

*THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIETY FOR
INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING*

SIFD NEWS



NEWS

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INFORMATION

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JUNE 2014



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

There are plenty of **International Folk Dancing Groups** that have not yet written an article about their origins, and/or their members, and/or their activities, and/or their dance choices, and/or their displays, and/or their ambitions.

Once you start writing your article you will find it takes on a life of its own, and if you throw in a couple of pictures it will be even better. The end result will give interest and information to other SIFD members, and possibly new dancers for your group.

In the same vein: there are plenty of **SIFD Teachers** who have yet to write about their dance speciality and the main characteristics of the dances from their chosen region.

I hope you're inspired, (the next few issues should be good).



Jill Bransby sent in the photo of the Portuguese group, Odiaxere from the Algarve (another one on the back page); the cover design is by Judith Payling.

Ed.



SIFD Monthly Dance at Cecil Sharp House

Saturday 7th June 7pm - 10pm £8

The dance in June is on a Saturday and will be the last monthly dance until September so make the most of this opportunity and come and join us for an evening of lively dancing to music played by the SIFD Band. Naomi Ryder will be choosing the dances and leading the evening.

We return after the summer break on Sunday September 7th.

Anne Maddocks

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Jul. 12 BALKANPLUS - will be a Requests Evening

Jul. 29-Aug. 4 DANCE BY THE SEA! 2014 Residential Summer Folk Dance holiday with Turgay Onatli - Turkish folk dance and Dimitar Petrov (known to us as Mitko) - Bulgarian folk dance. Dance course, Music Making with Maya Buckley, Singing with Turgay & Mitko, opportunities to share dances, songs, music etc. in free time Comfortable ensuite hotel accommodation, DB&B plus lunch, award winning chef, heated outdoor pool, Torquay, English Riviera. £460 / £495 residential 6-night dance course; £370 for non-dancing friends & family. Options to stay for the 1st part (Tues - Fri) or the weekend (Fri - Mon). For details and a booking form please send s.a.e. to Cathy Meunier, 23, Church Street, Keswick, Cumbria CA12 4DX or email your request to cathy_meunier@hotmail.com

Jul. 30 BALKAN INSTRUMENTAL DAY COURSE with musician Maya Buckley. 10am - 5pm Livermead House Hotel, Torquay. £30 (no charge for hotel residents on the "Dance by the Sea" holiday). All instruments welcome. Instrumentalists are invited to play for part of the social dance on Wednesday evening. Course includes an optional session on Tuesday afternoon from 3pm, and an opportunity to attend the Turkish and Bulgarian "Culture Corners" on Tuesday & Wednesday evenings. For details and a booking form please contact Cathy Meunier (see above)

S.I **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

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 **Sep. 7 SIFD MONTHLY DANCE** see page 3

S.I **Sep. 27 BALKAN DAY COURSE** with Marion Nieuwenhuizen at Nutbrook IFDG. Greenwood Community Centre, Toton, Nottingham, NG9 6LN, (Note: new venue). 10.30 am - 4.00 pm; £8, half day £5. For further information: 0115 917 1831, gill.morral@ntlworld.com

S.I **Oct. 18 WMIDS BRANCH ISRAELI DANCE WORKSHOP** with Adrian Pointon at Dorridge Village Hall, Grange Rd, Dorridge, Solihull B93 8QA (near M42 Jn 4 / M40 Jn 16 and Dorridge Station) Cost for the day (half-day): SIFD members £12 (£7) Non-members £15 (£9) More details from Maggie Kaye: 0797-464-9311 or margaretkaye@blueyonder.co.uk

S.I **Nov.15-16 BALKANPLUS CAUCASIAN WORKSHOPS** with Tineke and Maurits van Geel at Cecil Sharp House. The weekend includes the Dunav 50th Anniversary Party. For full details visit www.balkanplus.org.uk or phone Maureen on 01473 272256 or Brian on 01992 582717

Nov.22-23 CAUCASIAN DANCE WORKSHOP: Lambley Village Hall, Catfoot Lane, Nottinghamshire NG4 4QF. Tineke & Maurits van Geel £45 which includes 9 hours teaching, drinks and refreshments. To book, send a cheque payable to 'Kilikia Dances for Armenia' to Chrisandra, 16 Moore Road, Mapperley, Nottingham. NG3 6EF. Tel. 0115 9554962 or chrisandra@tesco.net



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.*



Eastbourne Festival 2014

I approached Eastbourne this year with a little trepidation – how would it go? I should not have worried and I would like to thank everyone who made it such a great success.

Maggie Kaye MC'd the Welcome Dance on the Friday evening brilliantly with lots of energy. She was accompanied by **Tessera** a new band that have come together in the last year. Maggie introduced the teachers who each led a dance so we knew what to expect from their workshops.



This year we welcomed back **Paul Mulders** an energetic Dutch teacher who led 5 lively Macedonian workshops. He is a great teacher and we were entertained with his story telling as well as his fancy foot work. **Marion Nieuwenhuizen** is a woman of many talents and certainly shared a lot of them with us at this festival. She is a Dutch teacher who now lives in England. She led 3 Balkan, one Israeli and one Gumboot workshop and is also member of **Tessera** so played for 3 evenings. She taught us with great warmth, skill and humour. **Dalila Heath** taught two enjoyable Armenian sessions and **Anne Leach** taught two interesting sessions on Quadrilles from around the world. **Silvia McIntyre** taught us some charming Austrian dances where I enjoyed seeing peoples' faces light up as they managed to clap at speed.

All the teachers were brilliant and as well as teaching great workshops joined in the evening sessions with lots of enthusiasm and energy.

The three MCs Maggie Kaye, Anne Leach and **Charlotte Kinross** all liaised with Tessera to plan enjoyable evening programmes which were a mixture of old and new favourite dances. They all led their evenings confidently with charm and skill. The evenings also included a chance for the teachers to review some of the newly taught dances.

Tessera is a new group - **Mike Machin** violin, **Clyde Olliver** accordion, **Maya Buckley** clarinet and Marion on percussion. They all also sing beautifully and play other instruments. They have an extensive ever-expanding repertoire of dance music and are always surprising and delighting us with different ways of accompanying dances. For example, Mike led us in Isvoros a Greek dance singing the beautiful melody. One of the highlights was when they played 'the world premiere' of Iliknerov Bar an Armenian dance to Dalila's great delight. They played for four workshops and the three evenings. It was a real treat to dance to so much wonderful live music!



left: Mary dancing

We finished the weekend with a 'final fling' in the main hall, Marion leading us in Ha'eer Beafor and Paul in Oj Vardare makedonski to show the rest of the festival what sort of dancing we do.

Then they both led us in Cocek za merak and we got lots of the audience to join in.

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A lot of work was also done behind the scene. **Rowena Martin**, despite being ill organised a team of stewards who helped the festival run smoothly and hosted two of us for the weekend. **Helen Ezra** ran the shop and helped decorate the gym. **Caspar Cronk** was on hand as my 'trouble shooter' helping as music technician. **Ron and Jean Wilkes** have been a great help and support working with me with the planning and organisation of the weekend. They have also been busy behind the cameras and are producing a DVD which will be very useful for anyone wanting to teach dances they have learnt.



(photos by Graham Kinross)

I would like to thank all the teachers, musicians, stewards and everyone who came and danced for making this festival so enjoyable.

I have thoroughly enjoyed helping with the organisation for the last five years and am now passing the baton on to Ron and Jean Wilks.

They are already busy planning next year and have booked **Jan Knoppers** and **Richard van der Kooij**.

Bookings for 2015 open on the 1st October and Early Bird prices apply for bookings made before 10 Jan 2015. Ron & Jean would welcome any offers of help and feedback so do contact them on aloha@f2s.com

Mary O'Mahony



The Turkish Way of Dancing

I found quite amusing the picture of two rather vicious-looking men in the last SIFD News, subtitled ‘The oldest known representation of Turkish folk dancers’. It reminded me of a paragraph in an article I wrote four years ago for our RSCDS Branch Newsletter, after a successful demonstration of Scottish country dancing for a local WI group. A paragraph in the article related to a Turkish folk dance, and it may amuse the SIFD News readers, too:

“It gives you a nice feeling to demonstrate for people the pleasures of Scottish country dancing. It is energetic, but not aggressively so. I would be reluctant to demonstrate, for example, the Turkish dancing. You might have recently missed the newspaper report, I believe, from Australia or New Zealand. A Mr. Can was arrested for wife beating as the policemen failed to understand that the couple were simply engaging in a lively traditional dance Kolbasti, in which the dancers wrestle and slap each other to celebrate good fortune. Apparently, Mr Can and his wife, who run a kebab shop, had an exceptionally profitable day and started celebrating in the car park in front of their shop with much arm swinging, kicking, slapping and wrestling moves that included headlocks. And I had naively thought that the Turks were devoted only to the sinuous movements of belly dancing and to dervish whirling.”

I have not so far had the good fortune of attending any course of Turkish folk dancing, neither have I ever met Turgay Bey, but I wonder whether Kolbasti is in the repertoire of dances he teaches.

Dal Sudwell



Balkanplus

The June Balkanplus will be held on the 14th June at Cecil Sharp House, Camden NW1 7AY, starting at 7.00pm. MC for the evening will be Emily Nisbet. Admission £5.

Maureen Felton

Easter in Bulgaria

We're off! After an early start we are met at Sofia airport by a smiling Ilana and Todor and are introduced to our handsome young driver Mitko - who is married. English, German, Dutch and Bulgarian can be heard as we make our way to Ilana's home village of Voivoinovo near Plovdiv, to meet up with our host families for the next two nights.

Our hostess, for Margaret and myself, is Penka with her close friend Todora. They have imported two grand daughters for the evening, both college students who speak excellent English who help the conversation along. We are offered rakia - home made, wine - home made, cherry fruit juice - home made (delicious) and chicken soup - home made. I ask if the chicken was also home made, Yes, it was. Later, at the back of the house, they show us some farm buildings which house one cow, five calves, four pigs and a handsome cockerel strutting his stuff amongst his harem, now minus one.

Next morning we are whisked off to Plovdiv to see the professional dance group 'Trakia' doing their barre exercises overseen by their dance master, a compact, fit gentleman with beautiful pointed toes. This was followed by a performance of the highest standard with numerous changes of costume. 'Trakia' are fortunate in having good facilities with the financial backing of the municipality and private donors.

Later we saw another professional group 'Dunav' based in Vidin. They, too, showed us their exercises and a performance again of the highest standard. They are a smaller group, struggling for financial support in difficult times and do not have the same facilities as 'Trakia' but gave us a great show nevertheless.

We have several memorable visits including the beautifully preserved Roman amphitheatre in Plovdiv and the wonderful church in the Shipka pass with its golden dome gleaming from afar against the dark wooded hillside and the bells made from melted down shell cases as a gesture for peace following the battle of 1877 / 78 against the Ottomans.

We also saw the Trojanski monastery whose priest was reluctant to let us in because he thought we were too noisy. To my mind it was dark and oppressive with every square inch painted. *continued >>*



Bread;

Crossing the stream



Then on to the National Exhibition of Popular and Artistic Craft, beautifully laid out with a large and tempting gift shop at the end.

Then there was the covered bridge at Locech, almost medieval in appearance and full of souvenir shops; at Pleven an amazing panorama in the round of a battle scene; a wine museum set into a cliff, and yes, we did have a taste; an ancient castle on the banks of the Danube with Romania on the opposite bank and at Chiprovsti a carpet weaver's house and a museum where we got caught in a thunderstorm. The fast flowing stream through the village turned into a raging torrent and part of its allegiance seemed to have transferred itself to the road. We cautiously picked our way back to the coach feeling somewhat damp around the edges. Why is it drips down the back of the neck are so uncomfortable?

The two most memorable visits, however, must be to the 'Magura' caves and the 'Krushunski Vodopadi' waterfalls - a succession of waterfalls or cascades. The 'Magura' caves south of Vidin are a huge succession of rather damp, dark caves reaching 56m. in depth which means a lot of steps. There are strange shaped formations and strange markings on the walls which experts say depict a calendar rather than the hunting scenes usually found. It took quite some time to climb down and climb back up again, but when we emerged the young man in the drinks kiosk at the top said we had seen only half of it, the rest being closed to the public for further study.

The most adventurous visit of all, however, was the climb up alongside the cascades. Due to the recent rains the path was muddy and slippery and required a good deal of help pushing and pulling (thanks Mitko) to get to the top. There we found the stepping stones to cross the river were almost submerged. Undeterred, various people set to and found stones lying nearby to fill the gaps to complete the bridge. Gallant helpers then bestrode the stones and passed everyone safely across. Miraculously no-one fell in though the banks were somewhat muddy. "After a nice walk" - according to the itinerary - we adjourned to the next hotel to get dried out and cleaned up.

Our trip was planned to coincide with Easter and on Sunday morning we were greeted with "Chrustus Vuskres" to which the reply is:

“Vo Istina Vuskres” - Christ is risen, it is true. Then we played the egg game. Everyone was given a coloured hard boiled egg. You hold it firmly in your fist and your opponent comes and gives it a firm tap on the top. If your egg cracks you are out. If not, you move on and attempt to crack someone else’s egg. The winner is the person whose egg remains intact - a bit like conkers without the string.

On Easter Monday we were in the village of Sofronievo where traditions are strongly upheld.



The eggs are decorated with vegetable dyes - boiled nettles, onion skins, and beetroot - and beautiful patterns emerge.

continued >>

So, after all these activities, did we actually dance? We certainly did. We had several lessons with Iliana and Todor playing and singing. We had slow, controlled dances with interesting mixed rhythms and faster dances with more complicated steps and accessible dances for everyone. We were a group of 33 including 2 husbands who came along for the ride, except that our charming Jan from Holland, who came to class to watch, found out that he could dance after all. Iliana is an expert dancer whose eagle eye misses nothing and who brings out the best in everyone. She is full of encouragement and patience and instills a love of dance, music and song and is ably supported by Todor on his accordion, expertly, fluently, any rhythm, any tempo, often singing as well.

Apart from classes we also danced with the villagers in Voivodinovo, Radomirtsi, Sofronievo, Gamzovo and Zamifirovo. (No, I couldn't find them on the map either). Each village greeted us so warmly and had gone to great lengths to decorate their halls. They also fed us as if we hadn't eaten for a fortnight. They were very proud to present their demonstrations with participants starting at 3½ years old up to an age we didn't like to ask. They also had choirs, mostly of older women, who sang their traditional songs, dressed in their beautiful traditional costumes. They were always delighted when we joined them dancing in the square or in the restaurant to the local brass band. In Sofronievo there was also a T.V. cameraman filming events. This was important to the villagers who hoped that a showing on national T.V. might bring them more financial support from a municipality suffering from cut backs. What's new?

There is so much more that could be told. We had a wonderful time, beautiful dances, amazing visits, tremendous welcomes from the villages, great companions, sumptuous al fresco picnics, and, travels through outstanding countryside.

Iliana and Todor will be visiting us next year. Don't miss.

Frances Horrocks





Embroidery pattern from former Yugoslavia

Avrameanca

Re: Avrameanca which is the spelling I have.

I have two different versions of this dance, one taught by Frank Dowling. This one is a couple dance from Moldavia which at one point has concentric circles travelling in opposite directions. *

The other is a circle dance with shoulder hold from Oaşş with notation from Suani Bloland and I believe taught by Gary Karner at Swansea.

Does anyone else have any ideas? It was a long time ago.

Frances Horrocks

* Lily Avery has sent the notes, see page 17.



Rainmakers still dance a couple version of **Avrameanca** that Frances Horrocks taught us many years ago.

Jill Bransby



Wilf's music for Avrameanca was in last month's issue.

Ed.



Re. Avrameanca

Rather belatedly, I remembered that we used to dance Avrameanca at Harrow Green Folkdance Group and in fact performed it at one of the SIFD's "See How They Dance" shows at the Royal Albert Hall in beautiful Romanian costumes.

I still have the music on cassette and enclose a copy of the dance notes.

Lily Avery



Avrameanca - Romanian

Couples in a circle, facing c/c/w, men behind women, R hands on L shoulder of person in front.

Let 32 beats go. Then walk in circle for 32 steps, starting R ft. and swaying shoulders.

Drop hands. W turn outwards and continue walking c/w, thumbs in bra straps(!), swaying shoulders, while M continue walking c/c/w, thumbs in braces, swaying shoulders, for 16 steps.

All turn round and repeat the 16 steps in opposite direction, finishing up facing partner.

* Take ballroom hold, 8 small, flat, polka steps, turning on spot, starting with W's R ft., M's L.

Still facing each other, take 2 steps to side (to W's R, M's L) (step close, step close). Then 3 quick steps in same direction finishing with a stamp (i.e. step close, step close, step stamp). Repeat this figure in opposite direction.

Repeat from *

Form circle again, M dropping in behind W, and start again.

Originally taught by Tita Sever and Leonte Socaciu, but also by Garry Karner at an SIFD Summer School at Swansea. (1985).



Brian Dowsett comes to Derbyshire

Dance workshop with Brian Dowsett on Saturday 7th June in Calver Village Hall S32 3XR. Further details from Greg Boyd or Janet King on 07810181273 or 0162957065 respectively or email gregboyd99@aol.com or j.king194@btinternet.com

Greg Boyd

Ludo Mlado

Macedonia

A

Em Am D G

Em Am D G

CG Am D G G

D D C C D

D G G D G G

"Wilf Horrocks' Collection"



Ludo Mlado is well known and danced regularly at Cecil Sharp House.



Rainmakers still dance a couple version of **Avrameanca** that Frances Horrocks taught us many years ago.

Jill Bransby



Wilf's music for **Debka Dayagim** (Israel) will be published next month.

Ed.



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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.



WHAT'S ON IN JUNE

- S.I **Saturday 7th DOINA EASTERN EUROPEAN DANCE GROUP**
3-5pm Victoria Embankment Gardens
- S.I **Saturday 7th SIFD DANCE** see page 3
- Saturday 7th BRIAN DOWSETT WORKSHOP** see page 17
- S.I **Saturday 14th BALKANPLUS** - see page 9



All material for the July issue of the SIFD NEWS must be received by the Editor in writing by 17th June.