANESSIAN at the Bassil Shippam Centre, Tozer Way, Chichester. 11.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. £14.00. Contact: Claire Wilton, 1A York Street, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 7TJ. Tel: 01243 788833.
- S.I. June 6th SIFD WEST MIDLANDS BRANCH COTSWOLDS SAFARI at Moreton-in-Marsh and then at Batsford Arboretum. Details later from Maggie Kaye, 0121 608 1437.
- S.I. June 12th SIFD DAY COURSE.
- July 6th/11th INTERNATIONAL EISTEDDFOD AT LL'ANGOLLEN.
- S.I. July 10th SIFD DAY COURSE.
- S.I. July 24th/31st SIFD SUMMER SCHOOL at University of Wales, Swansea. Main courses: Spanish (Helen & Edward Martyr) and Greek (Dimitris Triandifillidis). General courses: E.European (Frank Dowling) and W.European (Anne Leach); range of optional courses. Information from Roger Sturge, 0117 962 1802. £20 deposit secures place.
- S.I. Aug.28th/30th WILLINGDON IFDG'S MINI FESTIVAL at Lodge Hill Centre, Pulborough, West Sussex. Shared leading of International Folk and Circle Dances, also English caller. Full board £120 sharing, £140 single. Please send s.a.e. for detailed booking form to Rowena Martin, 60 Anderida Road, Eastbourne BN22 0PZ.
- Oct.22nd/24th RESIDENTIAL COURSE OF BULGARIAN AND EASTERN EUROPEAN FOLK DANCES with Bianca de Jong at Derwent Bank, Lake District. Comfortable en-suite accommodation, full board. Choice of General or Advanced course, or both courses. Superb area for mountain, lake-side and valley walking. Non-dancing friends and family welcome. Full board accommodation £105. Each course £17. For full details and booking form please send s.a.e. to Cathy Meunier, 115 Chetwynd Road, London NW5 1DA.
- Nov.5th/7th RESIDENTIAL COURSE OF BULGARIAN SINGING with Dessi Stefanova in Dovedale, the Peak District. An opportunity for a folk musicians' "get together" as well. Comfortable en-suite accommodation, full board. An excellent base for easier walking along the valleys or more energetic hikes over the Peak District hills. Friends and family welcome. Full board accommodation £99. Singing course £30. For full details and booking form please send s.a.e. to Cathy Meunier, 115 Chetwynd Road, London NW5 1DA.

PROGRAMME FOR NEFFA IS NOW ON THE 'NET

In the December 2003 SIFD NEWS I wrote about the forthcoming New England Folk Festival in Boston, Massachusetts, 23rd to 25th April 2004. The programme has now been posted in the NEFFA website, www.neffa.org. Click on Program Grids or Program Schedules and you have a choice of formats to print out. The PDF Grid is particularly useful as it gives you a complete over-view of the whole weekend on two pages.

The programme is mind-boggling. I counted about 250 separate events and every conceivable aspect of folk dance, music and craft is represented over the weekend. There are workshops, participatory dancing, parties and performances galore, and a feature of NEFFA is the ad-lib music jamming that goes on in the corridors of the Natick High School, around the corners, in the classrooms, on the stairwells (great acoustics!) and quite possibly in the toilets!

This year is the 60th NEFFA without a break, so they've had plenty of time to polish their act to a peak of perfection. As the dollar has been weakening steadily against the pound, it's getting cheaper and cheaper to visit the U.S. Approximate admission prices for the whole weekend are: adults £30, seniors £23, teens £14 and children £9. But you have to get there and stay somewhere. Several nearby hotels are listed on the web site AND you'll be home in time for Eastbourne!

I seriously suggest you browse the web site, allow yourself to drool over the programme, and consider a visit this year. You won't regret it. Give me a call on 01733 348880 for any useful information I can add. I've been going to NEFFA for years - never miss it if I'm in the hemisphere!

CYRIL FLEISHER

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Lily,

In the December issue of SIFD NEWS, there was a long article about the New England Folk Festival. As long-time residents of Boston, MA, who dance and play at NEFFA every year, we enthusiastically second everything said and, as overseas SIFD members, we should like to tell any SIFD members who would like to have fun at NEFFA first-hand that they will be welcome in our house (up to two couples) if they let us know in time. Others should know that NEFFA organization has an officer in charge of accommodation who can find other homes in the Boston area for NEFFA revellers in need.

See you in Boston in April!

TOM KAFKA and SUZANNE COSTANZA
35 Columbia Street, Malden
MA 02148
(781) 321-7948

Dear Lily,

We learn on page 10 of the March issue of SIFD NEWS that Cyril Fleisher cannot find an international dance group in the Peterborough area. Memories came flooding back from the mid-seventies when I worked for Thomas Cook's head office in London. They were relocating to Peterborough and wanted me to move there. Stephen and I were taken on a coach tour of the neighbourhood, looking at town and country homes and wondering whether we could bear to leave London.

But what really put me off moving to Peterborough was meeting their Development Department's Entertainment Officer, or some such title. We told him we were interested in international folk dance and music. He muttered something about chamber orchestras and keep-fit classes - would that do? I told him, with my tongue hovering near my cheek, that my speciality was Albanian bagpipes and if he hadn't got those I wasn't coming to live there. So here I am still in London! At least Peterborough has upgraded to a circle dance group. Perhaps Cyril can convert them.

CAROLINE THOMAS
77 Forest Road, London E17 6HF

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FITNESS EXPO 2004 AT EARL'S COURT, LONDON - 14TH TO 16TH MAY 2004

At the above "Fitness Expo" there will be a "Dance and Movement Demonstration Area" where there will be a diverse range of exercise, movement and dance forms including Jazz Dance, Dance Exercise taught by teachers from the Fitness League, the Medau Society and Margaret Morris Movement, and Break Dancing by visiting Americans.

The S.I.F.D. will also be taking part, with Hungarian by Leslie Haddon's group on the Saturday afternoon, Greek with the Philhellenes group on Saturday and Sunday, and General International workshop with Fiona Howarth and Anne Leach on the Sunday.

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BALKANPLUS, 3rd April at Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, London N.W.1 7.00-10.30 p.m. £5.00. M.C.: Brian Dowsett, with "Dunav". This month we are delighted to welcome some very special visitors from the Serbian Church. Nada Grkinic will be bringing her "senior" team from "Rastko" to entertain us and under her expert guidance there will be some participation as well. Other countries will not be neglected and "Dunav" will be playing some old favourites from their popular repertoire.

The next Balkanplus dance will be on 8th May, with Corry Verheijen following the SIFD/Balkanplus Day Course. See p.7.

FRANCES HORROCKS

S.I. SIFD SUNDAY DANCEWORKSHOPS at Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, N.W.1

Apr.4th M.C.s: Derek Bugby and Helen Ezra

*May 9th M.C.: George Sweetland (See p.7)

*Please note this is the second Sunday in the month.

7.00 to 10.00 p.m. Admission £5.00 for SIFD members, £7.00 for non-members.



WHAT'S ON IN APRIL

S.I. Apr.3rd BALKANPLUS. See p.10.

Apr.23rd MAINLY BALKAN & ISRAELI DANCE COURSE with Fiona Howarth and Frank
to 25th Dowling at Alnmouth, Northumberland. Delightful location for walking,
sight-seeing and seabird watching. Choice of single course or both
courses including additional tuition and social dancing in the even-
ings. Full board and accommodation £106, single course £15, both
courses £24. For full details and booking form, send s.a.e. to
Cathy Meunier, 115 Chetwynd Road, London NW5 1DA.

S.I. Apr.23rd 21ST GREAT ALNE LONG FOLK WEEKEND. Details from André Hobro,
to 26th 0121 777 3722 or Maggie Kaye, 0121 608 1437.

S.I. Apr.30th HALSWAY MANOR. Long weekend in the Quantocks including walking/
to May 3rd excursions and dancing (led by Janet Woolbar) to music by Stella
Wentworth (of SIFD Band) and tapes. Inclusive cost (three nights)
£145. Full details and booking forms from Gordon Adie, 14 Adelaide
Terrace, Truro TR1 3EK. Tel: 01872 276511, or Jack Richardson,
Tel: home 01792 403153, work 295194. Although the weekend is nearly
fully booked, vacancies may occur at short notice, so please get
in touch as soon as possible if you are interested.

Apr.30th EASTBOURNE INTERNATIONAL FOLK FESTIVAL.
to May 3rd

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*           IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT           *
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* The May issue of SIFD NEWS will be edited by Heather *
* Edwards. All material for that issue must be received *
* by Heather at 47 Sutherland Avenue, Bexhill-on-Sea, *
* East Sussex TN39 3QL, IN WRITING, by 16th April (note *
* slightly earlier deadline than usual). *
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