

SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING

registered charity number 284509

www.sifd.org

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Meryl Abraham took this month's cover photo earlier this year in Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, during the folk festival. The girls' waistcoats and skirts are grey, with white blouses, the aprons have large pink and white stripes with coloured motifs and the headresses are mostly pink. The men's suits and hats are grey with burgundy waistcoats and they wear black boots.

The motif this month is another from Yves Moreau - as found on his tee-shirts.

My apologies to Jean Dewey, and all friends of Stan Dewey for not deciphering his name correctly last month in his obituary (the W appeared to be an N).

Tony Latham writes that Betty Harvey is anxious to have something about **Alex Beauclerc** in the News Sheet and has asked for the following to be submitted for the next issue (dictated to him over the telephone by Anne Wood):

"Betty Harvey is sorry that she is unable to write more but very much wants to say how much she and members of her Jacy Tacy Polish Group loved Alex and how extremely saddened they all are to lose her."

Tony also pointed out that Betty is herself very weak now.

The delays due to the Postal strikes seem to have a random effect, hopefully they will have abated and everyone will receive this issue of the News more promptly than the last.

Ed.



Membership Renewal

I would like to thank all the members who have renewed promptly this year.

If you have been meaning to renew but haven't quite got round to it, NOW is the time. I will be (reluctantly) updating the address list to exclude defaulters quite soon. If you have lost your form, ring me on 01707 642774 or email me at dalila.heath1@btopenworld.com.

In view of the postal strikes, if there are any members who would like to receive an electronic copy of the News as well as a postal copy, let me know and I will send you one in .pdf format.

Dalila HeathMembership Secretary



Possible New Daytime Balkan Dance Session?

Some of you may remember that I ended up being the default leader of Martenitsa, and then it finally folded due to people disappearing off to France, Greece, Sheffield etc.

Someone said casually to me that it might be nice to have a London group that meets in the daytime, during the week ... so this is a request for anyone interested in principle to get back to me.

Venue to be in Camden or Islington hopefully, but anyway near a tube.

I'd lead the sessions as default, but anyone else would be welcome to teach and/or lead dances.

Repertoire and level Balkanplus-ish, although anyone new to all this would be gladly accommodated.

So if you might be interested please get back to me with name and contact info: if there's a quorum I'll try and fix day, find venue etc etc.

tel: (with answerphone) 020 8533 0054 email: tonigutman@yahoo.co.uk

Toni Gutman



Dance With the World Leaflets

I'm pleased to report that our two SIFD leaflets are updated and now ready for distribution.

The Dance With the World leaflet lists all the SIFD's associated and affiliated groups and classes, and is very useful for handing out at demonstrations and displays, to anyone interested in joining a group or class, or wanting more information about the Society.

The "Join Us!" leaflet encourages new membership. It outlines the benefits of joining the Society, both for an individual or an affiliated group. We need new members more than ever to keep the Society alive and healthy, so please consider distributing some of these.

If you would like some leaflets, please contact me.

5 South Rise, Carshalton, SM5 4PD 020 8395 1400

alison.scrimshaw@googlemail.net

Alison Scrimshaw



Iliana Bozhanova and Todor Yankov

I wish to thank the many who helped in making Iliana and Todor's first UK visit such a success. It must have been one of the most ambitious tours in recent years, and they returned to Bulgaria having presented a wide repertoire of beautiful dances with great professionalism and humour, and having set a new benchmark for the accompanying CD, DVDs and dance notes. I am pleased to say that they took home memories of our Indian Summer with Britain at its best. They also made many new friends in the two thousand mile tour that took in London, Norfolk, Oxford, Winchester, Bristol, Nottingham and Edinburgh.



Thanks first to my Balkanplus colleagues for agreeing to invite them to teach at the annual workshop weekend when the euro rate was particularly unfavourable.

Thanks also to the groups who agreed to be part of the ensuing tour. Some were eager to be included while others might feel they were cajoled (in the nicest possible way!) but, looking back, there can be few, if any, regrets.

Last but not least I wish to acknowledge the generous support of the SIFD in offering to subsidise the teaching fee for affiliated groups. Without this help some groups may have had to reconsider their participation.

Overall, I am pleased that Iliana has now been introduced to the British folk dance community and, moreover, that her talented

accordionist, Todor, was able to come and work so effectively with her and to charm us with his sublime singing. Let it not be too long before we welcome them back.

Brian Dowsett

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- S.I Dec.5th ZIVKO FIRFOV BALKAN PARTY at St. Alban's Centre, Baldwins Gardens. EC1N 7AB. Nearest underground station Chancery Lane (Central Line) Tickets from: Irene Keywood, 133 Third Ave., Dagenham, Essex RM10 9BD. Tel: 0208 592 4427. Price: £8 (including refreshments) Time: 7.00 10.30pm. Admission by ticket only, numbers limited. Dances from: Croatia; Macedonia; Serbia. Also: Bulgaria, Greece and Romania. Cheques made out to Zivko Firfov Folklore group.
- S.I **Dec.11**th **BARNET CHRISTMAS PARTY**. Music by Dunav Balkan Group. 8pm at Church House, Wood St. Barnet, Herts EN5 4BW £5 Details from Brian Dowsett 01992 582717 or bydowsett@aol.com
- S.I Dec.12th BALKANPLUS: MC Fiona Howarth with Dunav Dec.18th/20th DUNFORD WEEKEND see page 7
- S.I **Dec. 28th BALKAN DANCE WORKSHOP WITH FRANK DOWLING** 11am 4.30pm at Hempton Memorial Hall, near Fakenham, North Norfolk NR21 7LG. £9 pre-booked, £11 on the day, includes refreshments. Please bring food to share for lunch. For bookings and information call Dawn 01328 856582 or e-mail dawnwakefield@btinternet.com
- S.I **Dec.29**th **WILLINGDON IFDG TWIXMAS DANCE PARTY** at Stone Cross Memorial Hall, near Eastbourne, 10.30 4.30. Bring something for a shared lunch and a dance if you can. Info and map from Rowena 01323 503991 or rowenahmartin@hotmail.com. £7 (half day £4).
- S.I Jan.9th SIFD DAY COURSE Cecil Sharp House
- S.I **Jan.24th 'ON SHOW 2010' REHEARSAL** 1.00pm 5.00 pm. (nr. Jcn. 5 on M42) Elmdon Heath Community Centre, Cornyx Lane, Solihull. B91 2SF. details from Janet Douglas 01243 265010
- S.I **Feb.20th DAY OF TURKISH DANCES** with Janet Douglas. 10.30am 5pm. at Barnham Village Hall, nr. Bognor Regis, West Sussex. details from Janet Douglas 01243 265010
- S.I Mar.13th/14th MAINLY BULGARIAN WORKSHOP WITH EDDY TIJSSEN at Chorlton, Manchester and Calver, Derbyshire. Further information from Julie Korth 01942 831181

Mar.26th/29th BULGARIAN SINGING AND BALKAN FOLK DANCING residential course with Dessi Stefanova and Frank Dowling at Alnmouth, Northumberland. Comfortable ensuite accommodation, full-board. Excellent area for walking or sightseeing. Non-dancing friends and family welcome. Full board accommodation (3 nights) including the singing / dancing course £230 or £185 for accommodation / walking only (single supplement £20). For details and a booking form please send s.a.e. to Cathy Meunier, 23, Church Street, Keswick, Cumbria CA12 4DX or e:mail your request to cathy meunier@hotmail.com.

Events covered by SIFD insurance are marked S.I. Please remember that the onus is on <u>you</u> to mark each event when sending in the notice if your event is covered by our insurance.



Mainly Bulgarian Workshop

March 13th and 14th with Eddy Tijssen

Eddy is no stranger to our Bulgarian dance scene. He has taught in this country many times. His enthusiasm and knowledge of Bulgarian folk dance is legendary. He is able to play kaval and gaida. We're very lucky to have persuaded him to come to Manchester and Calver next spring for our tenth Folk Dance weekend.

Julie Korth

Zetten Balkan Festival

Social Cultural Centre, "de Wanmolen", Schweitzerpark 2, Zetten (near Arnhem), the Netherlands Friday and Saturday evening: Ball with the teachers and orchestra.

Friday and Saturday night after the evening folk dance programmes, we shall meet, talk, sing and dance together until early in the morning at the Balkan Corner.

The first lessons will start on Friday, June 25 at 09:30, there will be continuous lessons the whole day on Friday and Saturday, and on Sunday until 14:00 hours.

Teachers: Ersin Seyhan, Turkish. Silviu Ciuciumis, Romanian. Bianca de Jong, Bulgarian.

Ben Koopmanschap, Croatia to Albania. Dick van der Zwan, Greek. Hedwig Schoots, Balkan singing

Music from: Orchestras Sultan, Zadar and Trediki

€ 82.50 (excludes accommodation)

apply Silviu Ciuciumiş Aarhuispad 22, 3067 PR Rotterdam, The Netherlands

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e-mail: stichting.doina@hetnet.nl Internet: www.StichtingDoina.nl



Olga King Jack Steele

Sadly, this summer the West Midlands group has suffered the loss of three well loved members. Stan Dewey was mentioned in the October newsletter.

Jack Steele

Earlier in the summer Jack Steele died. He, and his wife Celia, joined the Heart of England group in the early 1980's. They were keen dancers and supported all our activities. Jack was a talented amateur pianist and he taught himself to play the accordion. Soon he was enhancing our Wednesday evenings with live music. He succeeded in getting together a small talented band of musicians and we greatly enjoyed their music making.

Even when he and Celia moved to Worcester, for several years, Jack made the round trip of fifty miles each month to provide accompaniment for our dancing.

Latterly Jack played for a Morris group in Worcester and joined a folk song society. Both folk dance and song featured at Jack's funeral and at the reception afterwards. Celia insisted that the occasion was to be a celebration of Jack's life.

Olga King

Olga King, likewise, joined the Heart of England group in the early 1980's; together with her husband Tom who predeceased her. They too were keen dancers and active members of the Society.

However it was her abilities as a needlewoman that made Olga outstanding. She designed splendid, authentic looking costumes for our display team. Perhaps even more amazing Olga would form sewing groups, who met regularly at her home, and with careful instructions and division of tasks these same people - some of whom, like myself, can hardly sew - produced these magnificent costumes.

* * *

Dear Jack and Olga, all who knew you valued your friendship, kindness, generosity, humour and warmth. Your memory will be cherished here in the West Midlands.

Celia Cox

November Balkanplus

The November Balkanplus will be held on the 7th November at Cecil Sharp House, Camden NW1, starting at 7.00pm. Our MC for the evening will be Bob Robinson. Admission £5.

Please note that this is the first Saturday in November.

Maureen Felton



Dunford (Midhurst, West Sussex) 18th – 20th December 2009

If you've been before there's no need to tell you that this is a really enjoyable weekend of dancing and walking or, of course, just relaxing in the lounge with its log fire and Christmas tree. Accommodation is in single, double or twin bedrooms, all en-suite, at a well-furnished country house at the foot of the northern slopes of the South Downs, once the home of Richard Cobden.

Janet Woolbar has kindly agreed to lead the dancing on Friday and Saturday evenings and Sunday afternoon. On both Saturday and Sunday mornings there will be a walk from the house – returning in time for lunch. For non-walkers, on Saturday morning, there is the opportunity to visit Midhurst's monthly market.

There will be Christmas dinner (the meals are jolly good) and carol singing on Saturday evening. If you haven't been before, and you're a dancer, I'm sure you will feel at home and among friends. The cost of the weekend - £135.00.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Dot Bradbury (Mrs) Tel. No. 020 8540 3464



Sunday Dances at Cecil Sharp House

At this time of year Helen Ezra and I start to organise the programme for next year's Sunday Dances. We are enormously lucky to have several amazingly generous people who MC willingly each year, and provide us with very enjoyable evenings. But before they start to hide when they see us coming, we would love to add to this list. Would **you** like to MC a dance? As encouragement (I hope) here is a splendid article on MCing a dance, written by Simon Guest. They might seem like obvious points, but it is invaluable to have them spelt out. It also makes one appreciate even more what goes into a successful evening.

Perhaps – if MCing seems a little daunting – would you like to suggest a few dances you would love to do which don't come up very often? If enough people made suggestions, we could put together a Your Choice dance. Some dances turn up again and again – but your favourite might never appear. This could be your opportunity!

Alison Scrimshaw



The Art of the MC

Being a good MC at a folk dance is not easy. The MC's function is to make sure that as far as possible everyone goes home at the end of the evening having had a great time.

If, as MC, you also enjoy the dance then that's a bonus; your primary duty is to work for the enjoyment of others, all the time.

Choosing the Programme

Dances can be characterised as follows:

- Formation (Partner, Non-partner, Trios, Circles, Sets of various sorts, Any where on floor etc.)
- Time signature (Waltz, Polka, Reel, 7/8, Bourrée etc.)
- * Tempo (Slow, Measured, Quick etc,)
- Difficulty (Easy, Moderate, Followable, Where angels fear to tread etc.)
- ❖ Band plays or tape/CD/mini-disk
- Old favourite, well-known or needs to be walked through/taught

On any particular occasion not all these characteristics may need to be considered but in general a balanced programme for your clientelle is the aim. Make sure you have the right proportion of each category. You may choose your favourite dances, but remember that if you are doing your job properly you may not get to dance them.

The order of the programme is very important. By all means put a couple of non-partner dances together but don't put all of them at the beginning and end (it has happened!). Mix the tempi, mix the difficulty, mix the formations, spread the taped items to give the musicians breaks.

Start the evening with one or two taped dances in case the musicians are late arriving.

Running the Dance

Start on time even if there is nobody there. It's a question of reputation and pride.

Announce the name of each dance and its provenance two or three times because there are always some people not listening, the PA system may not reach well, some dancers are hard of hearing and, in any case, reinforcing the names in people's memories is good policy.

Announce the required formation more than once. "No partners needed", "Longways Sets" etc. Announce if the dance is easy, followable, needs previous knowledge, is to be walked through etc.

Check for incomplete sets (people with hands up) and encourage wall-flowers to join. Check for sets too close together. Check for uncomfortably crowded circles and propose inner relief circle (those that know it?)

Signal band to start when the floor is ready and then check the tempo. Slow the band or speed them up accordingly.

If appropriate, signal the band clearly and in good time when to stop.

If the dancers and/or the band did well, say so.

Don't leave gaps between the dances. Announce the next dance almost immediately after the previous one finishes. Organise the band/tapes to support this strategy. People didn't come to rest - they came to dance.

Mark down on your personal copy of the programme the position you should have got to at every ¼ hour point in order to keep on track. (At Cecil Sharp dances we can normally do 16 dances per hour. This allows for occasional quick walk-throughs.)

Do not schedule a dance that you yourself do not know well enough to walk through unless you can be sure that there is someone available and willing who can lead it or show it.

Use any known experts at the dance to help lead or demonstrate. They are usually flattered. Keep a look out for any long time wallflowers and try to get them dancing.

Thank the band and helpers (PA person, tea persons etc.) before the last dance.

End with a bang not a whimper. A well-known or followable circle dance without partners using an inner circle if necessary can make quite a magical ending if *everyone* is on the floor.

Simon Guest

Letters to the Editor:



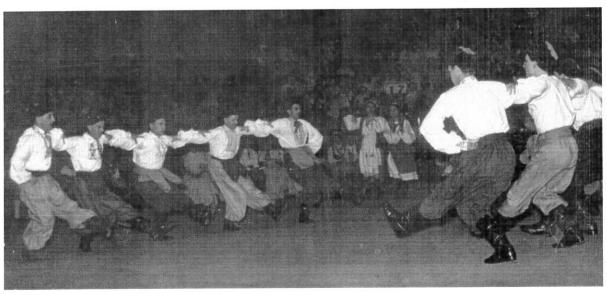
Dear Janet, I was interested in Lily's letter (August) about the performance of a Ukrainian item at the Royal Albert Hall (in 1957). I took part in that performance and I still remember the classes taught by Wasil Kamisk.



He worked us men to death and achieved a miracle. We danced Kolomeyka, a fast dance using the triple Hopak step. At one point while retaining hold and dancing each alternate man turned a backwards somersault. I am on the extreme right, with an agonized expression on my face desperately trying to hold on to the somersaulting dancer on either side!.

I also remember struggling with my cross stitch embroidery for the front panel on my shirt. As this was made of ordinary spun cotton

I could not count the threads. I also remember the problem finding a pair of soft sided long boots. I eventually found them in a ballet shop, second hand having been used in a pantomime production of "Dick Whittington"!.





I also, out of interest enclose a photograph of the Society's one time Austrian group. Ruth Coton (nee Sharp) is in the centre front row, and on her left Il, who with her husband Hans, taught the group.

Ken Ward.



In response to Dorothy Sloan's letter and comment on the photograph in the September News; my sister and I agree that the costume is indeed that worn so distinctively by our mother (and now by Janet Woolbar - to my initial great shock on first unexpectedly seeing her in it!) but we are sure that the face is Pug's. The reproduction inevitably lacks the precise clarity of the original owned by Frances Horrocks, who has no doubt as to the identity. I am inclined to assume that the photograph must have been taken at a time before Pug had given the costume to Margery.

Tony Latham



SIFD Day Courses

There will not be a Day Course in November as Cecil Sharp House is unable to accommodate us.

The next course will be on January 9th 2010.

Pam Radford

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As mentioned in the previous issue, it is our intention to run the courses from 2pm-6pm as the majority of people preferred this time. The teaching time is only slightly reduced, as we will only have a short break for refreshment. I hope you will still come and enjoy the courses. The new times come into force as from January. See you there.

Helen Ezra

A Blast from the Past

What a nostalgic occasion Fiona Howarth's Israeli Day Course was for me. I attended the course to revise dances originally learnt over thirty years ago when Jacky and Judy Barkan brought them from Israel.

I continued to dance them with Bert Price and Gaye Saunte for many years, so it was a great pleasure to be dancing them once more with members of Gaye's original Israeli Group who also attended the course.

It was a most enjoyable and well-structured class, attended by over thirty people. We danced the energetic Debka Uria and the lyrical Erev Ba, both favourites of mine. Several of us had thought we would not find the strength to do all the lively dances we used to sail through, but the music and steps carried us along. The day brought back so many happy memories; I look forward to practicing the dances again at Fiona's class.

Shirley Rogers



Nutbrook I.F.D.G. 30th Celebrations

Thank you Nutbrook for a fantastic day of dancing and celebration on the occasion of your 30th anniversary on 26th September. The bubbling reception and canapes put us in the mood to enjoy dances chosen from Nutbrook's 30 year repertoire. Julie Korth in inimitable style then led a workshop of dances from five Balkan countries. Tea and celebration cake followed. Ellinismos Group in fantastic costumes gave a wonderful display of Greek dances and led a workshop. To give us strength for the evening costume party dance Nutbrook provided a sumptuous buffet feast. Marina Wolstenholme as MC and Cloudburst providing live music made the party dance a real pleasure for us all and during the evening Kalikia showed us dances from Armenia.

What a super 30th anniversary celebration for all of us who were there. Congratulations to Gill Morral and her team.

Janet King

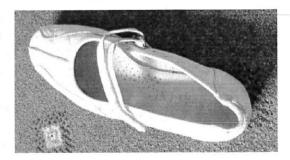
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Here in Nottinghamshire, Nutbrook I.F.D.G celebrated 30 years of dancing with a wonderful day.

Thanks must go to many people who made it such a successful day - members who provided food (sumptuous), teachers and callers who led us through many dances (wonderful), musicians who played (brilliant), and visiting teams who displayed a variety of dances in glorious costumes (fantastic).

One white, flat shoe was discovered after the ball finished.

The slipper is now in Stapleford. Tel 0115 9171831 if you know Cinderella.



Following this party Nutbrook enjoyed another special occasion. Iliana and Todor present some lovely dancing and music from Bulgaria. Our only regret was that the time was too short. Iliana's teaching was clear and suitable for the vast array of ability we had on the night. A great evening.

Gill Morral



LA DÉROBÉE.

(France,



Wilf Horrocks

J

Next month 'Picking up Sticks' will be featured, so if you are able to add interest please send it in. Ed.



Biography of one of the Guest Teachers for the SIFD Summer School. The dates are August 7-14, 2010. www.sifdsummerschool.org

Ramon Cardona

Ramon will be teaching both of the General Courses for the Summer School. (These will be divided into partner and non-partner classes.) Although Ramon is an expert in Catalan dancing, he is also actively interested in other forms of folk dancing, such as Balkan, French, Basque, Israeli and Scandinavian. He leads a weekly General International class in Barcelona.

He was born in Barcelona and started dancing when he was 15 years old and has since participated in many courses and seminars on Catalan dancing. He has taken part in many traditional festivals, both as a spectator and as a performer. He says that he has 'enhanced [his]... dance education by self-learning and direct contact with popular culture.'

To complement his dancing he had musical training in the diatonic accordion and the flabiol i tamborí (traditional Catalan flute and tabor, played at the same time).

Ramon is an experienced teacher, starting in 1980, and subsequently teaching in different parts of Catalonia. He has been taking part as a teacher in the Summer Catalan University in Prada de Conflent for more than 20 years. He takes part every year in the festival Le Grand Bal de l'Europe in Gennetines (France). He has taught Catalan dances in folk dance seminars in various countries such as Italy, France, Germany, Japan, Spain, Switzerland, and also in England at our last Summer School in 2008!

We enjoyed Ramon's teaching, his music playing, and his enthusiastic participation at Swansea so much that we have invited him back, but this time to teach the General Courses. According to his website he also likes ballroom, contra, jotas, rock and roll and swing! We look forward to welcoming him again to Wales.

Jill Bransby

SIFD Sunday Dance/Workshops

at 7pm - 10pm at Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, N.W.1

£8 SIFD members

£9 non-members

£4 children 14-18 (under 14 free)

Nov 1st MC: Graham Styles

Dec 6th

MC: Fiona Howarth



WHAT'S ON IN NOVEMBER

S.I Oct.30th/Nov.2nd

SIFD WEST MIDLANDS BRANCH WEEKEND at Willersley Castle, Mill Lane, Cromford, Derbys DE4 5JH. (Near Matlock) with Marina Wolstenholme. Evening dances with Maggie Kaye, Janet Woolbar and the Heart of England Band. Full board ensuite accommodation for the weekend £130 per person. Sunday night stopover available at special rate. Still a few places available if you are quick! for more details ring Maggie Kaye 0797-464-9311 or email margaretkaye@blueyonder.co.uk.

- S.I Saturday Nov.7th
- BALKANPLUS see page 7
- Saturday Nov.7th

ENGLISH COUNTRY DANCE WORKSHOP workshop and dance, tickets on the door or from www.wegottickets.com Workshop 2.15 - 5.15pm £6 (SIFD £4) Dance 7.30-11pm £9 (concs £8) Combined tickets £14 (concs £13, SIFD £12) Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, London NW1 7AY

- S.I Saturday Nov.21st
- SIFD AGM 4.30pm at St Ursula's High School, Brecon Road, Henleaze, Bristol, BS9 4DT. afternoon workshop with Dalila Heath from 2.00pm to 4.00pm (£5), evening dance with Anne Leach 7.00pm to 10.00pm. tea 4pm, and a buffet supper at 6pm, cost £5.
- S.I Saturday Nov.21st
- **CROATIAN DANCES** including Ličko Kolo (the silent dance), with Joan Sach. 10.30am 5pm. at Barnham Village Hall, nr. Bognor Regis, West Sussex. £10 (SIFD members), further details from Janet Douglas 01243 265010
- S.I Sunday Nov.29th

WORKSHOP WITH CATHY MEUNIER at Witnesham Village Hall near Ipswich. 11am-5pm. Balkan dances from Yves Moreau's recent workshop. Details from Sally Fletcher fletchersm@aol.com or on 01473 252824.



All material for the December issue of the SIFD NEWS must be received by the Editor IN WRITING by 17th November, emails by 16th November.