

# S.I.F.D. NEWS



**July 2016**

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

The front cover by Lesley Boorer originally had Christmas balloons which have been altered to suit the SIFD 70th year. A photo taken in 1935 of costumes from Brittany is featured on the back page.

I am very grateful to Roy Clarke for his interesting series of articles, 'Past Pages', based on the 'Early Years' of the News which concludes with 'Envoi' on page 6.

**Ed.**



## **Nutbrook International Folk Dance Group**

**Correction:** Website address for Nutbrook International Folk Dance Group is [www.nutbrookfolkdance.co.uk](http://www.nutbrookfolkdance.co.uk)

### **Opportunity 2017**

Dale Hyde from Canada is visiting U.K. in 2017. He will leading a Day Course on March 25th for Nutbrook International Folk dance Group. The subject – Latin America and Canada. Other events (Balkan or General mix of dances) are in the planning stage.

### **September 2016**

Looking forward to a weekend of dance – Balkan, European mix with Mariette van Gelder. Remember Early Bird tickets need to be applied for before August 1st.

**Gill Morral**



## **Re: Halsway Weekend, may Bank Holiday**

Marion and I were very disappointed to miss our annual trip to the Quantocks due to Don's illness. We should like to thank everyone who sent their good wishes for his recovery. Optimistically, we intend to return next year for more dancing, walking and convivial company.

**Don & Marion Simpson**

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**Aug. 7-12 MACHOL EUROPA 2016** Warwick University 020 8209 3155 *INFO@IDI.ORG.UK*

- S.I **Aug. 26-29 WILLINGDON IFDG MINI FESTIVAL** of International and English Folk Dance, Circle Dance and singing at Plumpton College, nr. Lewes, East Sussex. £160 full board. Contact Rowena Martin, 60 Anderida Road, Eastbourne BN22 0PZ; 01323 503991 or rowenahmartin@hotmail.com
- S.I **Sep. 10 RAINMAKERS 40th ANNIVERSARY DANCE**, 7.45pm-11pm at Ickleford Village Hall, 82 Arlesey Road, Ickleford, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 3TG. More info from Roger (01438 812766) or Mark (01462 454210).
- S.I **Sep.17 BALKANPLUS** - MC will be Maggie O'Regan - please note that this is the 3rd Saturday
- S.I **Sep. 24 SIFD 2016 AGM** will be in Nottingham.
- S.I **Sep. 28: OXFORD INT. F. D. G. - 40TH ANNIVERSARY PARTY** 8.00-10.30pm St. Giles Church Hall, Oxford. More details: [oxintdance.org.uk](http://oxintdance.org.uk) or from Colin 01865 862059
- Oct. 7-10 3 NIGHT INT. FOLK DANCING WITH WALKING** led by Phil & Brenda Steventon. Dancing in the morning & evening. 4- 5 mile afternoon walks led by an HF walking leader at HF Holidays, Bourton on the Water, Oxfordshire GL54 2BY. For details ring HF on 0345 470 8558 or Phil & Brenda on 020 8397 9649
- S.I **Oct. 15: SIFD GEORGIAN DANCE DAY COURSE** with Baykal Dogan. Trefusis, Cecil Sharp House. 9.30 to 4.00.
- Oct. 22-23 DANCE AROUND THE WORLD** Cecil Sharp House
- S.I **Oct. 22 ARMENIAN WITH SHAKEH MAJOR-TCHILINGIRIAN** Dance Day hosted by Jelenka Balkan Dance group. 11am - 4.30pm at Hempton Memorial Hall, near Fakenham, North Norfolk NR21 7LG. £15. bookings and further details from Dawn 01328 856582 [dawnwakefield7@gmail.com](mailto:dawnwakefield7@gmail.com)

- S.I **Oct. 30 ANNE LEACH - THE GRAND TOUR** dance workshop at Pulborough Village Hall, W.Sussex. RH20 2BP. £7 10:30am -3:30pm. Bring a picnic lunch. DIY Tea & Coffee available all day. Janet Douglas 01243 265010
- S.I **Nov. 4-6 TURGAY ONATLI** teaches dances from Turkey in Calver, Derbyshire. For details and a booking form please send s.a.e. to Cathy Meunier, 23, Church Street, Keswick, Cumbria CA12 4DX or email to [cathy\\_meunier@hotmail.com](mailto:cathy_meunier@hotmail.com). Website [www.balkanfolkdance.org](http://www.balkanfolkdance.org).
- S.I **Nov.12-13 SERBIAN DANCE WORKSHOPS** with Sasha Smrekcic (accordion) and Vladica Tanasijevic. Tel. 01992 58271 see page 8
- Nov. 26-27 DANCES OF THE SILK ROUTE** (Dances from Iran, Daghestani, Uzbekistan, and Afganistan) with Helene Eriksen (from USA) in Mapperley, Nottinghamshire. Cost £60 if booked before 1st Sept. (£75) after. [Chrisandra@tesco.net](mailto:Chrisandra@tesco.net) or 0115 9554962 for details.
- S.I **Feb.8-13 RIVIERADANCE! 2017** Residential Balkan folk dance holiday with Yves Moreau (Bulgarian & Balkan), Cristian Florescu & Sonia Dion (Romanian). Int. folk dances with France Bourque-Moreau, singing with heli, music-making with Maya, drumming, walking and sight-seeing. 5 nights full board in Torquay, English Riviera. £470 (full-days) or £400 (half-days); £310 for non-dancing friends & family. For details and a booking form: email [cathy\\_meunier@hotmail.com](mailto:cathy_meunier@hotmail.com) website: [www.balkanfolkdance.org](http://www.balkanfolkdance.org) or send s.a.e to 23, Church Street, Keswick Cumbria CA12 4DX
- S.I **Feb.10-11 BALKAN INSTRUMENTAL DAY COURSE** with Maya Buckley. Fri. pm & Sat. 10am-5pm & 8:30pm-10:30pm. £30 (no charge for hotel residents on the Rivieradance! 2017 holiday). All instruments welcome. Instrumentalists can play at the Sat. eve. dance. Resources for the course will be provided in advance. Pre-booking is essential. please contact Cathy Meunier (see above)



*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.*

## Envoi

An impression of the earliest days of the S.I.F.D., gained from reading the News, is the amount of help given by the E.F.D.S.S. Principally through the relationship between Bert Price and Douglas Kennedy; who clearly saw the Society as a young, vigorous National Organisation. Setting the Society up as that, clearly was a far sighted vision and decision by that small group of dancers at the I.V.C. Doing so brought introductions to authoritative teachers like Lucile Armstrong, Philip Thornton, Dr. Cyriax and Aily Eistrat; whose legacy is still with us today. There was much other help freely given from Douglas Kennedy and the E.F.D.S.S.

As membership grew so did the need for a News Letter, subsequently the News, initially produced by the secretary and then by a succession of editors (with support), leading to an appeal (without success) for a volunteer; so Bert Price invited John Fraser (Secretary to the U.N.S.A.) in April 1954 to become editor, and he accepted. Thus started a period of continuity lasting into the 1960's through him, John Ungar, Irene Fyffe and John Fraser; which gave the News a journal characteristic with interesting material.

I have always enjoyed the International nature of our dancing, both couple and set, with Balkan mixed together at our dances; and at classes including those with a bias one way or the other.

There are those whose contribution to the early days is substantial, but not mentioned individually in detail in my brief "notes from the News"; like Ken Ward, Margery Latham, Ruth Coton (nee Sharp), Simon Guest, Jack and Joan Richardson and Charles Steventon, among many; to whom we owe our thanks.

Style is important, a reported comment by Douglas Kennedy on the need for correctness and also to avoid uniformity, surely is as valid now as then; but we have few specialist groups now to give example.

Making new members welcome is also still relevant, but again with fewer classes, equally difficult. I remain grateful for help, firstly at Harrow Green and later from Margery Latham, for making dancing the pleasure that it is. Now also for the work that has gone into making the Society what it is; sustaining it throughout its seventy years of giving pleasure

and interest to so many.

What of the future? I cannot see it as being easy. With the membership widely dispersed and in general, the dancing more specialised, its role is somewhat different, but just as necessary. It has survived because members have been dedicated to International Folk Dance, and that remains what is needed for the future!

The views of others will be welcome.

**Roy Clarke**



## **The Gift Of Dance**

I was first introduced to International Folk Dancing and the S.I.F.D. on 20th March 1980 by my sister Iris Birch, who founded Interdance Worthing at that time.

It all started with a small group of us meeting fortnightly in a church hall on the outskirts of Worthing, West Sussex. I went along with no idea of what to expect. I had never danced before. Iris provided the music using a small cassette player. I took along my old H.M.V. auto-change record player so we could use the S.I.F.D. Interfolk vinyl E.P.'s. (all high-tec stuff).

After a few sessions I was hooked. Three dances I remember from these early classes were Hareemon (Israel), Fricassee (France) and Alunelul (Rumania). I seem to recall that the stamping in Alunelul caused the stylus to jump on the record. I am still dancing these dances 36 years later.

After a while, Iris moved the dancing to central Worthing (weekly) where it attracted a much larger following. During the 1980's, Interdance Worthing blossomed into a very popular and a widely known dance club with a reputation for good teaching, with emphasis on correct style. In addition to this, Iris organised 16 Day Courses using visiting teachers from the S.I.F.D. This was a big contribution to my knowledge of the dancing and the repertoire of Interdance.

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I think that I have danced most of the 300 plus dances in the repertoire of Interdance Worthing.

I found that practising the dances at home was a huge benefit. A big thank you to Iris for all her time and dedication in promoting International Folk Dancing over many years.

In 2009 I retired and moved to West Devon. As there was no International Folk Dancing locally I decided to start my own Group. We have been meeting weekly for the past three years and I have 19 people in the Group, mostly in their 60's and 70's. They love the wide variety of music and I try very hard to emphasis the need for different styles in the dances. In spite of the age range of the Group, Chekassia Kfula is one of their favourite dances.

Recently, one of my dancers said to me “Thank you so much for giving us the Gift of Dance”. I would like to pass this sentiment on to the S.I.F.D. and all those people (past and present) who have devoted their time and effort to make it such a success. Congratulations on the 70th Anniversary.

**Mike (Mick) Allison**  
(a.k.a. Iris's Brother)

Bridgerule, North Devon (formerly from Worthing, West Sussex)

P.S. I sincerely hope that the younger generations have sufficient interest in International Folk Dancing so that it does not die.



## **Balkanplus**

The July Balkanplus will be held on the 9th July at Cecil Sharp House, Camden NW1 7AY, starting at 7.00pm. We will be having an evening of requested dances. Admission £6.

Note that there will not be a Balkanplus in August.

**Maureen Felton**



## **The music and traditional dance of the Roman People of Eastern Thrace in Turkey**

It is generally now accepted that Roma or Roman people as they are called in Turkey, had their original roots in northern India (where they were known as people involved in dancing and music) and left between 6th – 11th centuries. This has been genetically and also linguistically verified and investigations into their language show Sanskrit roots.

The Roman people travelled initially to central Asia and then moved west to Turkey and to Eastern Europe with the Ottoman Empire. Superficially at least many converted to Islam in order to avoid the taxation levied upon non-Muslims.

With the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in the early twentieth century the Roman people found themselves marooned in Eastern Europe, their already delicate status further threatened by their Muslim religion. During the subsequent exchange of populations, begun in 1923, one and a half million Christian people in Turkey were forced to move to Greece and 500,000 Muslim people in Eastern Europe were forced to move to Turkey. See the Sinasos dance choreographed by Chrisandra that records these events on youtube:

*<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AqUppjFn3EY>*

Of the 500,000 Muslims that moved to Turkey the majority were people of Roman origin. They travelled by boat to Buyuk cekmece bay in Turkish Thrace where most of them remained in the area, with particularly significant populations around the town of Edirne close to the Turkish and Bulgarian borders. Ironically this enforced deportation probably saved the lives of many who would otherwise likely have been sent to concentration camps during the holocaust.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union between 1984- 89 a further 100,000 people, the majority of whom were Roman, moved from Bulgaria to Eastern Thrace in order to escape persecution.

Today the Roman people have thriving and on the whole tolerated communities in Eastern Thrace and in Istanbul. They continue to be known and respected for their musical skills and significant numbers now study traditional music at Istanbul University. Their unique dance forms are also becoming increasingly studied and respected.

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Each year on 5th and 6th May the Roman communities in Turkey celebrate the return of spring with the festival of KaKava. Records show that at least as far back as the 15th century this was celebrated in the Ottoman Empire. The main sites for this celebration today are in Kirklareli and Edirine. In May 2016 I was fortunate to be able to attend one of the larger KaKava celebrations close to the town of Edirine with my friend Ahmet Demirbag and senior members of the Roman community. The festival is considered to be the most powerful time of the year and comprises of a number of rituals all interspaced with music typically from the zurna, tapan, clarinet, dolu and doluka as well as a great deal of dancing.

The festival begins on the evening of 5th May when with much celebration a large bonfire is lit. This is accompanied by a Roman brass band, performances of Roman dance and impromptu music and dance both with live and recorded Roman music. As darkness falls the crowd waits expectantly for the fire to burn down sufficiently. Then hesitantly at first a few brave young men begin the ritual of leaping over the bonfire. This is done three times at least to bring good fortune and to burn away sickness and disease. As the fire burns lower, women, children and older members of the community also join in.

The main event however is on 6th May. At 3am well before dawn huge numbers of the Roman community gathers close to the river Tunca. Single women hoping to be married wear wedding head dresses, people ensure that they and their children touch something of iron in order to ensure their strength and power in the coming year. Wishes are written on paper and tied to the wishing tree and placed in the river. Candles are lit and put in little dishes on the river along with wishes. Water is drawn from the river and used for washing (in Kirklareli people enter the river to bathe but in Edirine the river is too dangerous and fast flowing). People wear red and dress in their very best clothes- much glitz from both men and women. A white horse is ridden bareback through the crowd as another symbol of new life. Branches with fresh leaves are gathered and along with stalks of wheat often hung in the house as a symbol of new beginnings. As dawn draws nearer the festival begins to reach its climax getting louder as more and more people arrive and join the dancing and music.



The dancing is predominantly individual involving both men and women who will sometimes dance together. Hand movements have specific meanings, 'I want to marry you', 'Bring me gold bangles if you want me' 'I cut myself' or even 'I kill you' if angry. The music is generally in 9/8 and also in 4/4 and often contains social messages about Roman life. Hip movements for both men and women are common and individuals link their own hands with the first fingers from each hand together making a clicking sound. There are several step patterns generally on the same area of ground.

With the first rays of dawn and with much ceremony the whole crowd moves to the bridge over the river bearing a large circular offering of white and red flowers. The crowd grows silent as the offering is lifted high and after a pause thrown into the last flowing river. As the light returns the crowd drift away quietly.

One thing that surprised me is how tolerated these rituals are in Turkey today. In fact non Roman Turkish people in the area themselves celebrate some of these rituals. On my way home on the first evening I saw groups of neighbours lighting small fires outside their houses to jump over and non-Roman people also attend the festival and joined in some of the rituals, although not the dancing which would be considered too shameful by many because of its hip movements.

The position of Roman people in Turkey is not easy but since 1988 their dances have been taught in university and Roman music is now accepted as an academic genre with Roman musicians now graduating from Istanbul University.

With many thanks to my friend and guide Ahmet Demirbag professor of traditional dance at Istanbul University who has studied the music and dance of the Roman peoples of Thrace for over many years and written extensively in this area (in Turkish) .

**Chrisandra Harris**

*Chrisandra@tesco.net* or 0115 9554962



Chrisandra will be running another dance and cultural tour to Turkey from 1st – 8th May 2017, see page 16.



## Peter Lilley

Those who knew him will be very sorry to hear that Peter Lilley died on 9th June. He has been a member of the Society for many years and was a notable member of Harrow Green Folkdance Group; an excellent dancer and valued member of the demonstration team (much sought after by the ladies as a partner, including myself!)

He was a very relaxed and likeable character with a great sense of humour and enjoyed taking part in our many Harrow Green activities, parties, weekends away and dance performances. I looked forward to and enjoyed the many occasions when I danced with him and have fond memories in particular of being, with Peter, part of the Edelweiss Group performing schuhplattler dances, especially when Peter and Mike Lawrence “brought the house down” at the Royal Albert Hall with one of their more ambitious improvisations (see photo).

Although he has not danced with us for many years, he leaves us with many happy memories. Peter’s wife, Kay, whom some of you may remember, died some time ago but we send our condolences to their son and daughter.

**Lily Avery**



Dear Janet,

When I read in the May issue of the News that Roy Clarke's next article on the SIFD history would be about the Royal Albert Hall Shows I was reminded that I have programmes for two of the Shows (in 1963 and 1964). It prompted me to get the programmes out and look at them.

Apart from the details of the items and participants, which are interesting in themselves, I found that a number of other things have become worthy of comment because of the passage of time since the Shows were held – the programmes in effect give a snapshot of aspects of the Society back then:

\* We had three Patrons at that time – Dame Margot Fonteyn, Margaret Dale and Cyril Beaumont.

\* Cyril Beaumont wrote the “Foreword” in both programmes. He expressed the “prime object of the Society” as “to help both our own countrymen and foreigners domiciled in this country to learn and practise their national dances, both for their personal entertainment and also to afford the general public.....an opportunity to see something of the dances of nations other than their own”.

\* The Society Chairman in both years was Ken Ward. The Secretary in 1963 was Margaret Bisset and in 1964 was Lily Southgate.

\* The Society described itself (in 1964) as meeting “in halls throughout London”, with “classes held under the auspices of London County Council”. (But the programmes show that participant groups include some from further afield).

\* The 1964 programme mentions that a “building fund” had been started “so that the Society's possessions may eventually be brought together under one roof, and so that social functions can be held, and overseas dancers entertained”.

\* The 1963 programme advertised the second Swansea Summer School, organised by Jack Richardson. Fees for residents were 14 guineas.

\* Both Shows were called “See How They Dance” with a distinctive abstract globe design as their front cover logo.\* Programmes cost 2 shillings.

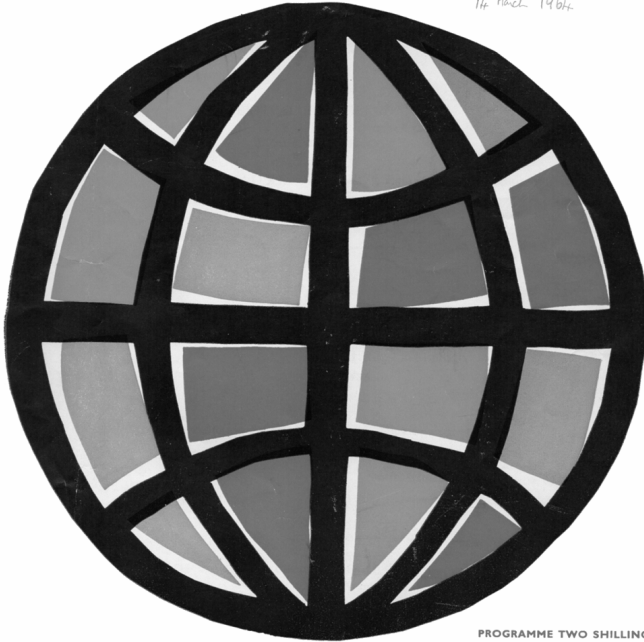
**Judith Payling**

\* *pictured opposite (next month - colour version as the motif).*

ROYAL ALBERT HALL · MANAGER: C. R. HOPPER · SATURDAY MARCH 14th 1964

**SEE  
HOW  
THEY  
DANCE**

*The March 1964*



PROGRAMME TWO SHILLINGS

**THE SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING**



## **Audio Cassettes on Their Way to the Dump**

We have 500 or so audio cassettes most of which are folkdance related. There are, for example, the cassettes from dozens of day courses.

If anyone would like to collect them from Epping please email ([sguest@theiet.org](mailto:sguest@theiet.org)) or 'phone (01992 577065).

**Joan & Simon Guest**

## **Dance & Cultural Tour to the Turkey Turquoise Coast**

May 1st – 8th 2017 with Ahmet Demirbag and Turgay Onatli

Experience the real Turkey

Daily dance classes with cultural, historical and nature experiences.

Some intended tour highlights:

Morning dance classes with local dance teachers, some with live music.

Visit to the traditional village of Cormakdag-Milas where people still wear traditional dress. With luck we hope to see a traditional wedding party during our visit.

Walk in the Sakikent valley with optional swimming on the Fethiye Dead sea beach.

Visit to the ancient city of Kaunos and see the King rock graves.

Optional hot springs and mud bath – very good for the skin and health!

Visit to Iztuzu beach (excellent swimming) and possibility of seeing the loggerhead turtles nests (depending on turtles nesting time).

Boat trip around Gocek bay visiting islands and with optional swimming.

Trip to Fethiye and to visit to see local dance group.

One free day. People are free to rest or make their own program and suggestions of possibilities will be offered including visit to local market.

Flights to Dalaman are not included and are available by Budget airline from many local airports in the UK.

Non dancing participants are also very welcome.

Total cost of the tour is 699 euros (approx. £550 depending on exchange rate). This includes:

7 nights accommodation in a shared room, all breakfasts, 6 evening meals, all dance classes and cultural experiences, all transport in Turkey, excursions and visits. Transport to and from Dalyman airport if arriving on group flight (this will be advised once flight timings are released).

Not included: flights to Dalyman in Turkey, visa costs (currently £20), drinks and lunches, personal expenses and tips. There are a limited number of single rooms available - add 200 euros.



A deposit of £200 secures your place. The balance is payable on arrival in Dalaman.

Numbers are limited and the last tour with Turgay and Ahmet sold out quickly so early booking is recommended.

For further information, and a booking form book contact:

Chrisandra@tesco.net Tel 0115 9554962

Web site: [www.worlddancing.co.uk](http://www.worlddancing.co.uk)



*Celebrating KaKava (see page 9)*

## Po Faj Dok

Polish

8

C G7 C C G F

"Wilf Horrocks' Collection"



### Po fajdok

We danced this dance from the Kurpie region of Poland in Betty Harvey's Jacy Tacy Polish Group. In her music file, which she passed on to me, she wrote the name as two words as above. I harboured a suspicion that it should be a single word *pofajdok* relating to the verb *pofajtac* meaning to dangle (one's leg) or to wag (a dog its tail). It was taught to us in 1971 by Zbigniew Strzalkowski, who was a principal of the Warsaw ballet company rather than a folk dancer.

My only notes on the dance were made much later for an elaborated choreography, which was never performed but serves as a reminder of the very simple step sequence that we were taught:

Couples in ballroom hold progressing anti-clockwise along Lo.d.

- Bars 1-2 2 polka steps making one turn clockwise.
- 3-4 With free leading foot: heel, toe, stamp.
- 5-8 Repeat sequence of steps as in 1-4.
- 9-12 4 polka steps making two turns clockwise.
- 13-14 Heel, toe, stamp as in 3-4.
- 15-20 Repeat sequence of steps as in 9-14.

Betty noted on the music "4 times, getting faster". The recording she supervised plays it five times.

Tony Latham



Next month the music for **Ambee Dageets** which I think is a dance that just about everybody knows, but I haven't published it before.

Ed.

## **SIFD Committee**

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**Contact the SIFD at [mail@sifd.org](mailto:mail@sifd.org)**



## WHAT'S ON IN JULY

- S.I **Sunday 3rd BALATON EMBANKMENT PERFORMANCE** is at 4.30-6.30pm. at the Victoria Embankment Gardens.
- S.I **Friday 8th BARNET SUMMER PARTY** with Dunav Balkan Group. 8pm at Church House, Wood Street, Barnet, Herts. EN5 4BW £6 includes food and drink Contact: Brian Dowsett 01992 582717
- Tues.5th-Sun.10th LLANGOLLEN INT. MUSICAL EISTEDDFOD**  
01978 862001 [tickets@international-eisteddfod.co.uk](mailto:tickets@international-eisteddfod.co.uk)



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