

# SIFD NEWS



**AUGUST 2011**

# SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING

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## Contents

- p. 3 **News**
- p. 4 **Diary Dates**
- p. 5 **Balaton**
- p. 6 **Balaton, Norway**
- p. 7 **The Iberian Folk Dancers**
- p. 8 **Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod 2011**
- p. 9 **Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod 2011**
- p.10 **Report from last Committee Meeting**
- p.11 **Firsts and Favourites**
- p.12 **Firsts and Favourites, Summer School 2012**
- p.13 **Frank Flanagan Fund, Letters**
- p.14 **Niguno Shel Yossi**
- p.15 **What's on in August**

Simon Guest has designed this month's cover from a photograph taken by Jill Bransby at Llangollen. This was a young Lithuanian team 'Suvartukas' from Plunge who were at the Eisteddfod, this picture was taken of the procession in 2006.

Fiona Howarth has asked if it is possible to include a short abstract of the dance steps together with the printout of “Wilf’s Music”.

The answer is “Yes, please”!

As there is a month’s notice of the dance to be featured - the hope is that someone will know the dance well, write in and give us steps and/or anything else about the dance. It works quite well; although sometimes the response arrives too late to feature in the same issue and follows a month later - as was the case in July with Cur Shaghey Ny Geurry, the music for which appeared in June. In the absence of feedback - I give whatever information I can.

Next month will feature **Branle des Rats** from **France**, and October will be **Aland Girl** from **Finland**.

**Ed.**



### **Membership Renewal**

Where appropriate, membership renewal forms have been included with this issue of the News. For your convenience, they have been filled in so all you need to do is check the information and pay your subscription in a method convenient to you. Note you do not have to return the form if the information contained therein is correct.

Overseas members may, if they wish, pay by credit card via PayPal, although sterling cheques are preferred. PayPal accounts are identified by the account holder’s email address and the Society’s account is mail@SIFD.org. Details of the PayPal system can be found at [www.paypal.com](http://www.paypal.com).

Overseas members normally receive their copies of the SIFD News via surface mail, but airmail despatch outside Europe can be arranged on request. Please add the extra postage cost of £10 to your subscription if airmail is required.

Your membership cards will be sent out with the next issue of the News.

**Dalila Heath, Membership Secretary**  
dalila.heath1@btopenworld.com 01707 642774



### **Annual General Meeting 2011**

Just a reminder that the Annual General Meeting for this year will be on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> September at Cecil Sharp House.

I know this isn’t an event you usually rush to put in your diaries, but this year there should be some interesting discussions.

There is also the bonus that it will be followed by the **Commemorative Dance**, starting at 7pm. We hope as many of you as possible will be able to come to both events, especially as we’re also hoping many people will wear costumes for the dance, to make it a special occasion.

Phil and Brenda Steventon – who always arrange lovely dances for us – are to MC.

Refreshments will be available after the meeting, to ensure you’re not too hungry to dance.

**Alison Scrimshaw**

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- S.I **Sep.4<sup>th</sup> SIFD AGM** see page 3
- S.I **Sep.10<sup>th</sup> SIFD AFTERNOON COURSE** Cecil Sharp House
- S.I **Sep.10<sup>th</sup> BALKANPLUS** with the Barnet Group and live music from Dunav
- 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. £20 including refreshments, 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

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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.



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**

## Balaton

The Hungarian folk dance group Balaton, named after the lake in Hungary, was founded by Alan McLean in 1968. Amongst various other jobs he had for a period been a professional dancer and through this became very interested in Eastern European dances, Hungarian in particular. Years later in the 1980s he started up the Doina Eastern European group, and in the 90s, he helped organise the first meeting of the Martișorul Romanian group. Alan, as many of the older SIFD members will know, was always very enthusiastic, he promoted the group in terms of arranging performances and he spent a lot of time going to Hungary to collect music, costume and learn dances, often asking amateur groups to show him the choreographies they had performed so that Balaton could use them. Two highlights from this earlier period were when the group danced for the shows 'The Generation Game' and 'Jim'll Fix It'.

I first joined the group in 1978, having specialised in Hungarian when dancing with the Cambridge group run by Kathy Tribe. At first I could not attend regularly since I lived in Birmingham, again performing Hungarian dances with Sybil Chapman's group. Sue and I took over running Balaton in 1984 when I moved back to London. In those first years, especially, our range of costume increased and since Hungarian folk bands have continued to flourish, we acquired a wide range of recorded music, which enabled more flexibility in what we could perform.

In Hungary from the 1970s there was a re-discovery of Transylvanian dances from the Hungarian minorities in Romania, as well as a move to seeking greater authenticity in dance so that what you put on stage was based on the actual figures from the villages, and done in the right style. Before this some arrangements had been more packaged like musical productions. When Sue and I started to go on courses from the late 80s, and Hilary slightly earlier, this is where we encountered this improvised dancing that was being taught, and participants could build on these principles to develop their own choreographies. Hence over the next years we replaced the entire repertoire to reflect this change, mostly developing our own choreographies, sometimes with arrangements from outside Hungarian teachers, and sometimes improvising dance in performances. This helped that by the 1980s a Hungarian dancer had started a regular dancehouse (táncház) in London, which Hilary, Sue and I went on to run for the last 15 years, in addition to Balaton.



The numbers in the group have changed over the years. At one period we had quite a few couples, but in recent years the core has been 5-6 girls plus me, with Hungarian male and female dancers joining us for periods of time while they were based in the UK.

In general we work fairly hard to keep up a high standard and have a good team spirit, since we all appreciate doing performances well.

Through personal contacts, Balaton has performed abroad, twice in Hong Kong, once in Romania once in Serbia and this autumn we will perform, for the first time, in Hungary itself. More typically we have danced for senior citizens groups, at multicultural events, festivals, etc. and, along with Doina, we still fly the flag for the SIFD at the annual Embankment performances – some of us have now been doing this for 25 years.

Lastly, the environment has also changed, especially as more Hungarians now live in London. For many years there were two other, mainly second generation, Hungarian groups in London, whom we knew well.

While these have now ceased to function they have been replaced by younger groups of dancers, some of whom used to dance with amateur groups in their own country. We continue to have very good relations with these new groups, especially since many of us dance together and socialise at táncház, and have supported them in terms of lending out costume, attending events they initiate and we pass on performance opportunities to each other if the other groups cannot manage them.



We welcome any enquiries about joining the group, or simply come to see us either in Balaton or at táncház.

The Balaton group meets at studio 2, the Colombo Centre, 34-68 Colombo Street, London SE1 8DP, 7-9pm, in roughly speaking term time.

Táncház meets at the function room of the Kings Head pub, 214 High Street Acton, London, W3 9NX, 6-9pm on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month, except for some sessions in the summer and around Christmas and Easter.

Contact **Leslie Haddon**, 020 8441 2959, LesHaddon@aol.com or see the website <http://sites.google.com/site/balatonhungarianfolkdance/>



## Norway

Earlier this year my husband, David, and I had a wonderful holiday exploring from Bergen north to Kirkenes by the Russian border and back again. This was with the Norwegian Hurligruten company which has a boat leaving Bergen every day to serve 36 ports along the coastline and the islands inbetween. It was an amazing experience - a different world of dramatic, unspoilt land still very close to nature.

We hadn't realised when booking that one date of our time away was very special - 17th May is Norway's 'National Day' to celebrate the founding of the constitution in 1814 which has not changed since! Parades, music, song and dance are the order of the day along with national costumes and, most importantly, hot-dogs and ice-cream for the children! We were fortunate to witness some of these festivities first-hand and particularly enjoyed a dance display at one of the ports with a grandstand view from the ship's rail. Lovely memories!

**Meryl Abraham**

## The Iberian Folk Dance & Music Society also known as 'The Iberian Folk dancers'

The group was started about 55 years ago by Lucile Armstrong, who had travelled extensively in Spain and Portugal, where she also taught English. She collected the music and dances of the various regions, wrote down the songs and lyrics, sang the songs and played them on the piano, learnt the dances, sketched the costumes. She also wrote a few books. On her return to England she taught several classes. She was a perfectionist and demanded the best from her students. She was strict about dress, correct steps, punctuality. She made many of the costumes. We still have two dancers who were with her in the early days. In her 60's she could only teach sitting down.

When she stopped teaching Olga and Jose took over. They used many guitarists over the years. There were many in the group then as the classes were free. There were even men in the class. I believe Jose is interested in doing a film about those days.

The next teacher was Juanita, who used tapes. We still have copies of those tapes, converted to CDs now. Interestingly Juanita suffered from severe arthritis and Spanish dancing actually helped her to overcome this - a mystery to the doctors. Many of the dancers that Lucile taught are now well known teachers themselves. Jacqui and Elsa teach now.

We amalgamated with 'The Proteas', a South African dance group also taught by Elsa at the same venue on the same day. Financially we operate as one group and do many shows together. Three members dance in both groups.



Our membership is very diverse: We have 2 in their 40's, 4 in the 50's, 6 in the 60's, 8 in the 70's and 2 in the 80's. We have 7 South Africans, 1 Jamaican, 6 English, 1 Irish, 2 Japanese, 1 Cameroonian, 1 Portuguese and 1 Spanish/Portuguese. We lost our Brazilian, French and German members last year.

We perform at indoor and outdoor festivals, libraries, clubs for older people, schools etc. Some past performance venues were: The Big Dance at Trafalgar Square on two occasions and for Capital Age Festival which showcases dance for older people, A Taste of Spain (Regent St), The Shaw, Cockpit, Hackney Empire, and Bloomsbury theatres and also at two Rooftop Gardens.

We've danced at a Polish/ Portuguese wedding, in Grantham marketplace and the Arts Centre. We often do audience workshops. We always dance at Dance Around The World.

Most of these are free shows but sometimes we are paid. The money is used for hall hire, costumes and fares to performances for the under 60's. Our best fee was £250 for a half-hour performance.

Sometimes we only receive cake and tea. Members pay £3 per 2-hour session and the hall costs £12 per hour. We pay a membership fee to Swiss Cottage Community Centre, where we practice. We also pay an affiliation fee to SIFD and through them an Insurance fee.

We meet Saturdays at 12 and do one hour of Spanish and the other hour either Portuguese, or Latin American folk dance.

The second group meets every second week from 2 to 4 and does South African dances, especially Quadrille, and Cuban dances like La Rueda and the Conga. Both groups have a break midway. We are a friendly, relaxed, welcoming group and have lots of fun together.

We would love to have new members.

**Elsa Perez** secretary



## **Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod 2011**

Llangollen has changed over the years, some things are better and some not so. But the magic continues. Variety of cultures and warmth of welcome are the hallmark of an event that was founded in 1947 as a way of rebuilding relationships after the tragedies of the second world war. At its heart is a message for peace from the children of the Llangollen area, this year augmented by a large party of children from Ukraine who are travelling as peace ambassadors sponsored by UNESCO.

### **Folk Instruments and Song**

In recent years the adult and children's folk dance group competitions which used to be the sole representatives of folk dance have been joined by a number of other competitions which have added to the range of folk dance and music. The folk instrumental competition has been merged this year with the folk groups and folk solos. The folk group finalists all provided a rich mix of instrumental, singing and dancing, the winners were Pearls of Odessa, Ukraine (87), second Newcastle Kingsmen, England (82) and third, Sogo African Traditional Dance Ghana (80). The solo finalists were all singers, winner Angele Gupta, India, resident in Canada (90), second Alina, Ukraine (88) and third (possibly because she missed the final but was able to perform later) Aleksandra (Serbia). Putting these different disciplines together squeezed out a wonderful Sardinian foursome and instrumental solos. A Lithuanian did get to play his "bell tree" in the Wednesday evening concert as did the Sardinians singers.

### **Folk Showcase**

Another recent innovation is a folk showcase competition. Apart from an American choir that seemed to have slipped across from the folk choir competition where it belonged (beautiful performance but hardly traditional), we were treated to a variety of ensembles demonstrating the range of their cultural traditions in music and dance. Winners were Cheong-Bae, a spectacular group of South Koreans with twirling hat streamers (91). Second were Heritage Dancers from Mahali, India an all women dance group, with a male band and vocalist who contributed to the fun; a bit different from the usual noisy Bhangra prancing (90). Third were the Newcastle Kingsmen, whose rapper and long sword dances, singing and clog dancing achieved success in a number of competitions (86). Loughgiel Folk Dancers (Northern Ireland) won the special prize for the best Celtic presentation (83). Other groups were Pearls of Odessa, Ukraine (84) and a group of Welsh harpists from Derby, England (79).

### **Street Dancing**

Only three groups took part in the street dancing competition, two of them performing indoors as it was raining. The adjudicator (Huw Williams) said they ranged from excellent to excellent and that was reflected in the close marks. Heritage Dancers were particularly successful in creating the informal atmosphere of a village celebration and deserved to win (93), Newcastle Kingsmen second (92), Sogo African Traditional Dance Group from Ghana third (91).

### **Folk Dance Duo and Solo**

The folk dance solos and duos used to be held as preliminaries with finalists appearing on stage in the pavilion. This year there were only finals and they were held in Dinas Bran school. Given the small entry that was probably as well. The only entry in the duos was a pair of 8 year-olds from the Loughgiel Folk Dancers, Kacie McKendry and Connor O'Mullan (N Ireland) whose brilliant performance earned them a well-deserved 94 marks (and this is not a children's competition). The solo folk dance was won by a young Basque woman, Onintzu Unzuma Tellerin (89), second was a traditional Bhangra dancer Sukhde Singh Chouhan who was substituted for an other competitor but impressed the adjudicators with his highly skilled and energetic performance (86). Third was Eimear McGarry from Loughgiel Folk Dancers, (84). Other competitors were Amy O'Brian a musician with the Newcastle Kingsmen and Paramjat Singh, India

### **Adult Folk Dance Groups**

George Sweetland used to give a most erudite and thorough report on the Adult Folk Dance Group competition. As far from expert and a social dancer only, I am no substitute for George, but I was able to discuss the performances with Frances Horrocks, Julie Korth, Mary O'Mahony and Hilda Sturge. We arrived at similar opinions to the adjudicators'. The low spot in the folk adjudication which followed the sudden dropping of Narendra and Frances some years ago is now well behind us. Dick van Dooren, who did so much to bring back a well-grounded traditional folk emphasis in the adjudication, finished last year, but Ed Austin and René Fréchette have now been joined by Ahmet Lüleci who was much



appreciated when he taught Turkish at York Summer School in 1998. Hilda and I much enjoyed meeting him again. The quality of the adjudicators' comments is now of a high standard with informative explanations of their criteria for judging traditional presentation and the degree of staginess in the choreography.

Winners were Cercle Celtique Kan Breizh from Rambouillet, Brittany (93). They made an excellent choice of 6 contrasting dances with a good variety of style and music, though the adjudicators felt they could have chosen more challenging pieces. Their presentation was very precise with plenty of energy.

Second Newcastle Kingsmen (92). (We understood from a later conversation that one of the adjudicators would have put them first. It was certainly a close thing – we were likewise torn between the two) They performed a Yorkshire Longsword dance from Kirkby Malzerd and a Durham Rapper, supported by two fiddles and a concertina, plus some appropriate traditional singing. This was a lively and skilled performance with a remarkable variety of moves and some surprises, giving a strong impression of the audience looking in on the community at play.

Third were Loughgiel Folk Dancers (91), Llangollen regulars, who performed a four hand reel and a tap dance. They came second last year and in 2006, first in 2007 and 2009. In 2008 they only managed third! They are characterised by a remarkable level of training and are a joy to watch. They are the only group we have seen who end their performance with a bow to the band. The adjudicators praised their well-prepared presentation and good use of the stage, but suggested that they could give more thought to the traditional context of their dances.

Heritage Dancers (Mahali, India), all women, identically dressed, gave a very staged performance, which would have benefited from more variety. (77)

Barvinochok, Kiev, Ukraine gave a very well presented performance but as so often with Ukrainian groups it was very stagy and lacked any feeling of village tradition. Pretty and most enjoyable but rightly marked down (72)

Kurdish Folk Dance Group (London). This group has a long tradition of Llangollen and they give a very pleasant performance of a lively and interesting programme. The adjudicators suggested they should give more attention to detail of their costumes (there was no variation) and also the meaning of their various movements. (82)

Sukhmani Folk Promotions Club, Barnala, India. This was a loud performance with a great deal of singing and a lack of variety in the dance. (79)

Sogo Traditional Dance Group, Ghana gave a lively, energetic and joyful performance, but suffered from a lack of dance, with more emphasis on drumming and singing. The group fared better in later competitions but here they were marked down. (71)

Danswyr Sir Conwy (Wales). This performance gave a strong feeling of a village celebration, lighthearted with a good variety of costume and forms, including square and longways sets.. They could have made more use of their hobby horse. We felt they deserved more than their 85 marks, but the adjudicators felt they could have been more precise and clean in the steps and movements.

It was very good to see the Bretons and the Newcastle Rappers but the absence of other European groups was noticeable and a matter for great concern if this competition is to continue to provide range and variety.

### **Children's Folk Dance – Traditional Style & Choreographed**

The Children's Folk Dance Groups competition was even more reduced than the adults. It differs from the adults in being two competitions in one. In stead of 1<sup>st</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, two prizes are awarded, one for the best traditional style performance and one for the best choreographed performance. Marks were not announced.

The winner of the traditional prize was Gero Axular Dantza Taldea from Donostia, San Sebastian, Basque Country. They gave a delightful performance of a challenging and well-executed programme of dances.

The choreographed prize went to Barvinochok, Ukraine, for an impressive and varied performance, "striking and dramatic...very high standard". At the very end of the performance two girls fell off the stage, one hurting her ankle, but she was able to come on stage for the presentation of their prize.

The other children's groups were

Kalynonka, Ukraine. Girls only, they performed a pretty and well-executed programme.

Northern Lights, Skipton, England, a visually interesting and well-performed presentation of a May Day celebration with the crowning of the May queen and a fairly well executed maypole dance.

Loughgiel Folk Dancers, N Ireland. This was a well-polished performance, as always from Loughgiel and they made good use of the one boy, with quick changes of pace and clean execution. The adjudicators suggested they could give more variety in the programming.

### **Choreographed Folk Dance**

The adults have a separate Choreographed folk Dance competition. Over the years this has gone a long way to removing too much staginess in the Adult Folk Dance Groups competition, a long-standing source of friction, particularly for the Ukrainians, though they still do enter the traditional dance and rightly are marked down.

The winners were Loughgiel Folk Dancers N Ireland, with a beautifully staged story of an Irish warrior (their one man!) fighting for his country and his true love. (91)

Second place went to Hoverla Ukrainian Dance Ensemble from Derby, England. This was an impressive sequence of Cossack dances, horsemen with lances and then a sword fight, presented with passion and drama. (87)

Kurdish Folk Dance Group, London, came third with a well choreographed wedding dance. (85)

Others were Kalynonka, Ukraine, Their two separate dances suffered from an empty gap between, but were nevertheless well-executed, if rather predictable (83); Sogo African Traditional Dance Ghana, well-presented, with the musicians and singers behind the three dancers instead of to one side (82); and Heritage Dancers, Mahali, India (79).

**Roger Sturge**



## **Report from the Last Committee Meeting**

Finances are always an important part of the meeting – this time was no exception. Judith reported that the 2010 claim for Gift Aid had been made, the accounts for the AGM and Charity Commission were waiting to be independently examined – and she was still anticipating a deficit for the current year. But on the plus side, she has discovered an account organised for charities like ours, available through our bankers. The interest paid is not huge (1.7% - 1.95%) but compares well with the 0.2% our reserves are currently earning.

Jeanette's advertising card is going down well, though we hope many more people will ask for a bundle to take to events.

The planning of Day Courses and Sunday Dances was looked at, the decreasing number of displays on the Embankment Gardens stage lamented.

At last a CRB check has been completed for one of our members, and a certificate issued.

Our optimism that we had found a way to bring in non-EU teachers was short-lived. The helpful group we thought we could use might not be able to help after all. It looks as though we must continue to investigate this problem.

Jeanette and Richard circulated a report on the Society's Aims, and whether the Society could do more to meet them. After much debate it was decided to open a discussion at the AGM.

The suggestion that the Society might become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, rather than a Registered Charity, will also be put forward at the AGM. Our next meeting is before the AGM.

**Alison Scrimshaw** 020 8395 1400 [alison.scrimshaw@googlegmail.com](mailto:alison.scrimshaw@googlegmail.com)

## Firsts and Favourites

Roy Haycock recalls

Way back in the early 1950's I formed the habit of dropping in on the SIFD Sunday dances, either at Drury Lane or on the last Sunday of the month at Cecil Sharp House, on the way home from a Youth Hostelling weekend. Many other older SIFD members started the same way. For about two years I learned dances as I went along, from following others. About September 1953 I decided to learn the dances properly and joined Harrow Green Folk Dance Group. The format for a Harrow Green evening was about three hours of general international dancing with an interval during which Ruth Sharp taught a new dance thoroughly. On my first evening Ruth taught "**Sapho**", a Finnish dance which I have not seen since. My partner for that dance was Janet Coultrup, who usually welcomed new members. Popular dances at that time were **Karapyet, German Windmill, Tan Cuj, Fjallnas Polka, Meitschi Putzdi and Petronella**. The Drury Lane Sunday dances were so crowded that many dances had to be done twice, first one half of the hall then the other and, even harder to believe these days, the men were usually in the majority.

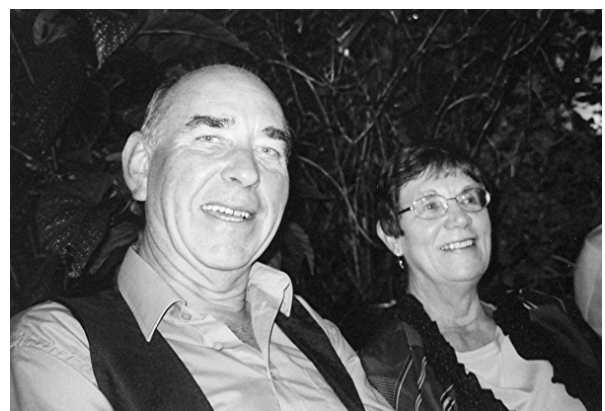
Ruth Coton (née Sharp), who is mentioned above, writes

When I joined the SIFD in 1947 we met at the International Club in London on Sunday afternoons. I cannot remember the exact name or where it was. I still have my blue membership card dated year ending August 1958 signed by Ken Ward, membership secretary.

I think the first dance I learned was **Karapyet**, in those early days. When we had dances at Hortensia Road School, Chelsea, I joined the Balkan class led by Philip Thornton. The first Balkan dance I can remember struggling with was **Paiduska**. The 5/8 rhythm was catchy but not easy for feet used to regular walking pace. It was fun to walk 1 2,3 4 5, along the street.



*Some 'then and now' photos of Ruth (above), and Ian and Jean (below)*



Ian Willson has written

I've been casting my mind back to 1956, when I learned my first international dance. It was **Djachko Kolo**. I was 17 and had joined the local branch of the YHA, and I was introduced to international dances at their meetings. Also, some of the members used to go to the SIFD dances at CSH on the occasional Friday, and later at the Inns of Court on Sunday evenings, so as I became more interested, I joined the class run in SE London by Bert Price, who taught us wonderful dances like **Fjallness Polska, Hambo**, various **Sardanas**, et cetera.

It's difficult to say which were my favourites; when we founded Woodvale, it was the lively Austrian and German dances I enjoyed most. Later, when we spent weekends at Surrey Crest, it was the Balkan dances that I liked most, simply because the music was so unfamiliar and special. Nowadays, I enjoy the gentler dances from Russia and Eastern Europe. It's lovely to think that Jean and I have been dancing together for over 50 years thanks to the SIFD, and, in the beginning, the dancers of the Eltham and Sidcup YHA Group.

**Arlene Hansell** writes that

It was the word "international" before "folk dance" that caught my eye on the notice in the public library: perhaps "international" would even include Russian dancing. Not the Russian dancing that we do now – lovely though the music and dances are - but the more characteristic, exuberant type, for which one needs to be young and fit.

That first night at Hornchurch Folk Dance Group, started by Ivy Romney in September 1957, exceeded my expectations. There was a demonstration by Harrow Green FDG, Harry de Caux played his accordian and members of the local YHA were an enthusiastic core of dancers. The first dance was **Datchko Kolo**. (Many years later my daughter and I stayed at a youth hostel at the same time as a school party. We were invited to join their folk dance evening, which included "Dutch Kokolo". I had a quiet word with the teacher afterwards.)

At HFDG, thanks to Ivy, we had a good grounding in many basic folk dance steps. After a year or so I joined the Troika Ensemble, the SIFD Russian Group taught by George Orloff. Unfortunately this was closed down by the GLC after a few years as there were insufficient numbers to satisfy the Council's requirements - this was before the days of workshops.

Now, having participated in a number of groups over the years, I attend the Bromley U3A FDG, led and taught by Fiona Howarth.



**Firsts and Favourites** continues next month - Judith would be delighted to add more to her compilation if anyone else, inspired by those that have responded, wants to join in. **Ed.**



## **SIFD Summer School, 2012**

Only a year to go now, not just the Olympics, but our biennial Summer School which will be held at Swansea University, in Wales. I hope you have the dates **July 28 – August 4** in your forward planner.

We have one piece of news to relate which is that the wonderful Armenian dancer Edouard Djololian is coming to teach us. Those who came to the Day Course in 1998 will know that this is great news. I will write more next month when I have received Eddy's CV and we hope to have confirmation from the other teachers we have invited.

The website is not updated yet as we do not have sufficient financial information from the University, however you can look back and remind yourselves of good times in 2010 on [www.sifdsummerschool.org](http://www.sifdsummerschool.org) Don't forget – only a year to go...

**Jill Bransby** (Publicity Officer for the Summer School)



### **Now for something completely different:**

Sapientia University in Romania have produced a set of videos for their intercultural Computer Science Education course explaining the different types of sorting algorithms. Why am I telling you this? Well, they use a variety of folkdances to get their message across resulting in an extremely unusual combination of folk dance and modern science.

See the six videos at: <http://www.youtube.com/user/AlgoRythmics>

**John Douglas**

## The Frank Flanagan Fund

Members will be aware from the Committee Meeting Report published in the December 2010 News that the Society last year received a very generous legacy from Frank Flanagan. The gift totalled £28,900. This has been designated the Frank Flanagan Fund.

The money was gifted with “no strings attached”, but the Committee has agreed that when deciding how the money should be spent we will primarily bear in mind projects that Frank would have liked.

Ideas which have been put forward so far include:

1. Financing the attendance of a musician (for the evening dances) at Summer School.
2. Subsidising a dance weekend in Frank’s memory.
3. Bringing more teachers from abroad.
4. Some sort of subsidy for the daycourses (as they are important to our aims, something that Frank attended and supported, and run at a loss which has to be borne from general income).



The Committee would be very pleased to receive other ideas for the use of the Fund. Please think about this and if you have any suggestions pass them to a Committee member.

It is proposed that there will be a discussion on this at the AGM.

**Judith Payling**



### Letters:

Dear Janet

In response to Ian Willson’s letter on Debka Meshuleshet, I have to say that Ian doesn’t have much confidence in his own abilities. He says “we introduced it to Woodvale. (I suppose nobody knows it now).” I say that Woodvale does know it and we still do it. Stella Wentworth can testify to playing it at our annual dances occasionally.

On the 3rd July we were MC’s at Cecil Sharp. Jenny mentioned Ian’s letter and asked if we could add it to the programme. We did and nearly everyone there had a go at it. Janet Woolbar arrived after we had done it, and she asked if we had seen the letter and said that she remembered the dance. We said that we had already done it, but we would do it again in the interval just for her - and we did. So twice in one evening!!

A final word for our dear friend and founder Ian - you teach Woodvale a dance, and Woodvale remembers the dance! (apart from the ones we have forgotten!!)

**David Mckie** (Woodvale International Folk Dance Group)

P.S. We did the dance at Cecil Sharp on the 5th July 2009 and at our Annual Dance on March 27th 2010





# Niguno Shel Yossi

Israel

Fairly Fast

Joe's Tune

Musical score for Niguno Shel Yossi, Joe's Tune. The score is in treble clef, 4/4 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked 'Fairly Fast'. The score consists of two staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a '5' below it. The second staff begins with a treble clef. The score includes various chords (D, Cm, Gm, A7) and rhythmic markings such as triplets and first/second endings.

"Wilf Horrocks' Collection"

Re: **Niguno shel Yossi** [where did the a come from?]\* Brian Dowsett and I learned this at the Billingham Course many years ago. Jonathan Gabai was here with his group and they taught us several of what are now standard repertoire. Another dance included was Zadik Katamar which is by Jonathan Gabai. The title means Nigun – melody or tune, shel – of, Jossi – a diminutive of Joseph. Thus Joe's tune. The musicians with Jonathan were the great Effi Netzer and his band. Theirs is the recording most often used and is I think the definitive version. It is very rarely performed as it was created. The original is in Chassidic style and therefore feet go flat to the floor and there is no leaping about. There is a lot of shoulder and arm expression.

**Fiona Howarth**

*\*(my spelling is appealing. Ed.)*



I took this photo in 2006, in Manchester; I believe the girls are dancing Niguno shel Yossi - there certainly seems to be plenty of 'shoulder and arm expression'.

**Ed.**

**NB** The music next month is ..... **Branle des Rats, France**



## **SIFD Sunday Dance/Workshops**

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

**August: No Dance**

Sep. 4th: Commemorative Dance: the charge for entry will be only £5 (under 18s free),



## **WHAT'S ON IN AUGUST**

**Sunday July 31<sup>st</sup> -  
Friday 5th**

**MACHOL EUROPA 2011** Israeli Dance Summer School. Warwick University, Coventry. 020 8209 3155 or [info@idi.org.uk](mailto:info@idi.org.uk)

**Saturday 20th -  
Saturday 27th**

**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

**Friday 26th -  
Monday 29th**

**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](mailto:rowenahmartin@hotmail.com)



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