

# SIFD NEWS

## July 2011



# SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING

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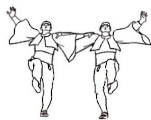
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The photo of dancers on the front cover was taken at the 30th Anniversary of the Nutbrook group.  
The two male Albanian dancers are taken from the logo of the Albanian National Ensemble.

This should be an interesting edition for you - two more groups have written articles about their history and activities, and, Brian Dowsett has written one on Bulgarian dance.

The music for Debka Meshuleshet is on the back page; next month **Niguna Shel Yossi** will be featured - it's well known - so someone must have a story or knowledge to share about it.

**Ed.**



### **New Web Site for Woodvale International Folk Dance Group**

Woodvale International Folk Dance Group would like to introduce you to their new web site - <http://www.woodvaleifdg.org.uk>

It is early days so far, but more pages will be added as time goes on.

If you want to contact us please use - [secretary@woodvaleifdg.org.uk](mailto:secretary@woodvaleifdg.org.uk) or [chairman@woodvaleifdg.org.uk](mailto:chairman@woodvaleifdg.org.uk)

We hope that you like the new site

**David Mckie**



### **Commemorative Dance at Cecil Sharp House in September**

As I've mentioned before, the Committee is planning to hold a dance at Cecil Sharp House on 4th September 2011, to commemorate the many long-serving members of the SIFD who have died recently.

Many of them were highly influential when the Society was taking shape, held various offices and worked hard to build it up. Current members owe them a great deal, and have much to be grateful for. Without the efforts of these members, and many others, the SIFD might well not have thrived as it has. As a token of esteem, we would like to hold this dance to remember and honour these members, so the details will be slightly different from the usual Sunday dances.

The venue and time will be the same – Cecil Sharp House and 7-10pm, but the charge for entry will be only £5 (under 18s free), and it would be lovely if as many people as possible could come in costume.

Philip and Brenda Steventon have very kindly agreed to act as MCs, and the programme will contain many dances which were particularly liked by, or special to, the people we're remembering. I have already asked for suggestions from those closest to them, but if YOU know of a dance which particularly reminds you of one of your friends, then please let me know and we will try to include it.

The dance follows the AGM, so I hope if you're planning to come to the AGM you will stay for the dance. And vice versa! Refreshments will be available between the AGM and the dance.

If you haven't been to a Sunday dance for some time, you will be impressed by the wonderful playing of the SIFD band, who we're very lucky to have.

I hope this will be a special occasion, and we'll see many of you there.

**Alison Scrimshaw**



### **Re "Firsts and Favourites"**

Thank you to those readers who responded to my article last month. I am assembling the details they sent, and hope to publish them next month.

But it's not too late to be included - I would be very pleased to hear from more of you.

**Judith Payling**

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**Aug.20<sup>th</sup>/27<sup>th</sup> 7 NIGHT INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING WITH WALKING** led by Phil & Brenda Steventon Dancing in the morning and evening. 3-5 mile afternoon walks led by an HF walking leader. At HF Holidays, Haytor, Devon, TQ13 9XT. New to HF? We can get you a £50 discount! For details ring HF on 0845 470 7558 or Phil & Brenda on 020 8397 9649

**Aug 26<sup>th</sup>/29<sup>th</sup> WILLINGDON IFDG MINI FESTIVAL** at Plumpton College at the foot of the South Downs near Lewes, East Sussex. Shared leading of International Folk and Circle Dance, also English Folk Dance and singing. Full board £160 (plenty of single rooms). Booking form from Rowena Martin, 60 Anderida Road, Eastbourne BN22 0PZ. Enquiries 01323 503991 or rowenahmartin@hotmail.com

S.I **Sep.10<sup>th</sup> BALKANPLUS** with the Barnet Group and live music from Dunav

S.I **SIFD AFTERNOON COURSE** Cecil Sharp House

S.I **Oct.1<sup>st</sup> BALKAN FOLK DANCE WORKSHOP** with Frank Dowling. 10.30 – 4.00 Price: all day £8 half day £5 . Bramcote Memorial Hall, Church Street, Bramcote village, Notts NG9 3HD From Derby and Stapleford approach from Chapel street (because of the dual carriageway), turning off the A52 island by Bramcote baths towards Bramcote village – Town street, first left into Chapel street. The Memorial Hall is on Church Street. From Nottingham turn off A52 into Church street. Buses from Nottingham – number 4 to Sandiacre or Derby. Contact G or J Morral 0115 9171831 email johnml@ntlworld.com or J Tipper 01332 882117 www.nutbrookfolkdance.co.uk

S.I **Oct.4<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> & Oct.7<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> RESIDENTIAL COURSES OF BULGARIAN & BALKAN FOLK DANCE** with Yves Moreau at Malhamdale, Yorkshire Dales. Comfortable ensuite accommodation, full-board. Dance workshops, singing workshops, social dancing and live music. Informal workshops for musicians. Excellent area for walking or sightseeing. Non-dancing friends and family welcome. 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

S.I **Nov.10<sup>th</sup> OXFORD BALKANSKO ORO - MITKO PETROV**, evening event contact Sally Humphrey for details, sally.humphrey@onetel.net (tel 01865 873860)

**Nov.11<sup>th</sup> MITKO PETROV - DERBYSHIRE**, morning course, j.king.king.994@btinternet.com

**Nov.12<sup>th</sup> MITKO PETROV** - Hempton Memorial Hall,near Fakenham, North Norfolk NR21 7LG. 11am - 4.30pm approx. Price to be confirmed soon. Refreshments included, please bring food to share for lunch. For bookings and further information (including accommodation advice) contact Dawn 01328 856582. dawnwakefield@btinternet.com

**Nov.15<sup>th</sup> OXFORD BALKANSKO ORO - MITKO PETROV**advanced evening workshop

**Nov.16<sup>th</sup> METHODONSKO - MITKO PETROV** Chandlers Ford, 7.30-9.15pm, contact Mad Chapman, 02380 267616 or mad.john@dial.pipex.com

**Nov.17<sup>th</sup> HURSLEY - MITKO PETROV**, Hursley International Folk Dancers 8-10pm

S.I **Nov.19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> MITKO PETROV - BULGARIAN** at Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, NW1 7AY. Party £10. Both Workshops+Party £50,(£45 if booked before 30th Sept). Discount to Balkanplus season ticket holders. For tickets, please send sae to Maureen Felton, 28 Henslow Road, Ipswich IP4 5EG. Please make cheques payable to Balkanplus. For more details phone Brian 01992 582717 or Maureen 01473 272256 or visit our website www.balkanplus.org.uk



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

## **History of Nutbrook International Folk Dance Group**

### **Origin of the Group**

Nutbrook International Folk Dance Group was founded by Celia Stone and Gillian Coulton (now Morral). After a chance phone call early in 1979, we met and discussed the lack of international dancing in the area. From this meeting the idea was sown and searching began to find a venue. The group had its first meeting in September of that year.

### **Cultural Links**

Nutbrook IFDG was founded in September 1979. Within 6 months we had been asked to give a demonstration, albeit to the Brownies. On the 1st May 1981, just eighteen months after beginning, the group travelled to Osnabruck, Germany to represent Derby City Council, their twin city. There we displayed English dancing in a variety of venues, including the enormous concert hall. Twelve dancers went and all had a great time. One hilarious item sticks in the mind (which at the time was not so funny), concerned the stage outside the cathedral. This stage was a temporary wooden affair which had been erected on site. As we danced we heard hammering from beneath us. It was being repaired while we danced! Bits of stage were falling off and being nailed back on. "Dance right – hole to the left" These were the instructions we gave each other. The most frightening aspect was the performance in the concert hall. Ignorance is bliss; otherwise we would have been very nervous. It wasn't until we stepped out onto the stage that we realised the vastness of the place.

Nutbrook I.F.D.G. has forged links with a Swedish group which has lasted the test of time and been involved with exchanges and



(Nutbrook IFDG - 1980)

visits from other teams notably a Romanian and a French team. In the early days a large team of Swedish dancers came for a week. In that period we arranged a "Medieval Banquet" in Edensor, (who remembers the frozen chickens?!) walks in Derbyshire and around the Nottingham's Lace Market area, a trip on a canal boat, as well as dancing. 1986 will be remembered for the visit to France with evening dances, "Brillante soiree franco-anglaise", processions and displays. We have also had visits from a Norwegian team, a Danish group, and a team from Poland.

In 1990, for the second time, we travelled to Sweden, to Orebro for their celebrations which included an International Music and Dance Festival. This was followed by the annual and very traditional Midsummer Festival. Teams from many countries took part, the most memorable of which were the dancers from the Ivory Coast with the Stilt Men. The highlight of Midsummer festival was the day at Annaboda. In this natural amphitheatre, a stage had been set up. Hundreds of people sat on the slope listening to many, many different kinds of folk music. Around 10.00p.m. everyone gathered behind the maypole as it was carried in a torchlight procession down to the lake. There it was raised for singing and dancing.

### **Celebrations**

For our 10th anniversary in 1989, we had a marvellous weekend of dance. We invited teachers from 3 foreign groups with whom we had previously made contact – Germany, Sweden and Denmark. We taught the Girl Guides, hoping to spread the word of dance to the younger generation. We enjoyed workshops learning dances from different countries and had a big Saturday night party with everyone in a costume from a huge variety of countries; a very colourful affair.

Twenty One Years of dancing in the year 2000 brought teachers from countries, with whom we have exchanged, along with a Dutch group who brought ideas for the future. A visit to the Council House in Nottingham inaugurated the celebrations, an auspicious start for the new 21st century. A merry weekend was enjoyed with wonderful music, a festive party and friends from near and far. Workshops in Dutch, Romania and Swedish dancing proved enjoyable and fun. Musicians also enjoyed learning from the Dutch violinist and our Swedish musicians.

The Silver Anniversary was a low key affair. After celebrating the coming of age 21 years with a weekend of dance, which unfortunately coincided with the petrol strike, in 2004 the group quietly celebrated with a meal at Vaughan's restaurant, Stapleford. This in turn began a new trend and this anniversary meal now has become an annual affair. Non dancing friends also are able to enjoy this occasion.

Our Pearl anniversary was great (30 years - Sep. 2009). The new innovation this time was a display by our friends in the Greek group Ellenismos. A "Sparkling" Reception began the events. This was followed by something old - dances from the past and something new - dances new to our group led by Julie Korth. A splendid display by Ellenismos in colourful and varied costumes enhanced the day. A buffet and dance followed. Music was provided by Cloudburst, Marina Wolstenholme led the dancing and the participants wore a great variety of costumes. It was a memorable occasion. *(see front cover)*

### **Demonstrations.**

Over the years Nutbrook I.F.D.G has given many displays. These have got smaller and less frequent, in more recent years. Members have danced in the Square at Beeston, on uneven fields at local Galas and at special events like Celebrating Stapleford.

The group has enjoyed dancing several times at West Hallam Well Dressing festival, with its lively atmosphere and friendly people. We initially danced at Women's Institute meetings and led social dancing for all to join in. Venues like Belvoir Castle and Sudbury hall were also on the agenda and the atmosphere was good but often the quality of the amplification of our music left a bit to be desired.

*(recent display)*



### **Venues**

The first few years, the group met at Kirk Hallam Community School. It was through these grounds that the Nutbrook Canal ran, hence the name Nutbrook International Folk dance Group. From there we moved for a few months to the Electricity board hall, in West Hallam, Derbyshire and from there we moved to Stevenson Junior School Stapleford. The group remained there for many years until the price finally forced another move; this time to a hall in Wollaton. Grangewood Methodist Church hall has proved to be a popular venue with its own car park and kitchen. The floor surface has changed from carpet, to wooden to a polished sprung wooden floor at Stevenson to an adequate floor at Grangewood.

### **Membership**

Our membership area is still widespread, covering the East Midlands competently. In the beginning Don Hoff, travelled every week from Leicester, sadly he is no longer with us. Nowadays we have loyal members who travel from north of Newark while others travel from Staffordshire and Derbyshire. Of the regular members 8 are from Nottinghamshire, 11 are from Derbyshire and 3 from Staffordshire. Petrol prices and other difficulties have reduced the numbers in 2011 but a loyal core still remains.



## **Repertoire**

Club nights have been and still are a mixture of styles, formations and music. Over the years dances taught by Celia Stone have covered a vast number of countries. Gill Morral and Norah Byron now lead the mix. Line and circle dances have always been popular and these are still interspersed with partner or set dances. In more recent years Russian and Armenian dances have been introduced and are now part of our regular diet.

## **Events**

Twice a year visiting teachers have led the group in day courses. We have had a great variety of subjects. From these workshops the group has built up a wide repertoire of Scandinavian, European and Balkan dances. In 2010 the group hosted a foreign teacher – Corry Verheijen - for the annual Autumn course. This turned out to be an informal week of activities, with a visit to Royal Crown Derby, visits to other local dance groups, trips to local areas of interest, and a splendid “European and beyond” course which ended with a party. The party followed a ploughman’s supper not such a grand affair as the anniversary “do” and was danced partly to recorded music and partly to “The Hazlenuts”. This band was a new idea and comprised 2 members from our own group Karen and Des and two members from Belper wind band who had never played this kind of music before. The music, dancing and company were great. An innovation in 2011 was a “Hat Night” to end the term and celebrate Easter Bonnets. Members wore a variety of hats and the aim of the evening was to dance a dance for each hat but we ran out of time! The most exotic hat was a gorgeous golden cap from Uzbekistan and the largest hat was Mexican.

Our events are now advertised on our own website - [www.nutbrookfolkdance.co.uk](http://www.nutbrookfolkdance.co.uk) - and brings us into the 21st century. It is sometimes hard keeping up with the technology.

Thirty two years of dancing has kept us fit, helped throw off tiredness and aches. How often have we heard the phrase, “I didn’t really feel like dancing tonight but I’m really glad I came, I feel much better now.” Planning begins now for 2012. Long may dancing continue.

**Gill Morral**



## **Balkanplus**

The July Balkanplus will be held on the 9th July 2011 at Cecil Sharp House, Camden NW1 7AY, starting at 7.00pm. MC for the evening will be Frances Horrocks. Admission £5.

NOTE: There will no Balkanplus in August; we will be returning to our regular monthly dances in September 2011 – please see “Dates for your Diary” for more details.

**Maureen Felton**



## **Saturday 9th July - SIFD Afternoon Course**

### **Irish Set Dances**

Time: 2pm - 6pm

Cost: £8 for members, £10 non-members

Place: Cecil Sharp House

Tutor: **Anne Leach**

Anne has kindly agreed to go over the dances which she taught at the Eastbourne Festival this year. If you didn’t go to Eastbourne, now is your chance to learn the dances. Please come along and enjoy yourselves. The dances will all be manageable, not like “Riverdance”. (So you can leave the tights and the short skirts at home).

Happy Dancing

**Helen Ezra**

P.S. Next course is September 10th.

## Why is Bulgarian Dance so popular? Personal reflections.

Newcomers to the international folk dance scene must wonder why the dances of a relatively small country like Bulgaria seem to feature so much in dance programmes and in the calendar of workshops. The list of visiting teachers of Bulgarian dance is endless. Yves Moreau, Iliana Bozhanova, Ventzi Sotirov, Delyan Demirov, Eddy Tijssen and Rosanka Bodurova. I should also mention the exceptionally talented UK based Dragan Draganov and Boyko Andonov along with other home-grown specialists - myself included. Some friends have joked that Balkanplus should be re-named Bulgarianplus, a suggestion difficult to argue against when we have Mitko Petrov booked to teach during his first UK tour in November.

In an article for the SIFD News written decades ago and recently reprinted, I enthused about the wide variety of styles in the different regions of Bulgaria and named some dances as examples. In this piece I will just try to answer the question: why is Bulgarian dance so popular? Look at a map of the Balkans and one thing is immediately evident. Bulgaria is centrally placed in the Balkans and so, with invasions and population movements within its borders, it has absorbed the surrounding cultures as well as maintaining its own rich heritage. Thus in one country we find a microcosm of the wider Balkan region. We can enjoy a sprinkling of Romanian, Serbian, Macedonian (OK, more than a sprinkling), Greek and Turkish culture as we travel within Bulgaria itself.

My first encounter with Bulgarian dancing happened long before I actually participated in it. In a BBC television programme, Peter Scott introduced some archive film taken by a famous wildfowl expert during the 1930s in Bulgaria. My attention was drawn to a group of villagers performing a horo. The subtle motion of the circle dance stuck in my mind, though at that time I could not distinguish between a rachenitsa, kopanitsa or daichovo - and here we have another attraction, namely the music and, specifically, the often challenging rhythms. Bulgaria does not have a monopoly of the aksak (Turkish word: limping) rhythms, but it is one thing the country is renowned for. To anyone outside the Balkans it is particularly satisfying to master these rhythms either as a dancer or musician, especially when they are combined in a dance like Sedi Donka (7 + 7 + 11). However, when recently asked by a researcher to name my favourite dances I instinctively listed the basic horos you would perform at public gatherings, albeit commonly with 5, 7, 9 or 11 beats to the bar. As much as I love the challenge of a complex new step, nothing beats the pleasure of participating in a simple dance within the native community. One dance may go on for an hour but there is always scope for improvisation and we feel a buzz comparable to being in a choir.

We should not forget that most Bulgarian dances have a regular rhythm even if the national dance is the rachenitsa with seven beats to the bar, so what else attracts us to Bulgarian dancing? The songs and music certainly do. Balkan music was not readily accessible when I first came across it, so I was moved by the mysterious Eurasian quality of it. I remember being particularly struck by the opening melody of Bavno Oro when I first heard it. Colleagues at work thought I was "on something" when I hummed the tune to myself. It could be the mix of subtle melodies and an earthy feel that enchant us - features that have similarly contributed to the popularity of Bulgarian choral music.

Riding on the back of this popularity is a relaxed attitude towards constructed step sequences in Bulgarian recreational dance so we accept that each teacher will have his or her own unique repertoire of dances. Thus, you can perform Bulgarian dances for fifty years and still be knocked out by a new dance. We are fortunate to have film archives of most of the dances ever taught but there will always be a selection process going on in every dance group to prevent us being totally overwhelmed by the relentless march of Bulgarian dance towards world domination!

Finally, although I am usually careful to play down national stereotypes, there is a good humour and bonhomie in the make-up of most Bulgarians I meet which naturally infuses into the dance. This national spirit is expressed vividly in every Bulgarian ensemble we see perform and it is this that helps them to constantly steal the show at any international festival. This is replicated to a degree in the recreational dance scene so I think it would take more than an SIFD AGM resolution to control the presence of Bulgarian dance in our programmes. Let us just accept it with grace as we stick a pin in the next request list!

**Brian Dowsett**



## Eastbourne Festival 2011

The Eastbourne Festival began with a lively Welcome Dance MCed by **Julie Korth**. This included many varied dances, including Hora nuntasilor a Romanian Wedding Dance. Some of the teachers led a dance each to give a taste of the workshops to come and we danced to live music from Dutch DIP, Clyde and Mike. We were lucky to have five really good teachers – the difficulty was choosing which workshop to go to.

**Eddy Tijssen** was back at Eastbourne 31 years after he first attended the festival. He taught five energetic Bulgarian workshops all with live music. We also had live music at all **Annelies Tijman** Scandinavian workshops. **Dalila Heath** taught some old favourites and some new dances at 2 Armenian and one Israeli Dances. **Corry Verheijen** taught one delightful South Seas sessions where we learnt to use stones like castanets. **Anne Leach** led an enjoyable Irish Set Dance session which was accompanied by a group called *Stick the Fiddle*.

We had two excellent “Meet the Team Sessions”! On the Saturday the **Ellenismos Greek Dance Group** travelled from Nottingham to entertain us. They wore a variety of different Greek costumes and showed us a lot of different dances some of which they taught us. On the Sunday **Tanec Bulgarian Group** from London amazed us with their energy and skill. They also taught us some of their dances which we enjoyed.

**Anne Leach** was the MC for the Saturday nights International Dance and **Bob Robinson** was MC for the Sunday night Balkan Dance. As always the programmes were an enjoyable mix including a few of the new dances we had learnt during the day. Some of the dancers wore beautiful costumes!

The live music was outstanding! **Dutch DIP, (Bregjie, Michiel, Linny and Annelies)** and **Mike Machin** and **Clyde Olliver** provided live music for 9 workshops, 4 social dances and they also performed in the Café at a tea-time concert. When we had to use CDs **Caspar Cronk** was on hand to make sure it all ran smoothly. **Rowena Martin** organised the stewards who gave up their time to make sure things went well. **Ron & Jean Wilkes** have produced a very good double DVD of the festival which will be very useful for teachers as well as being an excellent souvenir of a very enjoyable weekend.

Everything in fact went very well until our last session when **Ray** the overall organiser of the festival dropped a bombshell and said he will only run the festival for one more year! So we all have a lot of thinking to do about how we can help the festival continue.

We would like to thank everyone, teachers, musicians, stewards, and all of you who came for making this year so successful. We hope to see you next year and already have plans well in hand for a great 2012 Festival!

Mary O’Mahoney



## Eastbourne Festival

No ‘what an amazing festival’ article in last month’s newsletter! I plead thinking about organising the then upcoming Balkanplus: so this is a much needed gap-plugging.

Julie and her posse deserve mucho thanks for a truly memorable international section at the festival: The range of the offer was impressive - Corry’s stately South Sea Islands sitting dances, made even nicer by the fact that they were the one session that one of our longstanding friends who was on crutches could do (and that Corry could do, as she had just done in her ankle in tripping over a dog!), Eddie being on top form with a sparkling variety, Dalilah with her party dances and a beautiful lyrical dance, and Anneliese with her charming Danish dances. The evening dances had dances for all, and were exemplary in their smoothness (although there seems to be mixed feelings about the unplanned invasion by a team of belly-dancers doing a lively but cabaret-ish display), Tanec amazed us as usual with their energy and precision in Bulgarian dance, and for stylistic contrast there was a display of various regional Greek dances. But the one factor that made the whole weekend radiant was the live music - Dutch DIP were there as the core as usual - accordion, percussion and fiddle - but they were joined by Anneliese (the accordionist’s mother!) on fiddle, and Clyde and Mike on fiddles and voice! They played for Eddie’s sessions, for Anneliese’s, for the evenings - Mike had in less than a week learned the words to lots of songs. And the music flew, making us do the same.

Toni Gutman

## Harrow U3a International Dance Group

Our group was formed in 1999 by Janet Woolbar and she continues to lead the group with wonderful commitment and enthusiasm. We meet each week on Tuesday afternoons at the Harrow Art Centre with an attendance of around twenty to thirty. We are an Associated group of the SIFD.

Our dances are from around the world but we do specialize in dances from Eastern Europe countries. We also like to do Israeli dances. The group does a number of demonstrations each the year. We have done these at Harrow Museum , St Ann's Centre in Harrow and the Niland Centre in Bushey.

We have just visited the Niland Centre on 15 June and you can see a photo on the right taken during our demonstration.

This is an annual event run by Harrow Council to welcome carers together and recognise the work that they do.

The other photo was taken in 2007 at a demonstration



at Kenton Methodist Church. (This is the photo taken in the larger room.)

A number of our members have been with the group since it started.

Jane and I started in 2007 and really enjoy the weekly dance sessions

We also now come to the monthly SIFD Sunday Dance /Workshops at Cecil Sharp House.

Some of us at Harrow U3A also go annually to Halsway Manor for the May weekend International Folk Dancing which is a great weekend with walking thrown in for those who are really fit !.

**Ian Green**



## Cur Shaghey Yn Geurey

Dear Janet,

I'm an SIFD member who moved to the Isle of Man in 2007 and have done some Manx dancing in two groups here, including the above dance.

In response to your note in the May newsletter, I enclose music and notes\* on the dance in case that adds to what you have. Also enclosed from the same booklet (Dances of Mann, published by Sleih Gyn Thie) is general information written by Mona Douglas and descriptions of Manx dance steps.

I sometimes get the chance to teach

h some

International folk dances to groups I dance with here, and I had intended to start a group here, but in small communities it's difficult to get enough people to make it possible.

**Sylvia Horn**

\* *An abbreviated version of Mona Douglas's notes on Manx Dance follows. Ed.*

## Cur Shaghey Yn Geurey

Originally collected by Mona Douglas



This is a couple dance, danced with the partners facing each other with their hands on their hips.

Bars 1 1-4 Bend to the right and left.

5-8 Clap 3 times in front of your face (your own hands).

9-12 Bend to the right and left

13-16 Stamp right-left-right.

Bars 2 1-4 Shake right finger 3 times at your partner.

5-8 Shake left finger 3 times at your partner.

9-12 Each person does a slow spin, men with arms raised, ladies with their hands on their hips.

13-16 Heel-toe facing each other, 4 right, 4 left.

Bars 3 1-16 Manx waltz.

The dance can be made progressive if on the last step of the Manx waltz the men pass on to the left while the women cast out to meet their new partner.



**Manx Reel step:** 1 step occupies 4 beats. 3 small running steps keeping the feet close to the ground and a hop on the 4th beat swinging the free foot across in front of the other ankle with a slight inward 'kick'. R.L.R: Hop R. - L.R:L: Hop L. etc.

**Running step:** Short steps executed on the ball of the foot, with the feet kept close to the ground. A moderate amount of spring.

**Manx Sidestep:** A rather smooth step. When moving to the right, take a small spring sideways on to the right foot, then bring up the left foot behind the right, transfer weight on to the left foot (2 beats). To change to the left spring on to the right foot, and hop on the right foot swinging the left foot in front of the right to begin starting L. The movement can now be repeated to the left.

**Manx Waltz:** Partners stand close together side by side, man's right arm round the woman's waist and woman's left hand on the man's right shoulder. The outside hands are joined, the man's palm facing upwards, the woman's placed on top and the arms extended obliquely downwards. Keeping this position partners revolve clockwise with Manx reel step, beginning with the right foot.

**Manx Balance:** A very common step in Manx dances. Step on to the right foot and swing the left foot across in front of it; then step on the left foot and swing the right foot across.

**Partners set and turn single:** Partners face one another and take a short spring to the right on to the right foot, then bring up the left foot to take the weight of the body momentarily before transferring it back again to the right (1 bar). Repeated to the left on to the left foot then right and back again to the left (1 bar). Starting with the right foot, turn once clockwise on the spot with 4 running steps (2 bars).

**Partners side:** Danced in running steps. Partners face one another. Starting with the right foot they change places passing each other by the left shoulder and turning about to face again (4 steps, feet are brought together on the 4th), then return to places starting with the left foot, passing right shoulders and turning to the right about.

**Reel spin or Pivot spin single:** A spin occupies 4 beats. In the pivot the weight is kept over the right foot, the turn being made on the ball of the right foot, 'push off' with the toe of the left.

**Reel or Pivot spin with Partners:** Partners stand close together, face to face. They give right hands, keeping the forearms close together and vertical, the man taking hold of the woman's right elbow with his left hand to strengthen the grip. The woman places her left hand behind the man's right shoulder. Keeping this grip, revolve clockwise on the spot using a pivot step as in a single pivot turn.

**Slipping Skip Step:** This step is usually danced to jig time. Step forward on to the right foot placing the weight on to the right, bring left foot up partway behind it and transfer the weight on to the left momentarily, then back on to the right, bringing the left foot through-to repeat this step by the left.

**Manx cross back step:** This is a step with feet crossed and apart alternately. It involves 4 small springs swivelling on toes so that the feet do not leave the ground. **a.** crossed with right behind left. **b.** slightly apart. **c.** crossed with left behind right. **d.** feet together. For cross back step left - as above but start left behind right.

**Manx High Reel Step:** This step occupies 4 beats. First stamp both feet on the ground with right foot crossed slightly in front of the left, then hop left on the second beat, step on to the right on the 3rd beat, and finally hop on the right. Similarly for left stamp both feet on the ground with left foot in front of right, then hop right, step on to left and hop left; i.e. stamp, hop L, change, hop R. Stamp, hop R, change, hop L.

**Manx feather steps or Scots High Reel step.** This step is also known as a Manx high reel step and occupies 4 beats. Hopping on the right foot on each beat point the left foot to the side, then bring the left foot behind the right knee, then in front then behind again. Similarly hopping on the left foot, point the right foot to the side, bring behind left knee in front, then behind. In some cases, where stated, this step is danced with a point behind instead of to the side, and sometimes around the ankle.

**Heel Toe Step.** Hopping on the left foot, tip the ground with the heel of the right foot forward, then tip with the toe of the right foot crossed in front of the left and repeat this movement. Similarly hopping on the right, 'heel-toe' with the left foot.

**Rocking Cross Step.** Swing right foot forward, back in front of left foot, forward again and down. While doing this weight is on the left foot on which the dancer rocks gently up and down, lifting the heel but keeping the ball of the foot on the ground. Similarly with the left swing forward, across, forward again and down.

**Salute:** The 'salute' is a forward spring on to the right foot, the body bent well forward over the Dirk, and the arms flung outwards (2 beats). When repeating, it is necessary to change the weight backwards again to the left foot. This is done with another spring (2 beats) but the emphasis each time is on the forward movement.

**Manx Sand Step:** This is a difficult step in Manx dancing with sticks. Bouncing on the ball of the left foot, scrape the right foot backwards (1st beat) then forwards to an angle right and back again (2nd beat) and forwards again at an almost 90° angle to the left and back (3rd beat) scraping it behind the left, this time lifting it and stepping on it to repeat the same with the left.

**The 'Frog' step or Squatting step.** This step is danced in squatting position and is one of the most energetic of all the Manx steps. In squatting position kick the right foot forward, bring the right foot back again and at the same time kick the left foot forward. Repeat kicking right and left alternately.



Well before 20th century the Manx dances had fallen into disuse, mainly owing to the Stanley family and their adherents and later reinforced by the Victorian dominance of social and commercial interests under which nearly everything Manx was denigrated as inferior and the imported language, arts and general way of life was too often regarded as a much needed 'civilising' influence. The traditional dances of the Manx people in particular were held to be only clumsy gambollings of country bumpkins, ignored even by the small section of educated people among whom were the first men to start collecting Manx traditional music, Dr. John Clague, Deemster Gill and Speaker A. W. Moore. These collectors noted a considerable number of dance tunes, but not the dances performed to them although at that time these must have been popular at such gatherings as the Mheillea. Fortunately, one or two of the dancers themselves did make some notes of steps and figures, among them my great-grandfather Philip Quayle of Glentrammon, and his notes were my first inspiration for collecting the dances; but when I started the only way of getting any demonstrations of steps and other movements was to hunt out old men in pubs or elderly women who remembered dancing at the Mheillea in their youth, and, occasionally, to join children who were performing a free version of such a dance as Hunt the Wren and calling it a game.

## SIFD Sunday Dance/Workshops

at 7pm – 10pm at Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, NW1 7AY

£8 SIFD members    £9 non-members    £4 children 14-18 (under 14 free)

**July 3rd MCs: Woodvale - Alan Cant**

August: No dance



### WHAT'S ON IN JULY

- Jul.4th/10th**                    **LLANGOLLEN INTERNATIONAL EISTEDDFOD** 01978 862000
- S.I    **Friday 8th**                    **BARNET SUMMER PARTY** 8pm at Church House, Wood Street, Barnet  
EN5 4BW End of season celebration with music by Dunav. £5 including  
refreshments Details from Brian 01992 582717 Recommencing 9th September
- S.I    **Saturday 9th**                    **BALKANPLUS** see page 3
- S.I    **Saturday 9th**                    **SIFD AFTERNOON COURSE** see page 7



### Debka Meshuleshet

Israel

A Fast

8    D    A7    D    A7    D    A7    D    A7    D    A7    D

18    A7    D    A7    D    G    D    G    D    G    D7    G    D7    G

D    G    D7    G

Play ABAB ad lib with repeats

**"Wilf Horrocks' Collection"**

Debka Meshuleshet was taught to us in the early '60s by Jacob and Judith Barkan, and we introduced it to Woodvale. (I suppose nobody knows it now, (including myself!). The music for it would have been included in Wilf's repertoire because he played at most of Woodvale's dances.

**Ian Willson**



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