



SIFD NEWS



December 2011



SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING

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Happy Christmas

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Well, here we are - at that time of year again - and time to thank **Dalila Heath** for another year of work making sure you get your copy of the SIFD News every month either by post or email.

In the New Year, if all goes according to plan, there will be a 'New Look SIFD News'; which possibly will make Dalila's job a little easier.



This issue is rather over full - a bit like Christmas really - satisfying but stuffed. **Ed.**



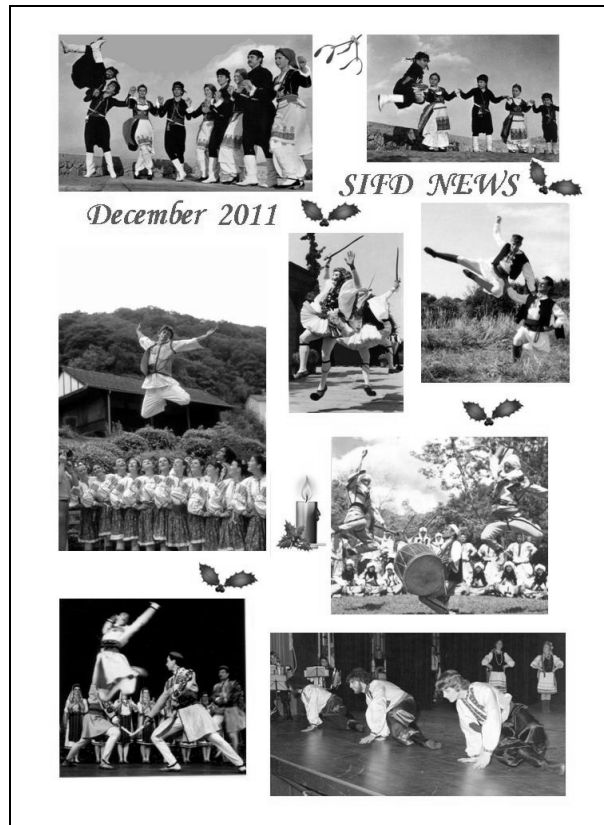
Key - Twelve Lords a Leaping

One man and one boy 'leaping' with dancers in Crete. *Old postcards from Lily Avery's collection.*

Two dancers at the Greek feast of Apokries.

'Leaper' from Gadija, ex-Yugoslavia at Llangollen.
Ken Poyton

Slavko Antović Cale, Krsmanovića, Belgrade. *Circa 1950*



Severnyashki folk Ensemble, Pleven, Bulgaria.

Two Turkish dancers (*CDcover - Jan Knoppers*)

Hennie Konings (centre) performing in 1964 in Ukrainian costume.

Janet Douglas



Woodvale International Folk Dance Group

Annual Dance Saturday 25th March 2012

** Please Note that this dance is from 2pm to 5pm **

Adults £6 and children £3 inc refreshments (please bring your own drink).

phone: 01732 883405 web site: www.woodvaleifdg.org.uk



Les Hutchins

Les Hutchins who died, peacefully, after long illness, was a founder member of Harrow Green; and subsequently active with both Hornchurch and Havering Groups.

He leaves Gillian, his wife and a daughter. Always unassuming and helpful, he will be missed by those who knew him.

Roy Clarke

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Jan.14th BALKANPLUS - with MC Julie Korth

Jan.29th DANCE IN DERBYSHIRE WITH DALILA - a selection of Armenian and other dances. Day course at Baslow Village Hall, Baslow Road, DE45 1SP between 10.30 and 16.30. Cost for the day £10. Further details from Janet King (01629 57065 or j.king194@btinternet.com) or Greg Boyd gregboyd99@aol.com or 07810181273).

Feb.4th/5th INTENSIVE RUSSIAN DANCE WEEKEND WITH HENNIE KONINGS, ISTD studios, Old Street 10 - 5 Sat & 10 - 4 Sun. £90 for the weekend. Bookings & more info from Janet Wilks 02072299387 janet@janetwilks.co.uk

Mar. 17th NENAD BIĆANIĆ see page 10

S.I **Mar. 25th WOODVALE INT. FOLK DANCE GROUP ANNUAL DANCE** see page 3

S.I **Apr.14th HELP FOR HAITI 3 - PAM RADFORD** with a day of 'beginners dances' 11am - 4pm at Barnham Village Hall. Near Bognor Regis. Raffle and tabletop sale - proceeds for St. Saviour's Priory, Haiti mission. £12. shared lunch. Details: Janet Douglas 01243 265010 or www.interfolk.co.uk

S.I **Jul.28th/Aug.4th 2012 SIFD SUMMER SCHOOL** at University of Wales, Swansea. Courses in Armenian, French and General International. Details from website www.sifdsummerschool.org ; phone 07905 603655 or 01462 457791; email sifdsummerschool50@gmail.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.



Residential Greek Folk Dance Course at Malhamdale 9th – 12th November 2012

Kyriakos Moisidis

Kyriakos comes from Thessaloniki in Greece. He teaches dances mainly from the north of Greece (Macedonia, Thrace, Pontos and Cappadokia). He is also familiar with village folk traditions and dances from all over Greece. Although he is new to most of us in the UK, he is already a popular teacher in Europe, Canada, the USA and of course in Greece. He was the Greek teacher for Yves Moreau's 60th birthday trip to Trakia, and he holds an annual folk seminar in Greece. It is a pleasure to be able to welcome him to Malhamdale. He is a delightful person to be with and speaks very good English.

This residential long weekend is at the HF country house hotel, Newfield Hall, in a peaceful location in the southern part of the Yorkshire Dales National Park, less than half a mile from the Pennine Way, which leads north to the nearby geological wonders of Malhamdale. It includes comfortable twin, double, family or single en-suite accommodation and full-board with a plentiful choice of good food. Dancers can select either the General or Intermediate course, or both courses. There will be social dancing in the evenings, with some live music and a review of the course dances. There will also be an opportunity to learn Greek and Balkan songs at Mike and Clyde's workshops. It is an excellent area for walking or sightseeing, and, leaders willing, half-day walks for dancers and full-day walks for non-dancers will be offered. Non-dancing friends and family are welcome to come and enjoy the facilities of the house and grounds including a heated indoor pool. Full board accommodation (twin or double for 3 nights) is £205, single course £37, both courses £60.

For full details and a booking form, please send s.a.e. to me at 23, Church Street, Keswick, Cumbria, CA12 4DX. Alternatively you can get the information electronically by sending your request to cathy_meunier@hotmail.com

Cathy Meunier

Doina Eastern European Folk Dance Group

DOINA is a performance group based in London that over the years has assembled dances, music and folk costumes from many Eastern European countries. We practise dances from Central and South-East European countries, mainly Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria and Poland.

When I joined as a relative newcomer 5 years ago I found that a key feature of the lively practices is that they are tailored to the dance experience of those attending and this adds to the warmth and friendliness of the group. We have often been joined by people with some dance experience, not necessarily with a folk dance background but some members even started with no dance experience while others, like me, returned to dancing after a break of some years.

Alan McLean, a one-time professional dancer who became fascinated by the dances of Eastern Europe, started DOINA in the early '80s. After a few years he handed DOINA over to Leslie Haddon and Sue Chipp - both are experienced SIFD teachers who have gone to many courses in various eastern European countries to collect dances, music, and costume.

Over the years Leslie and Sue have amassed an impressive wardrobe of colourful costumes that is shared with the Hungarian and Romanian groups Balaton and Mărțișorul. This allows us the luxury of using 5 sets of costumes from different countries in the DOINA end of year finale performance in the Victorian Gardens on the Embankment.



The actual dances range from easier to more challenging ones. I also like the fact that they are very varied, including line and circle dances, couple dances, girls' dances and a few for boys only. One of the latter from Bulgaria is such fun that girls love doing it too at practices. We gradually add new dances, or return to favourites we haven't performed for a few years, dropping others to keep roughly a constant number of dances in the repertoire. For example, the SIFD funded a visit to the group by a Romanian Banat dance expert so that he could create a lovely choreography of dances from the mountain region. More recently Polish dance expert Tony Latham put together a Krakowiak choreography for us that we used this year in the Embankment performance.

We generally perform at low key events that have included local festivals and carnivals, church events, hospital fetes, fund-raising events for charity, senior citizens and residential homes, and multi-cultural events.



You can see dance photos and more about DOINA at:
<https://sites.google.com/site/doinaeasterneuropeanfolkdance/>
or type DOINA Folk Dance into google

Practices early this Autumn aim to appeal particularly to new members whether experienced dancers or not (and there is no need to bring a partner). You are all are welcome to come and try our dances.

DOINA meets Tuesdays 7 - 9pm in term time near Westminster Abbey at:
The Abbey Centre, 34 Great Smith St, Westminster, London SW1P 3BU.
Leslie has more information at LesHaddon@aol.com or 020 8441 2559

Keith Chandler



Letters:

I was very sorry to read in the November News that Ken Ward had died. I danced with the Zivko Firfov group for a number of years in the 1980s and early 90s and played with Ken and others in the band. We had a lot of fun and performed at all kinds of gigs, including - I seem to recall - a hairdressers' competition at the Royal Albert Hall! I remember the effort Ken always put into perfecting our style, getting our costumes right, choosing the best version of the music and making sure we didn't sound too English when we sang. He was a man of many talents: not only could he play the accordion and sing with impeccable style, he could also turn his hand to embroidery, deal with the technical side of music recording and speak Serbo-Croat quite respectably. We all learnt from his knowledge of the background to the dances and enjoyed being part of 'Ken's group'. I left the group before Ken went to live in Spain, but I know he kept in close touch with the group and until recently was very much a presence at their Christmas parties. I have fond memories of his version of 'Good King Wenceslas' in 7/8 time and his inimitable solo dances.

I'd like to send my condolences to all Ken's friends in the Zivko Firfov group, especially those who had known him for many years. It is the end of an era indeed.

Susan Jordan

A Few Personal Memories of Ken Ward

My husband always referred affectionately to Ken as 'Hookboots' - on account of his habitual dance footwear (Serbian opanki). I was always passionate about dance from the regular outings to Covent Garden that my magic, indulgent Grandpa treated me to from the tender age of 4 years old (when becoming a ballerina was top of the list!!) so it would have been no surprise that I cavalierly 'skipped' the last day of term and did not return to college after the obligatory day 'fiddling with dead bodies' to improve our knowledge of anatomy, helped by those handsome medical students at Kings. I 'hitched' (tut tut!) all the way up to N. Yorks. for the very prestigious first residential International Dance Conference, where I was immediately hooked by Bert Price to SIFD passion. His international morning almost eclipsed the thrill of being taught by Rudolf Laban himself and the magic of listening to Imogen Holst. As a direct result of that, my best college mate and I enrolled for the (could have been first as well) Bisham Abbey centre residential international dance course led by Marjorie Latham and Ken Ward, who introduced me to Geof Gleeson (my future husband) or rather he to me, as it was only their reports in the staff room, which included Geof (the acclaimed returned hero from Japan, the judo course coach), of our college girl laughter, gaiety and enthusiasm in their classes, which ensured he came to the Dance Party to see these characters for himself, where he rather swept me off my feet with his fantastic, imaginative ballroom expertise and imaginative improvisation.....

Subsequently we had several dinner party evenings together with Ken and Frances. Ken was so kind and generous and as you know was very skilful with a needle, so he generously altered and added to (what is still my most treasured costume) the original Skopje I wear so often. Even with the few years devoted to bringing up my children when I mostly couldn't arrange to continue Zivko Firfov classes etc. the friendship endured and led to so many, many wonderful memories and experiences, from the Canford Summer Schools of Music to the Swansea weeks.... Without hesitation I volunteered to do the paperwork for Ken and then shared organising Albert Hall Shows, in those good old days when we hired the whole building for the entire day - morning rehearsal, lunch laid on in the top gallery, performances afternoon and evening. He was always so appreciative and quietly inspiring, hardworking and innovative. One of the highlights I thought was the RAH Show when the ZF item transformed the arena into a bustling market scene in old Yugoslavia. I remember strolling around yelling out 'dobri cenki' (? Spelling) - as I had heard them on Sveti Sava, offering hot maize cobs as a snack to the festive throng. I am sure Frances, Lily, Val and Jerry, Marie etc. well remember those efforts for the CCPR in Wembley Arena among other venues. Ken was so enthusiastic and keen to show off our wonderful collection of costumes and in those days we were all so young and fancy free, permanently ready and willing to trip off anywhere dancing. We were SO lucky to have so many wonderful charismatic teachers, leaders, innovators, 'originals' like Ken, Marjory, Bert, Pug, Lucille, Jack, Simon..... the list is endless really - maybe impossible to provide a definitive list anyway.

One of Ken's strengths was his unflinching concern for style and accuracy, which can sometimes become dimmed and blurred with constant repetition and varying interpretations. His success in that direction always seemed to be reinforced by those regular, generous accolades on our performances at the annual celebration dinners in posh Hotels in central London for the British Yugoslav Society. That was of course prior to Tito's demise and the inevitable loosening of the ties which bound the various regions together into Yugoslavia. As we still do, every year the focal region changed. It was always easy to see at those Ritz/Strand evenings who was who. On a Macedonian demo there was no shortage of smiles, tears and special attention from those originating or linked with that country, for example and it was always such a pleasure and privilege to chat with some of those to hear all sorts of unique 'extras' about their region. Needless to say, the raffle always included tickets for various holidays, events, flights to Yugoslavia etc. and Ken quite often won. On one occasion I remember he passed the tickets on to Joan and Roger (fittingly as they are now the ones keeping us all together and leading us 'onward ever' - as my school motto urged.) Wow what a pressie and what a gift he leaves for us all. Long may the torch (inspired by Zivko Firfov) lit by Philip Thornton and Ken blaze and shed its light ever wider. It was a bit heartbreaking when he moved to Spain, but he kept in touch and up to date with all our doings - ever ready to help with advice or information and in fact it was his non appearance at a London meeting with Joan and Roger which triggered the Barcelona police finding him lifeless in his abode. I do so hope that his writings are safe and his accumulated knowledge published later.

I was very concerned that he had not progressed enough to take advantage of the SIFD grant available for the expense of its publication. At least the British Museum is looking after a good variety of his costumes. Di Waller's interesting, informed talk on costumes of that Balkan area at the BM was fittingly illustrated by some of hers and Ken's beautiful originals so well exhibited. Long may they remain informed, guardians of those precious artefacts – regularly exhibited and shared too we hope. I am sure we all hope that we may look forward to the eventual publishing of the fruits of his dedication, researches, experience and knowledge. See you at his Memorial Dance!

Diki Gleeson

'Letter to Ken' *

(reprinted in full - unfortunately half of Simon's letter was inadvertently omitted last month - Ed.)*

Dear Old Friend,

I've been thinking about the first time we met. It was a Sunday dance in the 'cellar' in Drury Lane in 1953. It was all so new and exciting with the music and movement and we were both absolutely hooked from the start.

After that we were two or three times a week at Carlyle School in Chelsea for SIFD classes where Margery Latham, and Bert Price and others taught us the then basic repertoire. Philip Thornton was perhaps the most charismatic of the teachers and you acquired your passion for Balkan dance and music from him. I'm sure you remember visiting his flat and the incident of the Swiss roll through the letter box! I tried to play Gankino on the tin whistle but you were always the more musically adept.

When I left College in 1954 we went Youth Hostelling in France and Spain. On the train from Hendaye to Biarritz we met a Basque dance troupe and their musician, playing the txistu in the corridor, took our breath away.

Margery was always on the look out for dancing talent and she soon had you in the demonstration team. We danced Swedish at the Free Trade Hall in Manchester, in many 'See How They Dance' shows in the Albert Hall and in an endless procession of summer fairs and fêtes. Also, of course, we danced with the prestigious French group, Les Escargots, which (controversially at that time) was by invitation only.

You were generous with your musical talent and in the days when music was hard to come by you won many brownie points by recording dances for Joan's school concerts.

We didn't neglect the social side of SIFD life and there were many hostelling/dancing weekends and the Surrey Crest weekends with the traditional race to the Hare and Hounds before lunch on Sunday.

I was best man at your wedding as you were at mine and you followed me into the Chairman's role in 1962 when Tim was born.

Thinking back, we spent a lot of time together in France. Pierre Panis asked you to teach Balkan at one of the 'stage de danse' he ran for the French Ministry of Education and Culture at the Château de Boivre near Poitiers. Your 'Silent Kolo' created quite a sensation and the 'stagiaires' were delighted to learn it. On another of Pierre's courses (at Les Grandes Poteries) we had one of our most bizarre experiences when the four of us slept in an enormous dormitory in a boys' school in Sancerre (lovely town) - 60 empty beds and us! Afterwards the four of us went touring in my first real car.

Then there was the time that Francis Feybli invited us to teach at one of his magical Christmas courses at Beckenried on Lake Lucerne. You taught Yugoslav and Joan and I did French and Basque. It was an unforgettable week.

You soon started visiting Yugoslavia regularly and I still have all the postcards you sent from there. I remember how concerned we were for your safety when Skopje suffered a terrible earthquake in 1963.

After the years passed by we were very happy for you when you retired and eventually went to live in Spain. I hope someone will be finishing your book on costume which I know was a project close to your heart.

Ken, you were such a good friend, talented in so many ways and we had wonderful times together. We'll miss you but we treasure such good memories.

Joan sends her love as do I.

Simon

Jelenka – North Norfolk Balkan Dancing

Jelenka began in February 2005 on an inauspiciously snowy day, but nonetheless a dozen dancers braved the weather to come to the first session. I chose the name Jelenka (pronounced ‘yelenka’) which is Croatian for little deer, for 2 reasons:

- (1) there were no other groups in the SIFD list that began with J!
- (2) I wanted to choose a name of Yugoslav origin, as my love of Balkan dancing dates back to my first encounters with Serbian folk dance, while on a SerboCroat language course in Belgrade while I was a student.

Since moving to Norfolk 20 years ago I had been a regular dancer with Norwich International Folk dance group, but the round trip of 50 miles was often not possible in winter weather, so I decided to try setting up a group in my home village of Hempton.

We are lucky to meet in a lovely light and airy hall with a good sprung wooden floor and rural views onto the bowling green and Hempton Common. Our regular dancers come not only from the nearby town of Fakenham and surrounding villages, but many drive from Kings Lynn area, and some from Norwich and even Wisbech and Diss. Over the years the group has developed a regular core of keen dancers, but also has a wide ranging e-mail list of 70 members who come at least occasionally.

The emphasis is on coming along to enjoy the music and dancing and beginners are always welcome. We have not done costumed performances but have several times given demonstrations where we invited the public to join us; this is a good way of promoting what we do, and we have been invited to venues such as the local High School and Pensthorpe nature reserve. Last year we also held a very successful Balkan dance session at Cromer Folk Festival with live music from the band Zaramo.



(Balkan dance weekend)

Each year we have had at least one evening dance with live music from local musicians including Zaramo and also Cakes & Ale – a lively bunch of students from the UEA in Norwich. We are lucky to have a local female a cappella singing group – the Balkanettes who have treated us to their beautiful singing at most of our summer evening dances. In June 2009 we were delighted to have a last minute guest appearance from Dessi Stefanova together with a group of young singers she was coaching on a course in the nearby village of Castle Acre.

Guest teachers, funded by the SIFD fees scheme, have provided many memorable and enjoyable workshops. Our regular December workshop held between Christmas and New Year is now a popular event on the Norfolk dancing calendar and we have usually had one other workshop in the spring or summer as well. The varied range of teachers who have ventured out to North Norfolk coastal areas includes: Brian Dowsett, Frank Dowling, Anne Leach, Désirée Hendriks from Amsterdam, Cathy Meunier, Iliana Bozhanova with Todor Yankov, and Mitko Petrov.

This year as reported in SIFD news, we had a first whole weekend of dance with Cindy Kelly and Adrian Pointon, run in conjunction with Brian Steere who has a Circle dance group in Hempton and Wells–next-the-sea. With the Saturday given to Balkan dancing and the Sunday to circle dancing, it gave many dancers a chance to experience the others' world.



Our repertoire consists of over 200 dances learned not only from our visiting teachers, but also from my travels to various dance courses around the country. Several of our most popular dances come from the teaching of Yves Moreau, Tineke van Geel and Jan Knoppers.

Visitors are always welcome to our regular dance sessions, monthly on Saturday afternoons 2pm – 4.30pm at Hempton Memorial Hall, near Fakenham. It is a friendly sociable group with the added attraction of tea and homemade cake in the break! Last year I was invited to run a small beginners group in a nearby village which has now become a regular event, held usually on the second Wednesday of the month at 6.30pm. This group is now also meeting at Hempton Memorial Hall. For more information on dates please contact me on 01328 856582 or dawnwakefield@btinternet.co

Dawn Wakefield (teacher and organiser of Jelenka)



Nenad Bićanić

Barlow IFDG and the Derbyshire Dancers are pleased to announce that their next dance course weekend will be on March 17th and 18th 2012. The teacher will be Nenad Bićanić, who will be well-known to older members. He taught two outstanding Summer Schools for us, one in Swansea and one in Edinburgh.

Ken Ward had met Nenad in Zagreb and introduced him to Frank Dowling and Francis Feybli, and then Nenad came to Swansea to work for Jack Richardson. He had danced with the group Ivan Goran-Kovačić, and later formed his own group in Sisak. They came to the UK in 1976, for the Teesside Eisteddfod, and won first prize.

What is remarkable about Nenad's dancing is his grasp of style, which enables him to teach dances from the other regions of the former Yugoslavia as well as the different regions of Croatia. I remember some lovely dances from the coast and the islands.

This will be our 12th weekend, and the others have been very well attended, so an early booking is advisable! Application forms and all details from:

Julie Korth, Holly Cottage, off Wigan Rd.

Aspull, Nr Wigan WN2 1EF

(s.a.e, please)

Tel: 01942 831141

Marina Wolstenholme

(I am grateful to Frank Dowling for additional information)

History of English & Scottish Dancing

The history of English and Scottish dancing explains some of the issues Geoff Weston raised in November's NEWS on page 13; I have no knowledge of Manx dancing. The revival of English folk dancing was the work of Cecil Sharp whose first book of Country Dances published in 1909 were of the traditional dances collected from villages. Over the next 12 years he produced 4 more books reproducing the ballroom dances published by Playford from 1651 to 1728 that gave the music and names of the figures, but not how to execute them. "Sides all" was interpreted as Siding, a crossing over with partner passing left shoulder and returning right shoulder, but subsequently Pat Shaw thought it was more likely to be a flirtatious movement of going shoulder to shoulder with your partner and returning to places. Sharp provided a demonstration of his Country Dances in Glasgow where the Scots were favourably impressed and wondered about their own dances. Classically trained Jean Milligan undertook to resurrect the Scottish dances, but modified the style that was more appropriate to the ballrooms than the traditional settings they came from. Subsequently she was cofounder of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society and I understand she rigidly controlled their dances; the style continuing to present times. Many people now, including myself enjoying Scottish dancing, but would not meet her standards. Whilst Sharp specified how various steps were to be executed, he did not specify detailed foot positions. Only some of his dances specify the steps to be used and his general notes say "that it is not necessary for every dancer to use the same step at the same time and the arbitrary changes of step in the course of a movement is not only permissible, but is in many cases to be commended".

Sharp's remaining book of Country Dances was the Running Set that is thought to have originated from this Country, was collected in the Southern Appalachian Mountains of America in 1917. Sharp and the EFDSS (English Folk Dance Song Society) not only taught the Country Dances, but also Morris, Long and Rapper Sword and Running Set. I have been told the American Folk Dance Society criticised the EFDSS about the Playford dances as one of the objectives in their Constitution (and the SIFD) is basically "to preserve Folk Dances, to make them known and encourage the practice of them in traditional form" and ballroom dances are not traditional. The EFDSS subsequently dropped the Playford dances and only permitted mixed couples in their Saturday night dances at their headquarters, Cecil Sharp House. I believe more women than men took up folk dancing and with the loss of many men in the two world wars, the mainly women Playford enthusiasts continued independently of the EFDSS. I believe three teachers in the London area that I came to know well were second generation Sharp disciples, took evening folk dances classes in many of the London colleges and ran day and weekend courses organised by groups around the Country. After the War the EFDSS aimed to get more people back into folk dancing, publishing the Community Dances, the traditional English dances and ones from America that included their contra dances. These are longways duple minor (two couple) sets with the first couples dancing on the opposite side and called 'improper'. A characteristic of many traditional dances is stepping that has generally been ignored. There was a boost to the number of folk dancers following the media showing Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh Square Dancing during their 1951 Canadian tour.

The social dancing in Scotland before the formation of the Country Dance Society and 1914 was researched by Tom and Joan Flett, most dances being obtained from people recalling what they did in their earlier days. Like the English traditional dances many of these involved stepping on the spot and travelling and were known as Reels, an old meaning of the word that appears in the names of many dances. Their first book, Traditional Dancing in Scotland by J.T. and T.M. Flett was published in 1964. They had a demonstration team in Liverpool, the Marlowe Scottish Dancers and much of their knowledge was also passed on to the RT&SDG (Reading Traditional & Step Dance Group) who collected steps and step dances with others in England. The RT&SDG sought out past step dancers and got them dancing again. They performed the Traditional dances of England and Scotland and passed on their knowledge through workshops. A number of step and clog dancers were filmed in sufficient detail to enable their steps to be reconstructed. This group generally known to by their informal name of Reading Cloggies were active in the revival of Clog dancing. Although giving workshops themed with 'Putting the Stepping Back into Step Dancing', this did not catch on and Step Dancing is largely unknown in England and Scotland these days. The Group ceased to function 10 years ago after nearly 40 years. Traditional dances, generally without stepping thrive in England, but in Scotland they were not revived and remain largely unknown having been supplanted by the style of the now Royal SCDS. Traditional dances were not defined and could evolve in their execution in different locations and with

the passage of time although people who emigrate tend to keep their home customs going with very little evolution even if they did not do them in their homeland. I wonder if Scottish dancing is now more popular in the south of England than Scotland. When traditional dances are collected, published and taught by the EFDSS and others they become fixed in their execution. Sharp revived the Morris dances and most revival teams basically kept true to the published traditions of the villages they originated from, but there are minor variations in the way the revival teams perform the dances. Latterly, after the Sexual Equality Act when many women formed teams to dance in public, many of them danced completely new figures. A similar situation has occurred with the Country dances. Dances from other collections have been added to the Playford ones, more traditional dances have been collected and people have made up dances in these styles. Dances have been made up differing from past conventions; Pat Shaw's Levi Jackson has 2 couples facing 2 couples with a 5th couple at the head of the set, Polka Dot involves 5 individuals and is probably a reinvention of the Five Hand Reels of the old traditional dances. There is now the Scottish Heptathlon Jig with 7 individuals, 3 facing 3 and 1 in the middle.

Back in Playford's time the aristocratic single young ladies were chaperoned and the dances were the only chance for couples to talk out of earshot of the chaperon, hence dances where couples were not active for much of the time were in vogue. The longways triple minor, with the long set divided into minor sets of 3 couples was popular as the first couples were often the main active ones and moved down the set one place each round, the others moving up one place, and dancing alternately as 2s and 3s. At the ends of the set the couples have to stand out for 3 rounds before they joining in the reverse direction. With the passing of chaperons, these dances have fallen from popularity. Some of these dances that can easily be modified are now danced as 3 couple sets. The late Tom Cook introduced another modification of some dances making the first couple progress 3 places each round, there is never any neutral couples at the top of the set and if the whole set is a multiple of 3 couples there are no neutral couples at the bottom. I am not aware this arrangement has been widely adopted yet. Many of the Scottish dances are triple minors, but they are danced in 4 couple sets, the first couple after the second time through have to go to the bottom of the set. The dance is played 8 times through, everybody dances twice in each position and they are neutral once at the top and bottom of the set.

My only experience of a traditional dance in context was on holiday with two friends in Scotland in my very much younger days. We arrived at dusk and people were swigging from bottles in parked cars around the hall in a desolated location on South Uist. The only two organisers, a man taking the money at the door, and, a piano accordion player with foot operated percussion who called the names of the dances - no instructions or walk through. All the dancers were probably teenagers with girls sitting on one side of the hall and boys on the other, but they did mingle as the evening progressed. One 4 couple square dance, the Eightsome Reel involves a slipping ring left and right with 7 or 8 people, danced 18 times. This is done moving smartly left and right to a phrase of music, but not on that occasion in South Uist. The ring gradually accelerated up to speed that was maintained for some time before gradually slowing down to a halt and then repeating in the reverse direction. No concept of fitting it to a phrase of music. When sets finished they sat down, I was in the last set to finish and then the musician stopped playing. Whilst I would like to think Jean Milligan did not get to South Uist or they told her where to go, I reckon it was a new generation who had probably never heard of Jean Milligan

My teachers regarded Sharp's instructions as the law and would not consider any variation although I am now aware that a few changes were made in the early days to improve the dances and these were incorporated in later editions of Sharp's books. I think enough time has passed for Sharp's Playford dances to now to be accepted as a living tradition although due to the demise in the middle of the last century there are very few of us now to pass this on. The written instructions can leave some aspects unclear and without experience of the tradition may be interpreted in a different way.

I am not clear what Geoff meant by "There is no equivalent to Highland dancing in English . . ." On the same basis I am not aware that Scotland has the equivalent of Morris dancing that includes solo jigs, Clog dancing, although one dance came from there, Rapper and Long Sword dances (the swords are not weapons, the Rapper sword having a handle at both ends) although Scotland has Dirk dances representing fighting. My introduction to Folk dancing was a school Morris club where we learnt the Bacca Pipes jig that is danced over a pair of crossed Church Warden (long stemmed) clay pipes. We were informed this was more skilled than the Scots dancing over crossed swords since if you step on a clay pipe it shatters, but if you step on a sword you could only cut your feet.

John Walford

Dance and Cultural Tours to Romania 2012

28th April – 5th May Tulcea–Dobrogea (Dobrudja) (and the Danube Delta) €765.-
22nd – 29th September Tulcea–Dobrogea (Dobrudja) (and the Danube Delta) € 765.-

The prices include:

Transfer from Bucharest to final destination and return. Half board in a luxury hotel*** (breakfast and lunch or dinner, depending on daily programme) in a double bedroom with bath/shower and toilet. Free entry to swimming pool, sauna, jacuzzi and fitness studio. Single supplement: €126.-Dance lessons accompanied by live music. Excursions by touring-car and boat. Participation in a variety of activities such as: meeting and dancing with dance ensembles, visiting museums, village festivities, etc. Free entrance to the museums and exhibitions named in the programme.

Not included:

Return-flight to Bucharest, airport and security taxes.

Cancellation and travel insurances (you are requested to make personal arrangements).

We also organize journeys for private groups

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Makfolk Association 2012 Festivals

1. International children's folk dance festival "Hanioti 2012" (May) –Hanioti, Greece 15-20 May 2012
2. International Veteran's Folk –Dance Festival "Ohrid Waves" –Ohrid, Macedonia 14-17 June 2012
3. International Folk Festival "Mare Adriatico" –Lido Di Jesolo, Italy 17-22 June 2012
4. International Folk Dance Festival "Alegria" –Callela, Spain 23-30 June 2012
5. International children's folk dance festival "Varna 2012" –Varna, Bulgaria 30 June-05 July 2012
6. International Children's Folk –Dance Festival "Ohrid Waves" –Ohrid, Macedonia 26-30 July 2012
7. International children's folk dance festival "Hanioti 2012" –Hanioti, Greece 25-30 September 2012

www.makfolk.com.mk or FaceBook page <http://www.facebook.com/Makfolk>



HIFD 40th Anniversary Dance - 11th August 2012

Hursley International Folk Dancers will be celebrating their 40th anniversary next year.

We would like to invite all our dancing friends (and especially past members and guest teachers) to join us for a Day of Dance culminating in an evening dance with live music on Saturday 11th August 2012 at Otterbourne Village Hall (near Winchester).

More details nearer the time, but please put the date in your diary.

Rob Wilks



Balkanplus

The December Balkanplus will be held on the 10th December 2011 at Cecil Sharp House, Camden NW1 7AY, starting at 7.00pm. MC for the evening will be Maggie O'Regan. Admission £5.

NOTE: Maggie will be holding a run through of some of the evening dances starting at 6.00pm - all welcome - and will be part of the evening admission fee.

Maureen Felton

Fandango

Allegro Basque

9 C G7 C
18 G7 C G7 C
27 G7 C G C
35 Cm G7 Cm
43 Cm Fm Cm G7 Cm

"Wilf Horrocks' Collection"

NB Next month the English Fandango. Ed.



Dancing in the USA and Canada

The brief note from Janet last month about the Ontario Folk Dancers reminded me of my visits to the USA and Canada between 1989 and 1995. My work involved a conference in North America at the end of October, in a different city every year. I always found a folk dance group to visit, with help from SIFD members. Every group was very welcoming and the repertoire was not all that different from our own in the UK.

I have joined in classes in Scandinavian dance in Mill Valley, California, English country dancing in Dallas, International dance at MIT in Boston and taught some Israeli dances in Nova Scotia. These classes and a social dance in Boston were just like our events in the UK, although people seemed to be more forthcoming with requests than we are used to here.

Being part of a worldwide network is one of the benefits of Folk Dance. I have met some of the people from those groups since - in Sweden on a dance course, and at dance camp in California and they have told friends about us, so when they are in the UK they can visit our dance groups.

The SIFD subscribes to the Society of Folk Dance Historians in the USA, and they send us a directory of their members, we also have information from groups and festivals in Europe.

Just one warning: "Costume" at Halloween in Toronto does NOT mean folk costumes – see the picture



Jeannette Hull

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)

December 4th, Christmas Dance. MCs - Pam Radford and Maggie O'Regan.

This is sure to be a great evening as Pam and Maggie are a great team and both have a wide repertoire. The Christmas dance has a lovely atmosphere.

January 8th 2012 MCs: the SIFD Committee.



WHAT'S ON IN DECEMBER

- S.I **Friday. 9th** **BARNET CHRISTMAS PARTY** with music by Dunav Balkan Group. 8pm at Church House, Wood Street, Barnet, Herts. EN5 4BW £5.00 An orgy of music, dance, food, wine and revelry. That's the plan. More information? Phone Brian on 01992 582717
- S.I **Saturday 10th** **BALKANPLUS** see page 13
- S.I **Saturday 10th** **W MIDS BRANCH CHRISTMAS DANCE** 7.30 - 10.30 at Solihull Methodist Church Hall Blossomfield Rd, Solihull B91 1LG (B4102, by Solihull stations, near M42 Jn 5) MC Maggie K with the Heart of England Band. Bring-and-share supper. £5
- S.I **Friday 16th** **RAINMAKERS CHRISTMAS PARTY** 8-11 at St. Michael's Parish Hall, Broadway, Letchworth, SG6 3PQ. £2.50. Please bring a plate of food to share. More info from Mark 01462 454210 or Jill 01462 457791
- Thursday 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
- S.I **Friday 30th** **EMILY NISBET BALKAN DANCE WORKSHOP** - Hempton Memorial Hall, near Fakenham, North Norfolk NR21 7LG 11am - 4.30pm. £11 in advance, £12.50 on the day including refreshments, please bring food for shared lunch. For bookings and further information contact Dawn 01328 856582 dawnwakefield@btinternet.com

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All material for the January issue of the SIFD NEWS must be received by the Editor
IN WRITING by **15th December**, emails by **14th December**.



Dunford Weekend

There will be a dancing/walking weekend at Dunford House (near Midhurst) from the 16th to 18th December 2011.

For many people this is a regular date in their diary but if you haven't been before then a warm welcome awaits you with friendly staff – a log fire and Christmas tree in the lounge. Dancing will be led by Janet Woolbar on Friday and Saturday evenings and on Sunday afternoon.

The lovely Sussex countryside offers interesting walks – to build up your appetite for the good food which includes traditional Christmas dinner on Saturday evening.

If you want to know more please ring me on 020 8540 3464

Dot Bradbury