

SIFD NEWS

OCTOBER 2011



POMÈRANIA, E.GERMANY

SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING

registered charity number 284509
www.sifd.org

Editor: Janet Douglas (Mrs.), Oak Cottage, 92 Rose Green Road, Bognor Regis,
West Sussex PO21 3EQ. Tel: 01243 265010
email: *SIFDNews@hotmail.co.uk*

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The packaging and posting is done by Dalila Heath.



Helen (left), Judith (centre) and Jeanette (right)

New SIFD Committee details on back page



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The drummer motif is from Dunav - and the cover by Caroline Thomas shows Pomeranian costumes.

I am delighted to inform you that **Charles Collingwood** phoned me when he received his copy of the September News. (More about this departure from reality on page 12)

As this issue of the News is full, the series of articles about groups is limited this month to one from Dunav. If you have written in about your group, don't worry - it will appear; and if you haven't got round to it yet I'm sure you will be inspired to write when you read about the other SIFD groups.

Ed.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- S.I **Nov.10th OXFORD BALKANSKO ORO - MITKO PETROV**, evening event contact Sally Humphrey for details, sally.humphrey@onetel.net (tel 01865 873860)
- Nov.11th MITKO PETROV - DERBYSHIRE**, afternoon course 1- 4pm at Willersley Castle, Cromford, Derbyshire. Contact j.king194@btinternet.com or ring 01629 57065.
- Nov.12th 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.15th OXFORD BALKANSKO ORO - MITKO PETROV** advanced evening workshop
- Nov.16th METHODONSKO - MITKO PETROV** Chandlers Ford, 7.30 - 9.15pm, contact Mad Chapman, 02380 267616 or mad.john@dial.pipex.com
- Nov.17th HURSLEY - MITKO PETROV**, Hursley International Folk Dancers 8-10pm
- S.I **Nov.19th/20th MITKO PETROV - BULGARIAN** at Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, NW1 7AY. Workshops £25 per day. Party £10. Both Workshops + Party £50. 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
- S.I **Nov.19th BALKANPLUS** The November Balkanplus will follow the Mitko Petrov workshop on the 19th November with MC Mad Chapman & John Riley with Mitko (Note 3rd Saturday)
- Nov.27th AROUND THE WORLD IN A DAY** with Janet Douglas, dances from around the world, 10.30am - 3.30pm at Pulborough Village Hall. RH20 2BT £6 Tel: Maureen Reed 01403 741431
- S.I **Dec.9th BARNET CHRISTMAS PARTY** with music by Dunav at Church Hall, Wood Street, Barnet, Herts. EN5 4BW 8pm Contact Brian Dowsett 01992 582717
- S.I **Dec.29th WILLINGDON IFDG TWIXMAS DANCE PARTY** at Stone Cross Memorial Hall near Eastbourne (junction B2104 & B2247). 10.30-4.30 Shared lunch, drinks provided. Full day £7, half day £4. All welcome to bring and lead dances on tape or CD. Info: 01323 503991 or rowenahmartin@hotmail.com

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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.



Help!

I am a long-term international folk dance enthusiast with one very big problem: I moved to the west country in 1995 and have thus deprived myself of any local opportunities to indulge in my passion. I have had to sidestep into English country dance, Morris dancing and even (dare I mention it?) circle dancing. I find none of these styles as diverse, challenging and rewarding as international folk. So, after suffering in silence for more than 15 years, taking part in the odd dance weekend and last year's summer school, I have finally made up my mind to start my own class in Bridport where I now live. I face a number of problems: I am not a qualified teacher myself. So, if there is anyone out there living in this area who is better qualified, I'd be very pleased to hear from them.

I have some music, some dance descriptions and some dance videos from workshops I have attended but they don't all match up. Where is the best place to find the missing music?

Another seemingly trivial thing: I am trying to devise a poster, inviting people to join my new class. To draw people's attention, I'd like the image of a small group of dancers in a broken circle. I don't want a full circle as people might erroneously think I'm offering circle dancing. I cannot draw, if my life depended on it. I have trailed the Internet for hours trying to find an appropriate copyright-free image. In vain. Is there anyone out there who could draw me such a picture?

Any help and suggestions very gratefully received at mecki1@yahoo.co.uk. If you're not on the Internet, I'm sure the editor will pass your suggestions to me.

Mecki Testroet



Dance Around the World – 22-23 October 2011 – 10 am to 11 pm

The date for the Dance Around the World festival is fast approaching. Plan to be a part of the best inter-cultural dance event of the year, watching the demonstrations or joining in the workshops. With about fifty groups participating there is a wide variety of dancing to watch or try. The demonstrations and workshops are continuous both days and there will be music as well as dance workshops. There will be dances from every continent except Antarctica with we hope new offerings from China and New Zealand. One visitor has called it "a tour through all the villages of the world – and happening in London." We don't have representatives from every village but we get as much variety as possible.

The spectacular Latin/American event is on Saturday evening with a combination of demonstration and participation. The Peruvian Scissors dance, now designated as a cultural treasure, will be back this year and is just one of the items not to be missed. Simultaneously, Balkan dancing, organised by Balkan Plus, will be in the downstairs hall, with music by Dunav. It is not yet confirmed but we hope the Bulgarian Choir will also be performing. On Sunday evening the versatile Cloudbust band will be playing for an International/English dance. All the workshops and evening dances will have dances for all levels of dancers.

The price is just £12 for each day including the evening, £20 for both days with a £2 discount for concessions. Everything is included, no extra charges except for food and drink as both the café and bar will be open.



An evening of Norwegian and Swedish dancing – 1 October – 7:00 – 10:30 pm

Loretta Kelly, one the best Hardanger Fiddle players from the U.S. will be visiting London and will play for a dance/concert on Saturday, 1 October. The evening will start with an hour of instruction concentrating on the basics of Springars and Gangars, the dances that are traditionally accompanied by the Hardanger Fiddle. The instruction will be followed by a short concert and then by general dancing which will include some Swedish as well as Norwegian dances. The cost is £8, £7 for concessions.

For musicians Loretta will give a workshop on Friday 30 September, details from Tania Simon, 0208 341 1454, or tanciasimon56@gmail.com

Caspar Cronk

Dunav Balkan Group



(line-up early 70s)

‘Dunav’ (the Slav word for Danube) has been a familiar name to many SIFD members since our foundation in 1964, especially those keen on Balkan dancing. We are proud to be affiliated to the SIFD. In 2014 we shall have existed for half a century, though of course people have come and gone. But Narendra Kotiyan (drums, bass, woodwind) is still with us, and he was a founder member along with the late Henry Morris, and John Baldwin whose health prevents him from playing with us any more. Of the other present members, Brian Dowsett (guitar) and Caroline Thomas (accordion) joined in 1971, Dominic Coltman in 1985. Former member Dragan Miletić (accordion) rejoined in 2000 after a break, and Geoff Sole (clarinet) likewise in 2006. Then came Cahit Baylav (violin) and Çiğdem Aslan (singer).

Dunav rehearses at Caroline’s house in north-east London every Wednesday. We practise the music chosen for forthcoming concerts or dances, keep the most popular ‘core’ repertoire up to scratch, learn and arrange new material, and refresh pieces we have not done for a long time. New pieces might be Dragan’s favourite Serbian or Bosnian songs, a dance that has recently become popular through an SIFD workshop, or a recording that one of us finds particularly attractive and would like the Group to reproduce. Sometimes we write the music out from recordings; sometimes we just listen to it and learn it by ear.

Apart from the pleasure of playing for Balkanplus, Barnet International Folk Dance Club, weddings, parties, festivals, fund-raising charity events and so on, we have been proud to present our music in Bulgaria, Romania, the Republic of Macedonia and, in October 2010, in Turkey. We find the nationals of these countries to be generous and encouraging in their praise of our interpretations of their music. Best of all is when we can persuade a local group to give us an instrumental workshop in their regional style.

We all came into Balkan music and to Dunav by different routes. For Naren the links were Highland dancing – Frances Horrocks – Živko Firfov Group – John Baldwin.

For Brian it was Hendon Folk Club – Henry Morris.

For Caroline it was school piano teacher – Folkestone District National Folk Dance Group – SIFD – Naren.

For Dominic it was Lucile Armstrong – Naren.

Dragan was from Serbia and met Dunav while playing accordion for his community in London.

Cahit from Turkey was playing Turkish music at Cecil Sharp House, heard Balkanplus music, and met Naren.

And Çiğdem came to us via Cahit.

It's definitely who you know that counts in this world! SIFD members will remember with affection the late Cliff Beck, Dunav's double bass player in the early days.

The monthly dance event known as 'Balkanplus' evolved in 1986 as a means of getting Dunav more involved with London's enthusiastic Balkan dancers, and increasing our repertoire of dance music. The first venue was the Swiss Cottage Community Centre, then the Working Men's College and finally Cecil Sharp House. Initially we played every month, but reduced it to quarterly when that became too much commitment.

Britain's first ever Balkan Festival was held on 27 March 1965, organised by Naren and featuring Dunav and other groups with which he had come into contact. Since that event we feel we have made a significant contribution to the Balkan scene in the UK and are delighted that many others now share our love of the music and dance of south-eastern Europe.



(Conservatoire concert)

Caroline Thomas



Balkanplus

The October Balkanplus will be held on the 8th October at Cecil Sharp House, Camden NW1 7AY, starting at 7.00pm. MC for the evening will be the Ipswich Group. Admission £5.

Maureen Felton

Firsts and Favourites

Lily Avery recalls

I first joined the SIFD in 1957, having been a member of Harrow Green Folkdance Group for a few years before then. At Harrow Green, popular dances were **Meitschi Putzdi**, **Black Forest Mazurka**, and the energetic **Hopak** and **Kolomeyka**, but the SIFD offered an abundance of different dances and my favourites changed as I discovered the joys of dancing **Bourrées**, **Sevillanas**, **Sardanas**, even **Schuplatzer** with the various specialist groups. Then the excitement of discovering in Danny Lumley's group and Philip Thornton's group the intricacies of Balkan rhythms. The accolade came when I was "touched" by Philip! He used to watch the circle of dancers in his Balkan class and quietly touch you on the shoulder to tell you that you were good enough to join his "advanced" group! How elitist is that! My favourite Balkan dance was, and still is, **Nevestinsko Oro**.



Lily Avery in 1960 and now

So I remember many firsts and favourites, not least Les Avery whom I first met at one of the Sunday dances in 1957. We got married 27 years later!

Jill Bransby has written

The first International dance I learnt was **Shiboleth Basadeh** at Kathy and Henry Tribe's Evening Class at Chesterton School in Cambridge. I went along in 1965 or 6 looking to dance more formally, in a structured way, as I had spent 3 years studying Laban's more creative approach at college. (At the same time I took up Ballet and Contemporary Dance classes.) Little did I know that I would still be hooked on International Folk Dancing so many years later! My favourite dances were the **Girls' Hungarian circle dances from Bag and Kalocsa**.

A few years later I joined Kathy's Cambridge University Group and her Technical College Group, teaching the latter when Kathy had Tanya. We did some Yugoslavian dances, including the **Serbian Suite; Dinga** and **Alunelul Batut** from Romania were popular, as were many Israeli dances, including **Hine Ma Tov**, **Harimon** and **Hoi Harmonica**. I overlapped Steve Taverner who started a group in the Isle of Wight and I may have overlapped Leslie Haddon for a short time when Kathy was specialising more in Hungarian dance. (I certainly watched him performing with the group after I had moved to Hertfordshire.)

In 1975 we learnt Hungarian gypsy and wedding couple dances and I remember entering a dance competition performing **Csardas Myjava**, a Czech Couple dance. This was in the days of reel to reel tape recorders and as we made our dancing entry onto the stage there was a sickening distorted sound from the machine as the tape got stretched and stuck. We continued dancing without the music until we were told we could stop and restart. We dashed backstage and attacked the machine with a nail file, sorted out the tape by untangling it and rewinding it and performed our entry with the mangled tape – we didn't win!

I am so grateful to Kathy for such a good grounding in International Folk Dancing and for so much enjoyment. I am very glad I went along to that Evening class!

Caroline Thomas (who drew this month's cover back in 1980) remembers

I was 17 when my school piano teacher asked if I would like to earn 7/6d (37½p) playing the piano on Tuesday evenings for the Folkestone District National Dance Group. Big money, I thought, can't resist. There were more women than men, mostly 30+ (so old!) but friendly enough. I sat at the piano and someone stuck the SIFD book in front of me open at the Russian dance **Karapyet**. There was a melody line and letters to indicate chords, but this was no problem as I had studied musicianship and harmony as well as piano, and it seemed to come out right first time. From then on it was all systems go: an accordion was supplied for a trip to Salzburg and Croatia, they taught me handbell ringing, I played in 'See How They Dance' at the Royal Albert Hall and practised mysterious ancient Kentish rituals. I was fascinated. But when asked to transcribe Balkan music from a reel-to-reel tape, which I did by reducing the speed so as to hear all the twiddly bits, I was totally hooked. More than half a century later and, thanks to the Dunav Balkan Group, I still am. In the meantime I played for many years for the SIFD classes, demonstrations and Sunday evening dances, drew many of the cover designs for the News, and am now proof-reading the transcription of Wilf Horrocks' music collection.



Caroline in 1960 and now

Firsts and Favourites continues next month. Judith is pleased with the response from members and more contributions are welcome. **Ed.**



Commemorative Dance at Cecil Sharp House, September 4th

The Commemorative Dance went extremely well – over 60 people attended, many in wonderful costumes, so it looked as good as it sounded.

So many people to thank – so many people worked hard to make it a success. Principally Phil and Brenda Steventon, who had the task of arranging the favourite dances of the friends we have lost recently, (selected by those who knew them well), into a coherent programme. As many dances were unfamiliar, this was harder than it sounds. Also Janet Woolbar and the Band, as usual, contributed enormously. Janet, as she converted unknown dances into known, or at least followable, and the Band for brushing up on forgotten tunes, and learning new, and playing with their usual enthusiasm. Pam Radford provided a set of much appreciated interval dances, and as always there are the people who work so hard in the background. Dave Wedd and John Walford assemble and disassemble equipment, Dorien Bates is an excellent doorkeeper, and Helen Ezra and Jeanette Hull provided welcome refreshments.

And then I'd like to thank all of you who came to support this dance. I hope the people we were remembering would have been glad that we too were enjoying their favourite dances.

Alison Scrimshaw

International Dance in New Zealand

International folk dancing in New Zealand is alive and well.

I lived in Auckland in 1971 but was only aware of a Yugoslavian group who gave demonstrations, nothing else, though there may have been some other groups. However, as it was Auckland's Centennial year and there had been an influx of Pacific Islanders to the City I had several opportunities to experience not only Maori dance and culture but also to see performing groups from Samoa, Cook Islands, Tonga, Niue, Tokelau and Tahiti as part of the celebrations.

In the last 30 years or so dance groups have sprung up all over the country. Information for this article has come from Jane Soan who kindly provided me with a copy of the Folk Dance New Zealand, Inc. May 2011 newsletter. Jane, who is a member of the Hawkes Bay general international folk dance group, has been dancing with Bexhill IFDG for a few months while staying with family in Hastings.

Most major towns and cities have at least a general international group and usually specialist groups such as English, Scottish, Irish, Israeli and Greek. There are some inspirational teachers like Kate Grace, brought up in France, who pioneered the teaching of African dance in Dunedin, then returned to France for 3 years with her Kiwi husband and family and immersed herself in traditional French and Balkan dance. She now runs a Balkan group and "Les Belles Vilaines" back in Dunedin.

Dancers in Christchurch have had a terrible time following two major earthquakes and frequent aftershocks. Some lost all their possessions, homes and dance halls were badly damaged. Farandol Folkdancers (general and Balkan dance) and an Israeli group met in members homes to keep in touch while searching for new premises and, in spite of the trauma felt by all, have managed to carry on.

In Auckland one is spoilt for choice. Besides general international groups there are Dutch Dancers, the Bulgarian Roses, Early Dance, a French performing group, Danish, Morris, Rapper, and Welsh groups, a Russian, Ukrainian and Gypsy group and African dance and drumming to mention a selection. The Ruritanian International Folk Dance Club holds dance parties and workshops monthly (except for December and January). Folklore Chileno Latino holds a monthly networking evening with music and dance, plus food, from South America and Spain.

Two Polish groups flourish in Wellington.

Nationally, the FDNZ held its 10th International Folk Dance Camp in Wellington this June with guest teachers, Kate Grace (French community dance) and Aleksandar Zankin (Bulgarian). Aleksandar had 30 years experience as a principal dancer, choreographer and director in Bulgaria before moving to the States where he now teaches character dance at the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre.

In October the 22nd National Israeli Dance Camp, Machol Pacifica 2011 will take place in the Bay of Plenty, hosted by the Tauranga and Whakatane Israeli Dance Groups, with guest tutor, Pamela Schwartz.

There are regional monthly events, workshops, and courses such as the Contiki European Dance Tour, Jane Austen Dances and Old Silk Road Dance in Hamilton. So there is a huge variety of dance styles and culture to be encountered in the country. I was a little surprised to find no mention of Maori or Pacific Island groups in the newsletter but I understand they have their own umbrella organizations.

This is only a brief resume of what goes on. Further information can be obtained from the FDNZ website - folkdance.org.nz - or if anyone is planning to visit New Zealand and would like advice on groups it would be worth contacting Rae Storey beforehand. She has taught dance in Auckland for over 30 years and is stepping down from the Presidency of the FDNZ this year. Her address is 24a Dell Avenue, Remuera, Auckland 1050 tel; 00 649 524 9504.

Heather Edwards



SIFD Summer School, July 28 – August 4, 2012

The website www.sifdsummerschool.org is now updated. Included in this month's News are some little cards (flyers) advertising the week. Please distribute spares to any dance event that you attend and let me know if you would like any more.

Last month I wrote to tell you the good news that Jan Knoppers is joining Edouard Djolian at Swansea and there was also a 'stop press' to let you know that the third teacher will be Philippe Marsac from France. Information about Philippe and the dances that he will teach will feature next month.



Jan has been teaching dance since 1979. In 1983 he graduated from the LCA course for folk dance teachers and between 1983 and 1989 he studied at the Rotterdam Dance Academy (now CoDarts school for the Arts) where he graduated in 1989 in folkloristic dance, jazz dance and tap dance.

His involvement as a dancer and in later years as a ballet master with the Bulgarian performance group "Praznik" along with travels to Bulgaria provided the basis for many courses and workshops in Bulgarian dance. The Apple Chill Cloggers led him to Appalachian Clogging. His love of tap dance and show-dance developed into further study of styles such as Lancashire clogging, Canadian, Welsh and Irish dancing. A broad experience of Armenian dance led him to his latest great love: Asia and especially Central Asia.

Jan teaches workshops and courses in Bulgarian, Armenian, Irish, Asian and International Folk dancing throughout Europe. He has been the artistic heart of Theatergroep Radost in Delft for 30 years.

Jan has taught at many conservatories and dance academies in Holland and abroad and has worked with future dancers, singers and teachers, as well as within musical theatre. As a choreographer, he has created many dance works for amateurs and professionals. He was Co-director of the Internationaal Danstheater in Amsterdam and co-founder of the Internationaal Danstheater voor de Jeugd.

Jan has a particular interest in teaching and teachers. Headmaster of 4 teacher training courses (LCA), guest teacher didactics and methodology, choreography and group dynamics, he was part of the testing and examining committee for 14 years. Together with Bianca de Jong he created a teachers' programme for outside Holland and personally delivered the system in Italy, Germany, Switzerland and England.

Jan has always had a great interest in singing, and his folklore-research in dance has led to an active interest in singing, music and performing. He became a Certified Master Teacher CMT for Estill Voice International in 2009. Jan says that 'his teaching experience enables him to jolt any group or gathering into singing, playing and dancing in an instant'.

Those of us who have had the pleasure of dancing with Jan at previous Summer Schools and courses will confirm this, as his energy and drive, coupled with the enthusiasm and skill of his teaching, is infectious. He undertakes everything with a fine eye for detail but teaches in such a way that learning becomes easy.

Jan will be teaching in collaboration with Richard van der Kooij, two General International Courses at the Summer School, one in couple dances and the other in non-partner dances. With his large and varied experience in dancing and teaching we eagerly anticipate his courses in Swansea. Website at <http://www.p-art-ners.nl/dance/nl>

Contact me on 01462 457791 or jill@pjbransby.plus.com if you want more cards.

Jill Bransby (Publicity Officer for the Summer School).

2012 Dates for Sunday Dances at Cecil Sharp House

For many years the Sunday dances at Cecil Sharp House have been held on the first Sunday of the month (except in May so we don't overlap with the Eastbourne Festival). But next year this has to change. The English Folk Dance and Song Society have priority booking for their events at Cecil Sharp House, and they have apparently also developed a liking for the first Sunday of the month. As a result, I have had to book the following dates for our dances in 2012. The January date was deliberately chosen, but February, March and April will come as a bit of a surprise. May is the second Sunday, as usual, and after that the normal pattern is followed.

January 8th
February 12th
March 11th
April 15th

May 13th
June 3rd
July 1st
September 2nd

October 7th
November 4th
December 2nd

I do hope the changes will not spoil your enjoyment of these dances, and you will still be able to attend as usual, dancing with our various MCs, but always to our excellent live band.

Much thought and preparation goes into each of these dances, so please still come, support them, and enjoy them.

Alison Scrimshaw



Remembering 'Departed' Loyal Members.



The special commemorative dance on Sunday 4th Sept. was a great success – congratulations and many thanks to all those lovely people responsible and helping, especially the delightful MC's. It was so interesting to find out the favourite dance of so many of those charismatic old members. Curious how many were almost forgotten too. Thank goodness we had Janet (Woolbar) and Frances (Horrocks) to help our wonderful organising MCs - Brenda & Phil (Steventon). Although there was not a great deal of time between the AGM and the Dance it made for a really good atmosphere with several people making the effort to bring a costume. A lovely relaxed, full, happy day!! Many many thanks to all who helped in ANY way - well worth it. It certainly did stir the memory and to cut a long story short I thought it would be rather nice to have an extra section to our website just for past (deceased) members. I know that for a few of the pioneers like Margery Latham we had a special memorial dance, but thought that maybe we should have a long lasting tribute to all our past friends, founders of the Society, hardworking committee members, cherished loyal group members, etc.

Alison's (Scrimshaw) wonderful husband is happy to add all contributions to the website (photos too??) and I thought that maybe even if it was only a little cameo moment/event/special but interesting flash of memory, it would still be worth sharing. I also thought it would be even more interesting if after reading one of these pieces (should it trigger another memory in the reader) if others added to what is already there.... a little joke, a favourite saying, a hilarious moment....

Basically it would be a listing of names in alphabetical order with all the contributions following.

Perhaps reprinting obits and memories appearing in past Newsletters could lead the way??

Would some of you contribute? Have extra ideas? Could dig up old photos to be included? Would you visit the site? I do hope so. Fingers crossed!

Diki Gleeson

Letters:

Dear Janet,

I received my copy of SIFD News today, and was not a little surprised to read on Page 3 that I had died recently!

I can assure you that I am still very much alive and kicking, if not folk dancing.

So I hope that I will not be crossed off the mailing list, as it keeps me in touch with the dancing world, both past and present.

I do not know the source of the information, but I am sure that Sue, and others, will be pleased to know that it was premature.

Yours sincerely,

Charles Collingwood



Mea culpa!

I am so sorry that I spread a false rumour that Charles Collingwood had died. He very much hasn't. I had a 'senior moment' when reading something and got the name wrong. Sue Clark's tribute is lovely, and I hope Charles enjoyed reading it. I offer my most humble apologies to them both and to all his friends who were disturbed by the news.

Caroline Thomas



Report from the AGM

We had a good turnout this year, with approximately 9% of the membership, and people coming from Manchester, and Bristol as well as many members from the south-east. The open discussions were interesting and very valuable in giving the committee guidance for planning the priorities for the year. The new Logo is now official, so please use it from now on. Until we have the new version available on the website, please contact Jeanette or Richard for an electronic copy.

Judith reported that despite the current deficit overall our finances are still healthy and we have been able to keep subscriptions at the same rate. Individual membership continues to decline, while group membership is increasing, and some ideas were put forward for both encouraging international folk dancing and for persuading those who are already participating to join the Society. The committee will need to consider the practicalities and costs of these suggestions.

The meeting agreed that the aims should not be changed, that we should not lose our balance between accurate teaching and enjoyable social activity but that more could be done to forward the educational aims via our publications and courses, in all parts of the country.

The Frank Flanagan Fund: ideas for how to use the fund were discussed, including support for more weekend courses in more locations. The committee will start looking into how we can implement the ideas at our next meeting.

The meeting was in favour of changing to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. Roger explained that this would require a new Constitution and mean the committee would no longer be in danger of being personally liable in case of financial trouble. The arrangements for electing and appointing committee members would at the same time be simplified.

There are two changes to the committee: Alison Scrimshaw and Maggie Kaye have retired from the main committee, but neither has retired completely: Maggie continues as representative and secretary of the West Midlands Branch and Alison will continue to do the administration for groups membership. Jeanette Hull is the new secretary. Dalila Heath, membership secretary, will now be a full committee member. Please see the separate list for information on how to contact each committee member, and their main responsibilities.

Initial details of the 2012 AGM were announced. It will be hosted by Nutbrook International Folk Dance Group and held on Saturday 22nd September 2012.

Aland Girl

Finland



"Wilf Horrocks' Collection"

No details to add to **Aland Girl**, but two members know about last month's feature **Branle des Rats** - their letters follow. There are notes on **Dragaicuța** that will be held over until next month to accompany the music. Ed.



Dear Janet,

"**Branle des Rats**" has been alive and well in Worthing. My little record card indicates that I learnt it at "Sidmouth 1983". It also indicates "Rosbif" but I cannot recall whether they taught it or whether they just played the music and I picked up the dance from those who already knew it. I was not at Sidmouth in 1981. I have used it over the years and children really love it too.

I believe there are two different ways of using the four steps to cross over with your partner. What's new!

As a response to the Sept SIFD News comment, we danced it at "Dance International" on Friday 2nd Sept. Some remembered it too.

It was good to read Christine's write up on the Club as I feel that it is brilliant that for 31 years there has been an International Folk Dance Club in Worthing without a break. Yes the name changed from "Interdance Worthing" to "Dance International" and it became committee run but everything else just continued. After several years "Dance International" described themselves as a "Folk and Circle Dance Club".

The repertoire has changed quite a bit but we did dance Rats Branle and recently I taught it at my Thursday International Folk Dance Class and it was really enjoyed there. It always seems to get people laughing in a lovely way. Long may these dances of long ago live and rise again. Happy Dancing.

Iris Birch



Dear Janet,

Branle des Rats.

This was taught to us at the Barlow Group by Chris Gunstone on 12th March 1983. (What happened to Chris?). I did not realise that I was the sole guardian of the mysteries of this dance, which he gave to us as **Branle du Rat**. We danced it for a short while before it got overtaken by other dances from a day school given by Cecelia Stone in June and the ones from the 1983 Swansea course.

It is done in a longways set, although as there is no changing of partners or position in set this does not seem strictly necessary. My notes say:- Set with pas de basque 8x starting left. Bend to own L&R, step with L foot to R of partner and bring R foot to it turning clockwise to face partner on opposite side of set, (you have changed places). Repeat back to own side and repeat two more times.

Keep set close, try to trick partner as to which way you will turn. Represents catching rats.

So, yes, it is a humorous dance! Best wishes,

Philip E. Lloyd.

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)

October 2nd MCs: Dot Bradbury and Alison Scrimshaw,
who hope to provide a lovely mixture of dances, with the bonus of interval dances from
Janet Woolbar and Ben Hooke.

November 6th MC: Helen Ezra.



WHAT'S ON IN OCTOBER

- S.I **Saturday 1st** **EVENING OF SCANDINAVIAN DANCING** and music emphasising Norwegian with Hardanger Fiddle. See page 4
- S.I **Saturday 1st** **BALKAN FOLK DANCE WORKSHOP** with Frank Dowling. 10.30 – 4.00 Price: all day £8 half day £5. Bramcote Memorial Hall, Church Street, Notts NG9 3HD From Derby and Stapleford approach from Chapel St. (because of dual carriageway), turning off the A52 island by Bramcote baths towards Bramcote village – Town street, first, Chapel street. From Nottingham turn off A52 into Church St. No.4 Bus from Nottingham – 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 **Tuesday 4th/
Friday 7th
&
Friday 7th/
Monday 10th** **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 **Saturday 8th** **BALKANPLUS** - MC for the evening will be the Ipswich Group
- S.I **Friday 14th** **RAINMAKERS ANNIVERSARY DANCE** 8-11pm at St Michael's Parish Hall, Broadway, Letchworth, SG6 3PQ. £6.00 on the day. MC Jill Bransby with live music from Cloudburst. More info from Roger (01438 812766) or Mark (01462 454210).
- S.I **Saturday 22nd/
Sunday 23rd** **DANCE AROUND THE WORLD** - Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regents Park Road, London NW1 7AY. 10. a.m - 11.p.m. Two days of performances and workshops with a choice of evening events. Latin American evening on Saturday, social dances both evenings. £12 ea. day, £9 eve only, £20 whole weekend (concessions available) Contacts:- email: danceoffice@waitrose.com phone: 07749007040 or 020 8340 4683 Website: www.datw.org.uk



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