THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING



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APRIL 2014

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Packaging, posting and electronic distribution is done by Dalila Heath.

Sadly, two of our very long standing members have died, Irene Fyffe (who was member No.9) and Edwina Holdup (a past member of the News team) - see pages 6-7. They were both Honorary members of the Society.

The front cover with the SIFD logo was designed by Judith Payling.



SIFD Monthly Dance at Cecil Sharp House

13th April 7pm - 10pm £8

If you are not running in the London Marathon but feel the need for some exercise why not join Fiona Howarth for an evening of dancing on Sunday 13th April. Fiona has promised that she will provide a programme of accessible and enjoyable dances which should be much more fun than running 26 miles.

The dance in May is on Sunday 11th and will be led by the SIFD Band.

Anne Maddocks

Ed.



SIFD Summer School update.

As you may already know, the next SIFD Summer School will be held from the 8th-15th August 2015 at Swansea University. We are very close to revealing who our 3 wonderful teachers are going to be and I'm sure you are as excited as I am! Bookings will also be opening soon, so keep your eyes on the News to find out all the details.

If you have never been to a Summer School before, why not take a look at our website where you can find the programme and pictures from 2012's event. 2015 is shaping up to be the best Summer School yet so it's a great time to come along and see why so many people love it!

Naomi Ryder

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

May 2-5 EASTBOURNE FOLK DANCE FESTIVAL 01823 401271. £90 weekend ticket.

- S.I May 2-5 HALSWAY SIFD LONG WEEKEND see page 12.
- S.I May 10 BALKANPLUS MC will be Fiona Howarth
- S.I May 16 AN EVENING WITH LIZ MELLISH & NICK GREEN hosted by Rainmakers International Folk Dance Group. Dances from Eastern Europe; 8-10.30pm at St Michael's Parish Hall, Broadway, Letchworth, SG6 3PQ. £5.00 for the evening. More details from Mark (01462 454210).
- S.I May 24 ANOTHER DAY OF MOSTLY RUSSIAN DANCES at Stone Cross Memorial Hall nr Eastbourne BN24 5EH. 10.30-4.30 £10 Packed lunch, drinks provided. Booking appreciated: Rowena Martin 01323 503991 or rowenahmartin@hotmail.com.
- S.I Jun.7 BRIAN DOWSETT COMES TO DERBYSHIRE Dance workshop with Brian Dowsett in Calver Village Hall S32 3XR. Details from Greg Boyd on 07810181273 or Janet King 0162957065 email gregboyd99@aol.com or j.king194@btinternet.com
- S.I Jun.14 BALKANPLUS MC will be Emily Nisbet
- S.I Jul. 29-Aug. 4 DANCE BY THE SEA! Residential dance holiday with Turgay Onatli Turkish, and Dimitar Petrov (Mitko) Bulgarian folk dance. Ensuite hotel accomm. DB&B plus lunch, award winning chef, outdoor pool, Torquay. £460 / £495 6-night dance course; £370 non-dancing friends & family. Options for the 1st part (Tues- Fri) or the weekend (Fri-Mon). Send s.a.e. to Cathy Meunier, 23, Church St. Keswick, Cumbria CA12 4DX or email cathy_meunier@hotmail.com

Aug. 22-25 WILLINGDON IFDG MINI FESTIVAL of International and English Folk Dance, Circle Dance and singing at Plumpton College near Lewes. £160 full board. Contact Rowena Martin, 60 Anderida Road, Eastbourne BN22 0PZ; 01323 503991 or rowenahmartin@hotmail.com.

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Fee includes room, 3 meals daily (breakfast and lunch on Monday), coffee breaks, evening snacks, art supplies, and tuition.

Applications: Sheryl Demetro, 121 Sexton Cres., Toronto, Ontario M2H 2L7 416-493-3815 cdemetn625@rogers.com

Aug 23-30. 7 NIGHT INTERN'L FOLK DANCE COURSE led by

Phil & Brenda Steventon. Dancing in the morning and evening. Afternoons free at HF Holidays, Malhamdale, North Yorkshire, BD23 4AA. Details ring HF on 0845 470 7558 or Phil & Brenda on 020 8397 9649

S.I Nov.15-16 BALKANPLUS CAUCASIAN WORKSHOPS with

Tineke and Maurits van Geel at Cecil Sharp House. The weekend includes the Dunay 50th Anniversary Party. For full details visit www.balkanplus.org.uk or phone Maureen on 01473 272256 or Brian on 01992 582717

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.



Ontario Folk Dance Camp

Friday May 16 at 9:00 p.m. - Monday May 19 after lunch.

Lucia Cordeiro - Brazilian dance.

Sheila Scott - English and Scottish dance

Demetri Tashie - Greek

The University of Waterloo is in the heart of Mennonite country, close to the famous Kitchener Farmer's Market.

It is approximately 100 km. west of Toronto.

Accommodation: We are in Village 2, a modern building with adequate facilities.

Children under 12 years of age may use sleeping bags in parents' room at a reduced rate.

Ontario Folk Dance Camp 2014 Fee:

Single Room \$425.00

Double Room \$375.00

Irene Fyffe

It was very sad to hear that Irene Fyffe had died. She was an Honorary Member of the Society and very prominent in the early days and was possibly a founder member.

She was sister to Bert Price who was Chairman for many years and who was responsible for moving the Society forward in the post-war era and who will be remembered for instituting the proficiency award scheme.



In the 1950's, when weekly dances were held on Sunday nights at the Inns of Court Mission in Drury Lane, Irene was always there and we remember her teaching at the school in Hortensia Road in Chelsea where the Society held many classes.

She was, for some time, the Demonstration Secretary.

We remember her particularly, with her husband Ken, dancing with the Polish Opoczno Group which was formed when Zuitek Walczek left the Mazowsze Group who were playing in London.

(the photo shows Irene and Ken in Polish costume) We extend our deepest sympathy to Ken.

Joan & Simon Guest

Edwina Holdup

Edwina, wife of Michael Edwin died peacefully on 28th February. Sadly, the ravages of vascular dementia had been gradually taking her away from us for the last seven years.

Michael and Edwina were made honorary life members of the Society in appreciation of their service over many years as an important link in a chain of people who co-ordinated the pieces every month to get SIFD News to all members. No small job.

Michael and Edwina regularly danced in London and away in the '50s' and '60s'. Later, Michael's delicate back caused a change to mostly English dancing instead, but both still enjoyed SIFD weekends away. Many will hope that Michael continues to do so and in the meantime send sympathy for his loss over the last few years and now.

Mavis Sayers



Swedish Day Courses 12th and 13th April

Scandia, the Scandinavian dance group is bringing Tommy & Ewa Englund from Sweden, highly respected as teachers and judges in Sweden having taught in the U.S.A., Japan and the UK. Sat.12 April turning couple dances, polskas and related dances.

The two daytime workshops will start at 10 am and 2:30 pm and will be at the Primrose Hill Community Association, 29 Hopkinsons Place, off Fitzroy Road, London NW1 8TN.

The evening programme will be at Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regents Park Road, London NW1 7AY. Beginning at 7:30 pm with a short teaching session followed by a general Scandi dance and some demonstrations from the teachers.

The costs for the day will be £7 for each workshop and for the evening dance, £6(conc) and £18 for the full day, £16 (conc). The workshop on Sunday 13 April will be at Cecil Sharp House at 2pm and will be intended for general international dancers. They will teach some of the figure dances and if participants are interested, some teaching of Hambo. This will be an official SIFD workshop. The cost is £8. There will be a general International dance in the evening

Jeanette Hull

Seminar in Traditional Greek Dance Music

I used to listen to Greek fiddle players and wonder how they made their distinctive sound. Was it something I could learn and if so how could I find a teacher? A couple of years ago Adrian Pointon suggested to me that I attend a seminar of traditional Greek music given by Kostantis Kourmadias. The seminar was to take place in conjunction with a dance event given by Laura Shannon. I can honestly say that attending that seminar opened up a whole new world to me.

Kostantis is a master fiddle player but his instrument of choice is the saz – the traditional instrument still ubiquitous in Turkey but which in Greece has largely been replaced by the bouzouki. He has placed the saz with its distinctive tuning and system of scales at the heart of the repertoire of traditional Greek songs and tunes he teaches in his seminars and then put these at the disposal of dancers.

The seminar is for musicians who are already skilled with their instrument and wish to explore the principles of authentic Greek traditional music. Most instruments are welcome. Students will learn about dromos or makam (scale, literally 'road') in Greek traditional music, taxim (improvisation), drone, quarter tones, tuning in fifths and fourths, structuring a tune, and traditional rhythms for dancing. Optional private lessons (violin, saz, voice, percussion) before or after the seminar may also be arranged.

Before each of the seminars I have attended I have received a pack of music recordings, music transcriptions, song words and translations. The seminars are conducted in good English with great skill and good humour. The repertoire for each seminar has comprised a varied selection dance rhythms and styles which has then been played for dancing at a final party.

The only seminar in the UK this year will take place in Findhorn from July 8th to 10th. Full details are available from www.laurashannon.net or laura@laurashannon.net

Mike Machin



A photo seen so often – the follow-up

Following the publication of this item in the March News a number of replies have been received, giving information. Thank you to those who took the trouble to reply. This is what they said.

The photograph was taken by Barry Shapcott, a member of the Merton Park Group. It was taken especially for the cover of the Twelve Circle Dances EP set, in about 1978. The gathering was arranged specially for the photograph.

Participants and costumes have been identified. (Hopefully all the identifications are correct – sorry for any errors)



Front row (starting from left) Johnny Eistrat in Estonian Phil Steventon in Swedish Karin Eistrat in Estonian Janet Woolbar (in Swedish?)

Back row (starting from left) Alan Cant, Sue....., Sue and Dave McKie (from Woodvale Group) in German or Austrian. The twin daughters of Danish teacher Gaye Saunte in Danish.

A temporary member of the Zivko Firfov Group, his name forgotten, but a native of Skopje, in Macedonia, at that time in Yugoslavia. His costume is from Skopje.

Ruzica White, a native Yugoslav, at that time a member of the Zivko Firfov Group, in a costume from Bitola, in Macedonia, Yugoslavia. Janice Wrench in Polish.

Tony Latham in Polish.

Gregory Horrocks (son of Wilf and Frances) in French (Berry region). Timothy Guest (son of Simon and Joan) in French (Berry region). A daughter of Doug and Maureen Wells in French (Berry region).

Judith Payling

My recent journey with Jota Aragonesa

In November 2013 I was contacted by a final year dance student from Roehampton university. For her dissertation she chose to work on Jota Aragonesa. Jacqueline is half Spanish and knew this would delight her Spanish grandparents.

She started her search for someone to teach her the dance. She tried various Spanish dance groups in London and nearby with no success and finally found that the Iberian Folk Dance & Music Society was the only group that did this dance. She had already gathered all her information about the dance and the genres of Jota and Folk dance from the internet, and from various books including those of Lucille Armstrong. She found the latter of great interest and was excited to learn that Lucille had been one of the first teachers of our group. She also found videos of the dance on the internet and discovered there were different versions. From her studies she had learnt that there could be variations from village to village - and over the years. She also believed that learning the dance and not only about the dance would provide more insight into the dance.

This dance was in our repertoire up to about ten years ago when some of our dancers were still able to do 'jumping' dances with a degree of agility. I learnt it about sixteen years ago when I joined the group. (How time flies!)

I have always loved a challenge so decided to teach her. This meant finding the old video with some of our past dancers performing it and studying the notes again. I then started to relearn the dance. It certainly was strenuous.

Finally we met on 26th November and 10th December. Being very young and a full-time dance student, she learnt very quickly and danced it very well. I gave her the music CD and the notes. She was also very excited about it and loved the dance.

Our group was doing a performance for the French, Italian and Spanish Society in Ickenham on December 13th and I invited her to do this dance with me. As we were doing Andalucian and Mallorcan dances, the Jota Aragonesa would provide more variety. We would wear the proper costumes and I would dress as a man. The dance was very well received after a rather humorous start. Jacqueline had learnt the first and last Mallorcan dances also and I told her to change after the first Mallorcan dance so as to be ready for when I returned from my 3 minute quick change. We would then do the Jota followed by the last Mallorcan dance.

I returned after my quick change and received a big cheer and clapping when I entered as a man. I walked forward to start the dance but she was not there. I had to mention I had lost my partner, make a quick exit and run upstairs to find her - again to cheering and clapping.

She had been enjoying watching our dances and forgot to leave and change costume. I, on the other hand was busy dancing and didn't notice her still there. It was about three minutes before we were back in the hall. Again we had cheering and she explained why she was doing that dance. More clapping followed and by now I was feeling like 18 and not 78. I jumped far too much and too high but felt fine - then. The dance was a great success.

The dance was supposed to be filmed by the young man who interviewed several people at Dance Around The World last year. He works for the BBC, ITV and Channel 4. He is planning to do some short dance films especially about older people teaching their dances to younger people. So he was particularly interested in me teaching Jacqueline. However, he lost his way and turned up after we had done the dance.

We three went off on our respective Christmas holidays and met up in January to do the filming. This needed more practice beforehand and danced three times for the filming. Having the DVD of the dance also enhances her dissertation.

On 17th February she interviewed me at her home, asking questions about the dance. This was recorded by her. I met her three fellow dance flatmates, all working on their dissertations.

I am still left with aches and pains in my hamstrings - getting better all the time but a reminder to not overwork a 'mature' body. However, we may do Jotas for DATW 2014!

Halsway Weekend

At a music workshop I attended recently, a number of references were made to Halsway Manor, the lovely 600-year old Somerset-shire manor house of red sandstone in the shelter of the Quantocks. It clearly holds a very special place in the folk dance and music world, and in the best of traditions means many different things to many people - not surprising really, given the range of courses on offer there. For me, though, the name conjours up thoughts of spring, as I have mostly visited Halsway for the long weekend of international folk dancing interspersed with walking and general relaxation over the early May bank holiday weekend. Some of my many memories over the years since my first visit in 1985 include:

- Learning from Wilf Horrocks the fun of playing tunes in such a variety of key signatures that my first accordion didn't have enough buttons, and the challenge of tunes with more than 4 beats to a bar (especially those with an odd number of beats!)
- Walks long and short: up or down steep combes, along the ridge of the Quantocks, across dramatic Exmoor land-scapes, through picturesque Allerford and Watersmeet, down to Stogumber station on the West Somerset Railway, and many more. I particularly remember one walk from my earliest visit where we had to find an alternative route because a footpath had been blocked, and being impressed that Jack Richardson was encouraging us all to write to the local Rights of Way officer with the grid reference to try to get the proper route reinstated.
- Sheep and lambs, Exmoor ponies and their foals, a cuckoo calling (often the first I hear each year), and of course, the Halsway rooks! My only encounter to date with an adder a baby one coiled up asleep in the sunshine in the middle of the path with beautiful markings and far too tiny to do anyone any harm though we took care not to disturb him!
- A riot of blossom and spring flowers everywhere all along the verges, in cottage gardens, and spilling over stone walls. Primroses, violets, red campion, eyebright, wild orchids along the lane, fruit blossom and the handkerchief tree in Halsway orchard ...

• The scent of the log fire in the entrance-hall if it is chilly, and sitting outside on the terrace in the sunshine when the weather is warm.

Just add dancing to all this and you have a very special weekend which can be as energetic or as relaxing as you choose it to be. We dance on Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings (plus Monday evening for anyone staying on until Tuesday) and all Monday afternoon up until Cream Tea time, and have been known to add extra dance sessions if the weather is inclement and only a hardy few people are keen to walk. Janet is adept at creating programmes which include people's requests for favourite dances or dances they want to learn, plus introducing us to new dances. We usually find time for some maypole dancing on the lawn, as well.

To book for the SIFD weekend (2nd-5th May 2014), contact Gordon Adie:- email *grdnadie@aol.com* or tel: 01872 260517. Information about and photos of Halsway Manor: *http://www.halswaymanor.org.uk*

Stella Wentworth



Arku Dantza

I enjoyed seeing the photo on the back page of the last newsletter. It brought back happy memories of our Watford group doing a whole session of Basque dances - the one shown must be Arku Dantza because of the hoops.

I found more photos in an old album - we also danced Zozo Dantza / Baston Dantza and Makil Tikki (with sticks) - our team was also graced with some men (complete with red berets) including Ed Whitely, Frank Flanagan and Peter Long. Those dances took a lot of practise and energy and we certainly don't dance any of them now. I wonder if any other groups do Basque dances or whether any are recorded on video for future reference - they are quite special and it would be extremely sad for them to disappear. Thanks for the memory!

Meryl Abraham

Proposal for helping new groups to "get started"

It is proposed that SIFD funds and assistance should be made available to help new groups get started.

It is recognised that the initial costs of setting up a new group and the running costs during the period in which a group becomes established can be prohibitive. A scheme is therefore proposed under which, as appropriate, the SIFD offers assistance.

The offer

- The hire of a room for the first term or agreed period can be subsidised
- A contribution can be made to local publicity costs
- The new group will be offered ten hours free teaching (as under the free-to-groups scheme) in its first year
- Cover under the SIFD insurance policy for the first year
- The group will be entitled monthly SIFD Newsletters for the first year
- If advice is needed we will endeavour to assist in the form of advice and suggestions from experienced Group leaders.

On the proposed group's part.....

- Anyone wishing to start a new group with the help of support under this scheme must be a member of the SIFD.
- The organiser would be required to declare their support for the Society's aims and interests, (as justification for the spending of SIFD funds).
- The group is required to acknowledge in its publicity the SIFD's assistance.

Please note:

- The scheme can be withdrawn at any time
- All applications will be considered on their own merits
- Payments to or in reimbursement of third parties can made only when supported by appropriate paperwork
- In support of an application details of proposals, and expected costs and income will be required.

If you are thinking of starting a group, and this scheme is appropriate and of interest, please **ask for an Application Form from a committee member, or by email to mail@sifd.org** Dear Editor,

When I was 15 years old, I read about the Outward Bound organisation and the exciting courses for young people that they ran. I wrote off to apply, only to receive a letter saying that they did not run courses for girls. I wrote to the Times protesting and had my letter published. The policy was changed. A few years later, I was protesting again about the exclusion of women from the Mountaineering Club men only huts (I had to camp in a tent outside when I went climbing). This too was changed so that climbers of either gender could use the huts. All my life I have been active in combating unfair discrimination – on gender grounds or ethnicity.

It is with this background that I am disturbed to read, in the SIFD news, advertisements for dance events where gender specificity is a condition of booking. Dancers are dancers, and should not be excluded from a course or event by their gender. It would be different perhaps, if the dances themselves were categorised in the advertisement as traditional or newly choreographed women's dances. Then dancers of a male gender could decide for themselves whether they wish to learn them, and, as we all know, many do learn and dance them.

The equality law states that "unless your services are covered by one of the exceptions to equality law, your advertisement must not tell people that, because of a particular protected characteristic, they cannot use the service, or would not be welcome to use the service, or would receive worse terms in using the service." A protected characteristic would include gender. I would ask therefore whether there is any policy on accepting such discriminatory advertisements and, if so, the grounds for any such decision to allow them?

Yours sincerely,

Gill Wakley

There is no policy to allow discriminatory advertisements - I will police things better in future. **Ed.**





Mistrín Czardas

The czardas from Mistrín is danced to a popular song from the south-eastern part of Moravia, near the Slovak border. Indeed the area is called Moravian Slovakia. It is arguably the richest and most attractive region in the Czech republic as far as folk culture is concerned. The village of Mistrín is only a couple of miles from the town of Kyjov – and the Kyjov folk costumes (especially the ladies') are considered to be the most beautiful, colourful and intricately embroidered in the whole country.

The tune can be sung in the march tempo and, indeed, when as a young man I was still living in Czechoslovakia and was conscripted in the army, that song very often lightened our steps on long marches. The song starts with a question: Who is going to sing this song? And the answer is: The jolly party from Mistrín, they will sing it with all their hearts while crossing the fields on the way to the local hop to meet the girls.

I not only marched to the tune, I have danced to it, as well. Strangely enough, it did not happen on any folkloristic occasion in the Czech Republic, but at several 19th century "Hapsburg" balls in Vienna. With its moderate tempo, comparing to the fiery Hungarian and Slovak czardas tunes, it always was a welcomed enlivenment among all the waltzes, polkas, mazurkas and quadrilles.

A couple of years ago I introduced the Mistrínská Cardáš (the Czech spelling) in our Fleet club, but due to a lot of other attractive dances to cope with this czardas temporarily (I hope) fell into oblivion.

Dal Sudwell



The (very old) picture opposite shows a Czechoslovakian boy in costume. **Ed.**





"Wilf Horrocks' Collection"

Avramenca from Romania will be featured next month.



SIFD Shop Clearance Sale

Over the years we have received many generous and kind donations of items to sell to raise funds for the SIFD. They have been displayed at Sunday dances and at Summer School. This spring is the last chance to make an offer on many of the items.

We have a few T Shirts and Polo Shirts with SIFD designs, a large number of costume dolls, of very varied quality and sizes, and a few other items such as notelets and souvenirs.

If you think you might be interested in any of the items email Jeanette, she will send photos. (jeanettehull@blueyonder.co.uk)

Storage of all these items is becoming a problem, so unsold items will be disposed of in July.

We also have collections of books, that are yet to be sorted and catalogued. Some will be kept in the SIFD archives and the rest offered for sale to members later this year.

Jeanette Hull



SIFD Committee

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mail@SIFD.org - please use this address as the SIFD contact for non members and when a quick response matters - a committee member checks this mailbox every day, while personal emails may not be accessed when the addressee is working or away.



Tommy & Ewa Englund

Swedish Day Course

WHAT'S ON IN APRIL

- S.I Sat. 5th–Sun.6th BIANCA DE JONG Balkan Workshop in Manchester & Calver, details: Julie Korth: Holly Cottage, off Wigan Rd, Aspull nr Wigan WN2 1EF or maryomahony3@yahoo.co.uk
- S.I Sunday 6th HELP FOR HAITI 5 at Barnham Community Hall, nr. Bognor Regis, PO22 0AX. - proceeds for St. Saviour's Priory, Haiti mission. 2 - 5.30pm. £8. 01243 265010 or www.interfolk.co.uk
- S.I Saturday 12th SWEDISH DAY COURSE see page 7
- S.I Sunday 13th SWEDISH DAY COURSE see page 7
- S.I Sunday 13th SIFD MONTHLY DANCE see page 3

Fri.11-Mon.14th 3 NIGHT INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING with walking led by Phil & Brenda Steventon. Dancing in the morning and evening. 4-5 mile afternoon walks led by an HF walking leader. at HF Holidays, Harrington House, Bourton-on-the-Water, Cheltenham, Gloucs, GL54 2BY. For details ring HF on 0845 470 7558 or Phil & Brenda on 020 8397 9649

S.I Fri. 25th--Mon.28th GREAT ALNE LONG WEEKEND Alcester, Warwickshire. Int'l dancing with Dansgroep Oostzaan; dancing, music, handbells, singing, walking and cycling. Paul Lindley: 0121 6891802 or André Hobro 0121 7773722. www.greatalnefolk.org.uk



All material for the May issue of the SIFD NEWS must be received by the Editor IN WRITING by 17th April.