



Ollolai, Sardinia

July 2014 SIFD News

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Although many of you have emailed about Silviu Ciuciumis - his sudden death will be a sad shock for those who read it here; some remembrances of him start on page 6.

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The front cover (from the distant past) was by Caroline Thomas.

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Frances Horrocks has pointed out that Ron Wilks took the photos that accompanied her article about Easter in Bulgaria last month.

Ed.



Serbian Floods Appeal

After the recent serious floods in Serbia, an aid fund has been set up by the Serbian embassy, but with a collection point at the Serbian Orthodox Church of St. Sava in London whose community centre is well-known to many Balkan dancers.

For those who would like to contribute to the fund, we are planning to have donation boxes at the remaining meeting of Balkan orientated groups – including Balkanplus and Barnet – up to the summer break.

Alternatively, donations may be sent directly to the church at 89 Lancaster Road, London W11 1QQ.

Tel. 0207 727 8367 Charity No. 249616

Cheques payable to “POMOC SRBIJI”

Thank you

Brian Dowsett



SIFD Monthly Dance at Cecil Sharp House

There will be no dance in July and August.

Dancing resumes on Sunday 7th September at 7pm.

Anne Maddocks

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 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
- S.I **Aug. 5-8 SIDMOUTH FOLK WEEK** see page 5
- Aug. 10-15 MACHOL EUROPA** Israeli Dance, University of Warwick, Coventry. 0208 2093155 or info@idi.org.uk
- Aug. 17 PICNIC IN THE PARK** see page 9
- 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. 13 BALKANPLUS** - MCs will be Zivko Firfov group with live music from Dunav.
- 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.*



Balkan Folk Dance Workshops at Sidmouth Folkweek

We are offering some Balkan folk dance workshops with live music at Sidmouth Folkweek, from Tuesday 5th - Friday 8th August. So we'd be delighted if you would like to come and join us there. "We" being Maya Buckley, Chris Edmunds, Jake Slocombe and Cathy Meunier. For more information see www.sidmouthfolkweek.co.uk.

Cathy Meunier



Balkanplus

The July Balkanplus will be held on the 12th July at Cecil Sharp House, Camden NW1 7AY, starting at 7.00pm. This will be a Requests Evening and recent workshops round up. Admission £5. There will not be a Balkanplus meeting in August - the next one will be in September with the Zivko Firfov group and live music with Dunav (£7).

Maureen Felton

Silviu Ciuciumis

We just received the email below and would be grateful if you would put this in the next SIFD News for all the many SIFD members who have gone on Silviu's Romania trip over the years,

It was a great shock to us as it will be to all who knew him,

Liz & Nick

~

Dear all,

sadly I need to inform you that on May 9th our friend and beloved father Silviu Ciuciumis has suddenly passed away at his home in Rotterdam. We are very sad that he left us so sudden, but thankful that he meant so much to us and to the Romanian ethnography and folklore.

I'd be grateful if you could leave your memories of Silviu in this book of condolences <http://www.condoleance.nl/14826>, for our children to read when they are older, so that they will not forget what he was like. If you have pictures or DVD-material with Silviu for the children, that would also be highly appreciated.

Also on behalf of Julian (11) and Ruben (6) I thank you very much for your words of comfort.

We loved Silviu very much.

Andrea Drieman

Piraeuserf 19, 3067 WT Rotterdam,NL
andrea.drieman@gmail.com

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Silviu was our (Geneva/Lausanne group) principal Romanian teacher, came here nearly every year from 1993 to 2006. I once marked him out in an article as the best and most precise and competent traditional dance teacher I've ever met.

We think here that he overdid it - he put SO much effort into his wonderful Romanian tours, organising down to the last detail, and that house of his in Bukovina (Zoe & I were there twice).

David Roberts

Silviu Ciuciumis 5 August 1949 - 9 May 2014

I first met Silviu in 1994 at the Balkan Festival at Zetten in The Netherlands. Subsequently, I invited him to teach a weekend workshop in Ipswich in 1998. It had been some time since Silviu had taught in England and thereafter he received a number of invitations and became a very popular teacher here.

I remember a truly professional teacher with a huge repertoire of Romanian dances. Two things stand out from his Ipswich visit: his picking sprigs of forsythia in my garden in order to give a yellow flower (no mimosa being available) to every woman present for International Women's Day; and his obsession with punctuality. This desire never to be late led him to be waiting for me in hat and coat 10 minutes before we were scheduled to leave for anything. Nothing laid back or Balkan there.

From 1994 a group from Ipswich travelled most years to the Balkan festival organised by Silviu and Ersin (a Turkish teacher) and it was always a great success. Silviu also organised 2 trips a year to Romania as well as bespoke tours for individual groups. One year he came to collect me from Bucharest airport as I was travelling alone and I was horrified to find him looking pale and with his arm in plaster. He had been involved in a road accident, but this didn't stop him looking after us. He would stay up most of the night rearranging the next day's programme if things had gone awry, as inevitably they did in Romania.

Maureen has reminded me of the time Silviu danced a solo late at night in a darkened hall with just his shoes lit by ultra violet light, and his steps getting ever faster. He could be a showman as well as a teacher. We were due to dance again with him this June in The Netherlands.

Silviu will be sadly missed by so many people, but, above all, our thoughts are with Andrea and Silviu's sons Julian 11 and Ruben 6, and also his family in Romania.

Sally Fletcher

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I first met Silviu in July 1988, at Bucharest airport. I had never met a Romanian before, and felt that he did not fit the image -- he was far too dapper!

*Continued overleaf >*

I went to another of his tours, this time with Roger, in 1990. The change in Silviu was remarkable -- he was so relaxed, instead of having to be constantly rushing about. In 1988 he could never stay in one place for more than five minutes, as he had to keep tabs on our Securitate 'minders', and check that no-one was doing anything they shouldn't.

Since those two wonderful tours I have attended seven dance courses, weekends and a memorable summer school, with Silviu, and always thoroughly enjoyed his teaching, especially the humour that always came through, his choice of dances and his personality. Many of our favourite dances were taught by him and we do them very often. We were happy to be counted among his friends, and we miss him so much, but we will be constantly reminded of him by his dances.

**Hilda Sturge**

Bristol International Folk Dance



### **Fancy a Picnic in the Park ?**

Some of us from Merton Park and Cheam will be getting together near the house in Nonsuch Park, to dance for about an hour and a half (weather permitting).

A small café should be open until 5pm and toilets are also normally available.

Why not bring your sandwiches, dance shoes and brolly / sun lotion and join us.

Date Sunday 17th August

Dancing 3pm - 4.30pm.

Hope to see you there.

**Helen Ezra**







## **May Day Dance Weekend**

New faces from the unknown North joined the Halsway Manor faithful for the May Day weekend. This year the croquet competition was stiff between the teams who shared mallets and unmentionables. The “silverware” for croquet was carried off by Jane and Ian. However, later, the management complained about a missing tea spoon.

Dancing around the May Pole moved up to the 2nd year class under the tutelage of Janet. Put a note at the end of this year’s diary - the dancers will take the third year class and weave a basket in 2015.

Walks were taken in the muddy Quantocks and the depth of the mud was measured by ski sticks. So far no dancers or ski sticks have been reported missing.

Stella from the SIFD Band again provided live music and was ‘bumped’ by another accordionist from the dark North.

Janet introduced new and favourite dances. Request lists were long but the phenomenal memory of Janet (from somewhere near Harrow) led and taught throughout all hours over four evenings and some afternoons.

On Sunday a coach trip was made to the splendid National Trust house and gardens at Montacute House. In the long gallery was a splendid Elizabethan period art display. The visit this year, as the whole weekend, was enjoyed by all. Why not join us next year?

**John Boyd**



## Stara Zagora

Although it is the current and last in line of about 8 former names, Stara Zagora has always sounded a rather exotic place and after spending 4 days there at the end of April I was pleased to see that the city lived up to its name, a university centre with a rich historical past. It was hard to top the tour that Sally and I had just experienced with Iliana and Todor. We did enjoy it all and met some great people. Frances Horrocks has written an article on Iliana's tour so I will just outline what we - that is Sally Humphrey, my husband Alistair and I - got up to when everyone left us at Sofia Airport!

Alistair's plane arrived on time and we were able to drive off in our hire car just after 2pm. Amazingly the sun was shining and the drive along through Trakia to Plovdiv and on to Stara Zagora was beautiful. We were on our way to meet up with Nevena Vlaykova whom we had got to know at our Oxford group in 2011/2012 while she was reading for her Masters Degree in Russian & East European Studies at Oxford University. We met her and her mother Svetlana at a hotel complex a few miles outside Stara Zagora, in a village called Yagoda. This is where the folk dance group they dance with was holding their annual party, which consisted of a dancing session in the afternoon, followed by dinner and more dancing in the evening.

The group is lucky enough to have the choreographer Vasil Germilov (who came to the UK in 2012) to guide them and teach them fun, vibrant dances. What I hadn't completely taken on board though was that the whole thing came about as a result of Nevena inviting her mother over to Oxford to see what our Oxford group got up to every Thursday. Svetlana was a professional dancer in her youth and she was so impressed by what she saw in Oxford that it inspired her to go back to Bulgaria and start up a group in Stara Zagora - for people with some, little or no experience to get together, to dance and enjoy the wonderful Bulgarian rhythms. Sally and I found this very humbling and a great compliment! They are a group of about fifteen regular members and we joined in with the dances we could and some that we already knew, like Ventzi's "Zapil se Stojan", which seemed to be a firm favourite. Vasil's younger daughter also dances with the group so she is always on hand to put Dad right if he forgets what he's previously taught!

On the Sunday morning we went in convoy to Kazanluk, which is not far from Stara Zagora, and went first to the wonderful cultural museum containing the riches excavated from the tombs of the Thracian kings from around the 4th century B.C., before going to visit a couple of the actual tombs. One of them is in Kazanluk itself but is closed to the public although you can visit an exact replica. The other one, a little way out of town in the Valley of the Thracian Kings, was King Seuthes III's tomb and this was the real deal. Following that we had a delicious lunch in a restaurant specialising in trout, cooked in many different ways, before heading into Stara Zagora for a little rest!



*Nevena, Sveta, Alistair, Stephie, Sally & Stoyan in the Vlaykova family's flat*

Nevena and her family have recently moved into a new apartment which is 5 minutes walk around the corner from their old flat, and this is where the 3 of us were accommodated during our stay. Imagine - a whole apartment to ourselves! We walked round to their new apartment for a delicious dinner on Sunday evening and met Nevena's father Stoyan, her younger sister Katia and their dog Leo! "Zagore" and they rehearsed the programme they were due to dance at a charity event the following day. As with our visits to Trakia Ensemble and Dunav Ensemble whilst with Iliana, the dancers (about twenty in all) were electric to watch and very nice to chat to at the end.

They told us they had danced with a few different choreographers in their careers but that they really enjoyed Vasil's choreographies because he often puts the accents/stresses on the syncopated beat rather than where one might expect it!

In the afternoon Nevena showed us around the Roman ruins in the middle of Stara Zagora. These include the Antique Forum and a small amphitheatre dating from when the city was called Augusta Trayana, as well as the beautiful Ayazmoto Park. We were sadly about 3 weeks too early for the abundant lime trees in the city to be in bloom because apparently the smell is intoxicating! That evening the family and the 3 of us drove about 4 km out of the city to the little village where Nevena's Baba and Diado live - the parents of Nevena's father Stoyan. Baba first showed us round her wonderful garden, full of flowers and veggies, before serving us a delicious Bulgarian meal with mostly home grown/homemade produce (including the wine and rakia!) which we really enjoyed, as we had the previous night.



*Stara Zagora amphitheatre*

On Tuesday we decided to drive to Plovdiv (which Alistair hadn't visited) and see the amphitheatre and the Old Town, and we then visited a shop where they hand make folk dance costumes! We had seen Nevena's very pretty costume from Trakia from the shop and needless to say I weakened and have ordered a Pirin costume!

*Baba, Sally,  
Diado, Stephie  
& Alistair in  
Baba's garden*



Alistair also ordered a waistcoat and later, when we found the shop Iliana had taken us to, he bought a cummerbund to complete the outfit. Amazingly the lady in the shop recognised us from our visit about 2 weeks earlier! So, all in all, we will be well kitted out for our next party in Oxford!

That evening we went to the Army Club where the weekly meetings of the group that Svetlana started are held and we spent an energetic hour there before going back to Vasil's house; in another little village a few kilometres outside Stara Zagora. Yet again the table was groaning under the weight of more delicious Bulgarian goodies and homemade wine. One of the wines Vasil makes is infused with wild herbs and tastes rather like a Cinzano-type drink and he has won many national prizes for it. "*Nazdrave!*"

It was very sad to leave Nevena and Svetlana on the Wednesday morning to drive back to Sofia and eventually arrive in London. Bulgaria is a beautiful country and we were so touched by the enormous generosity and kindness of the Bulgarians we'd met. We couldn't have been better looked after by Nevena, Sveta and family and hope we'll soon be able to repay their kindness back in Blighty!

**Stephie Clark**

## **An Invitation for Younger Folk**

I consider myself extremely fortunate that I discovered International folk dancing when I was in my late teens, and I've had the privilege of enjoying a life-time of dancing and friendships through this wonderful pastime. I am dismayed to see so few young people at our events over the past few years. So I'd like to try and help younger folk make the same discovery that I did, whilst they still have the energy to enjoy it to the full, and years ahead of them to keep International Folk Dancing alive.

I've got two wonderfully enthusiastic and fun-loving teachers in Torquay this summer and I am quite certain that they can inspire young people. So I'd like to offer a "young persons' discount" at my Summer Balkan course in the Torquay, to encourage them to "give us a try".

I'm happy to put forward some of my own money to make this feasible, and I know that the SIFD is also interested trying to find ways to attract younger people to join us. I haven't managed to come up with the details of what the discount will be in time for this newsletter. But if you know of any young people who might be interested or who can pass it on to their friends, or if you can help by providing contact details and suggestions of where to advertise, please get in touch with me. I'd be pleased to have any other ideas and suggestions too. Email: [cathy\\_meunier@hotmail.com](mailto:cathy_meunier@hotmail.com) Tel: 017687 73117. The information will be on my website [www.balkanfolkdance.org](http://www.balkanfolkdance.org) when it is available.



## **Seminar in Dance and Traditions Prespes and Florina**

7-17 August. 10 Days in the village Lemos, above Prespes Lake where local traditions are still alive. Dance course, excursions, dancing at glendia & panegyria with local musicians, learn history of Prespes and participate in its traditions! Price: 780€ Full Board

Contact Yannis Konstantinou: [yankost@otenet.gr](mailto:yankost@otenet.gr) / +30 6986 733 391

or Maryse: [maryse.fabre3@wanadoo.fr](mailto:maryse.fabre3@wanadoo.fr)

or Caroline: [caroline\\_simmonds@hotmail.com](mailto:caroline_simmonds@hotmail.com)

Visit [www.mimallones.gr](http://www.mimallones.gr) for more information about Prespes!

# Debka Dayagim - A Fishermans Debka Israel

Once the tune, once the dance  
fairly fast

5 C G7 C Dm G

10 Dm Em G C G Dm G Dm

15 G7 C Dm G7 F G G F

C Dm G7 F G7 C

## "Wilf Horrocks' Collection"



All I have been able to find out about **Debka Dayagim** is that it was choreographed by Shalom Hermon in 1955; it appears to be a partner dance with couples facing anti-clockwise in a back crossed-arm hold.

But I have found a wonderful picture for you taken by Yuval Nadel (on back page). I don't suppose they are dancing Debka Dayagim - but whatever it is they are certainly enjoying it.



**The Crested Hen** features next month, from Sweden - Tup Och Hona - may be the translation (?). I hope someone knows something about it.

**Ed.**





## WHAT'S ON IN JULY

**Friday 11<sup>th</sup> BARNET SUMMER PARTY** with music by Dunav. 8pm at Church House, Wood Street, Barnet, Herts. EN5 4BW £6 incl. refreshments Further details from Brian on 01992 582717

**Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> BALKANPLUS** - Requests Evening see page 5

**Jul. 29-Aug. 4 DANCE BY THE SEA! 2014** see page 4

**Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> 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. Cathy Meunier, 23, Church St. Keswick, Cumbria CA12 4DX or email [cathy\\_meunier@hotmail.com](mailto:cathy_meunier@hotmail.com)



*All material for the August issue of the SIFD NEWS must be received by the Editor IN WRITING by 17th July.*