

Society for International Folk Dancing

S.I.F.D. NEWS



October 2017

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

Another design from Caroline Thomas appears on the front cover, this one from 1969 showing Thai dancers; the motifs are from a photo of Pam Radford and Sue Clark that I took at the 2004 Summer School - they are wearing costumes from two neighbouring villages in Thailand.

I would really, really like someone to send in some new designs and/or photos for future covers.

Ed.



The newly elected Committee

Jeanette Hull and Mary O'Mahony stood down from the Committee at the AGM on September 9th.

The new Committee is as follows:

Caspar Cronk, Dalila Heath, Richard Mellish, Holly Payling, Judith Payling, and John Stewart

Committee roles will be agreed at the next Committee meeting.

Judith Payling



Dance Around The World 2017

Sat/Sun 28th/29th October (see "What's On in October")

Dance Around the World is back at Cecil Sharp House for the 17th time. Doesn't time fly! Start at 10.00 a.m. Saturday - Dancing with Fiona, then enjoy a full day of workshops and performances. This year will see some new groups, as well as old favourites. If you have the stamina, stay on till the evening when you can join in the Latin-American Evening upstairs, or the Balkan Dance with Dunav playing downstairs. Sunday night finishes with an Anglo-European Dance, with Cloudburst. For more details see DATW.org.uk.

Maggie O'Regan



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- S.I **Nov. 5: SIFD DANCE** at Primrose Hill
- S.I **Nov.11: PAYLAK SARKISIAN, ARMENIAN DANCE W/SHOP** Kennedy Hall, Cecil Sharp House.10am-5pm. price £10. Some live music & performance by Akhtamar and/or Dalila & Laurence during the break.
- S.I **Nov.11: BALKANPLUS** MCs will be Dalila Heath and Ursula Brown, held in Trefusis, Cecil Sharp House, Camden NW1 7AY, starting at 7.00pm
- S.I **Dec. 3: SIFD DANCE** at Primrose Hill
- S.I **Dec.9: BALKANPLUS** MC will be Zivko Firfov, held in Trefusis, Cecil Sharp House, Camden NW1 7AY, starting at 7.00pm
- S.I **Dec. 29: TWIXMAS DANCE PARTY** at Stone Cross Memorial Hall (junction B2104 & B2247 nr Eastbourne). 10.30-4.30. £10 (half day £6). Shared dancing. Shared lunch. Drinks provided. Rowena Martin 01323 503991.
rowenahmartin@hotmail.com.
- S.I **Jan. 7: NEW YEAR BALKAN DANCE PARTY** at Calver Village Hall, Calver, Derbyshire S32 3XR from 11.30 to 16.30. Cost £5. Details or book with Greg Boyd on 07810 181273 or *gregboyd99@aol.com* or Janet King on 0162957065 or *j.king194@btinternet.com*
- S.I **Feb.7-12: RIVIERADANCE! 2018** Residential Balkan & Israeli folk dance holiday with Steve Kotansky (dances from the southern Balkans) & Vincent Parodi (Israeli folk dances). singing with Heli, music-making with Maya, drumming with Dave. 5 nights full board in Torquay. Prices £405 (dancers); £305 (non-dancers). *cathy_meunier@hotmail.com* or send s.a.e to 23,Church Street, Keswick Cumbria CA12 4DX website: *www.balkanfolkdance.org*
- Mar.16-19: 3 NIGHT INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING** with walking, Friday-Monday, led by Phil & Brenda Steventon. Dancing morning & evening. 4-5 mile afternoon walks led by an HF walking leader at HF Holidays, Newfield Hall, Malhamdale, North Yorkshire, BD23 4AA.Details ring HF on 0345 470 8558 or Phil & Brenda on 020 8397 9649
- S.I **Apr. 28: WOODVALE 50TH ANNIVERSARY DANCE**, see page 5
- S.I **May 4 - May 7: SIFD WEEKEND**, see page 5

Events covered by SIFD insurance are marked S.I. Please mark each event when sending in the notice if your event is covered by our insurance.

Woodvale Int. Folk Dance Group 50th Anniversary Dance

Saturday 28th April 2018 2pm to 5:30pm Tickets £8 at
Platt Memorial Hall, Platinum Way, St Mary's Platt, Sevenoaks TN15 8FH

During the evening there will be dancing to live music and a demo from Balaton. Come in costume if you can.

Please bring your own drinks and glasses, tea/coffee will be provided (and some light refreshments in the interval).

Please let us know if you are hoping to come as it will help with catering.
(mrdavid.mckie@btinternet.com)

David Mckie



May 4 - May 7 : SIFD Weekend

Halsway Manor, Somerset.

A weekend of International Folk Dancing led by Janet Woolbar with music from Stella Wentworth. Time to explore the local area and take guided walks in the locality.

Full details of costings see <http://sifd.org/events/sifdevents.php>

Or contact Robin & Judy Morris 01564773482 - 07966785172
robinnimbo@aol.com



Balkanplus

The October Balkanplus will be held on the 14th October in Trefusis, Cecil Sharp House, Camden NW1 7AY, starting at 7.00pm and ends 10.00pm.

MCs will be Susie Kelleher and Anne Maddocks. Admission £6.

Maureen Felton



The Riel Dance

A dance craze is sweeping across parts of Southern Africa. It is called Riel Dance. It is a dance for all of the community. It is even danced by those still in nappies, but it is mostly the young people who 'riel' with great energy, 'rubbery' knees and lots of fast, fancy footwork. When asked who trains them they say it's in their blood.

The spread of this dance craze starts a few kilometres from Cape Town up along the coastal area of Namaqualand and adjacent N. Cape, into Namibia. It also spreads Eastwards across from Stellenbosch near Cape Town, into the Karoo right across to Oudtshoorn and down to the coast at George. It happens mostly in rural areas and the Atlantic coastal fishing villages. It used to be popular in the 40's, 50's and 60's but then declined in popularity. Urbanisation and the new music and dance of the USA - jive and Rock & Roll was spreading worldwide.

In 2006 the ATKV, Afrikaanse Taal en Kultuur Vereniging (in English – the Afrikaans Language & Culture Organisation), decided to promote this dance, because of its ancient roots. They organised a Heritage Project competition and 7 groups took part. By 2016, 88 groups took part - about 800 dancers. There are trophies and other prizes given to the winners and runners-up.

One group, Die Nuwe Graskoue Trappers, entered the World Championships of Performing Arts in Los Angeles, in 2015. They won 14 gold and 8 silver medals in the Senior dance category. The band won 7 silver medals. The group also won a trophy as winners in the Open Dance Category. Three dancers were awarded a scholarship for a month's study in the States. The Riel dance style is unique and has probably never been seen outside of Southern Africa, except at that competition. Their group of 17 comes from Wupperthal and other villages in the Cederberg area. Their name comes from the amalgam of three villages: Nuwe Plaas (New Farm), Grasvlei (grassy lake) and Koueberg (cold mountain).

They were coached by Floris Smith who discovered them in 2012. Because of his background in the Performing Arts and Ballet he was able to refine their performance. He is a top chef and general manager of the Bushman's Kloof Heritage Centre. He says "I assist with stage presence and formation, like their circles and lines. I can't teach them to Riel. I couldn't Riel two years ago but I can now. I am on a fundraising mission as the group needs money.

They practice twice a week. It costs about R2000, (about £125) each time as the dancers and musicians come from different villages". They also need money for school fees.

So what is the dance? It is usually danced outside in a circle, sometimes as couples, sometimes singly, within the group circle. Lots of fast footwork kicks up the dust. It is said that the higher the dust is kicked, the more skilled the dancer. It is danced bare-footed or in soft, locally produced 'veldskoene' (flat, soft-leather, outdoor shoes). The dance area is usually very dusty. Many elaborate steps are performed, one of which is the 'askoek' or ash bread. The right knee is placed securely onto the left knee and it is slapped. The reverse is also done. This signifies the slapping off of the ash, after the bread has been baked in ashes. There is a lot of showmanship in the dance. A couple might 'show off' together, or the men together or the females together or dancers on their own. It is also a courtship dance and the couples often dance holding hands or arm in arm or men giving the ladies a twirl. The courtship of animals or birds is copied. The other part of the courtship ritual is the hat. The hat is offered to ask for a dance or to suggest courting. It is also thrown onto the ground and if the lady picks it up, it means she is interested. She will then flirt and tease him with the hat, not giving it immediately.



Another element of the dance is the animal mimic. They mimic the meercats, ostriches, baboons, snakes, birds, roosters, butterflies, antelope of the area. They also portray some work like sheep-shearing, farmwork, washing clothes, baking, cooking, wagon or cart pulled by horses. The dances last a long time – 8 or 12 minutes.

continued overleaf...>

They usually wear working-class 'colonial costumes' with head-scarves and aprons to signify servants (the females). The men would wear working trousers and shirts and old hats. Nowadays some groups have smart outfits.

The instruments played are: the guitar, banjo, violin, accordion, harmonica, drums and often a singer accompanies them. The tunes are simple, repetitive melodies derived from the music of the Malay slaves, minstrel songs of the Southern USA (brought by sailors), the music of the French, Dutch, German, Irish, Scots and English settlers. It is sung in Afrikaans as most of the original languages have now been lost. It could tell a story, depicted in the dance. The dance also, has been influenced by the European settlers'

Riel did not start in the 40's 50's and 60's. It is the evolution of a very ancient dance, at least 140,000 years old. It did not have a name then. It was danced by the San hunter/gatherers (formerly known by the derogatory name Bushmen). They are believed to be the earliest people of South Africa and indeed of Africa. If one accepts that humankind started in Africa then they were the first humans and their dance was the first human dance. After a good hunt there would be a celebration of ritual dancing in a circle around a fire. It would have been trance-like chanting and indigenous wind, string and percussion instruments.

In 1661 Pieter van Meerhof, a Danish director of the Dutch East India Company, on an expedition in the N. West of Cape Town reported: "between 100 and 200 fine persons arranged themselves in a circle each holding a hollowed reed in the hand, some long, some short, some thick and some thin. In the middle stood one with a long staff and he sang while the others blew into their reeds and danced in a circle, making the most beautiful movements with their feet".

As for courtship, a small arrow would be shot towards the fancied lady, not like the hat of today's dance. The dance would be passed on from parents to children. The sandstone caves of the area, especially Bushman's Kloof, which is a heritage site, are filled with ancient rock art which depicts the activities of the San. 22,000 years ago they were the largest group of humans in any one place on earth. One group, the Nama of Namaqualand, call the dance Ikhapara (khaps - hat). It is also called the 'dance of love'. The men fling their hats onto the ground and dance around them. They then have 'dance-offs' to impress the ladies.

2000 years ago the Khoikhoi (formerly known by the derogatory name Hottentots because of the click sounds in their language) moved South.

They were pastoralists - another one of the 'First People'. 2000 years of former contact with Bantu pastoralists caused them to gradually move away from hunting towards herding sheep. They moved South West through Namibia to South West Cape. They had a rich culture and were very spiritual. Initially there were hostilities between the Khoikhoi and the San but in time they merged into one group and are now known as the Khoisan. They share physical and linguistic characteristics, distinct from the Bantu nations. With the introduction of cattle herding and growing food, good harvests were later also celebrated, as with the hunts. The celebration was considered as social, cultural and educational.

In 1497, a Portuguese mariner Vasco da Gama, one of the first Europeans to stop in S. Africa, reported seeing Khoisan near to Mossel Bay.



1700 years ago, the Bantu nations like the Xhosa and Zulu, trekked South. The Khoisan were driven from their lands and their cattle stolen. From 1652 French, Dutch, German, Scots, Irish and English settled in S. Africa. They seized the Khoisan lands and their cattle. Many died during the 1713 smallpox epidemic. The Khoisan became marginalized. In two generations they ceased to exist as a separate entity. The survivors were forced to work as farm labourers, shearers, herders, nannies and servants. S. African history became dominated by the stories and culture of the Europeans and the Bantu. The Khoisan were treated as less than human.

However, as they were very musical people, they made 'ramkies' – home-made guitars and violins made out of an empty oil can and a bit of wood with strings. These accompanied their reeds and drums. With time, the music became known

as 'boeremusiek' (the predominantly Dutch settlers were known as 'boere'/ farmers). It also incorporated the 'goema' drum beat, a rhythm which developed from the mixed lineage of the people of the Cape. The dance also changed. Elements of the Settlers' dance like the Scottish Reel, from where the name Riel is taken, were now incorporated. Naturally the dress changed. These workers now wore European servants' clothes. Many Europeans and Bantu formed liaisons with the Khoisan and the Asian slaves, some permanent, some fleeting. Most S. Africans, of all colours, carry the genes of the original Khoisan.

All traditional dance evolves especially when invaders or colonists enter the land, bringing new customs, clothes, languages, religion, laws. If it's an oppressive entry, the oppressed indigenous culture has to make most of the changes.

Floris Smith has provided Tap Shoes for the group that won the competition (beginning of this article) and now they do Tap Riel – an offshoot of Riel. He has also taught them the Gumbboot dance, another traditional S. African Miners dance. He is an example of an advantaged S. African providing a helping hand to those less resourced.

Floris Smith says, "Today with renewed interest in the cultural authorship of the descendants of the Khoisan and the slaves of the old Cape Colony, Riel is alive and well again".

Elsa Perez

Photos: Eden Weis



(photo above downloaded from web)

The Sardana - Some tips for beginners

This is a dance to enjoy. Do not be worried about joining in an informal group: the Catalans will be only too happy to show you how it goes. However, shun the group with the appropriate dress and looking very serious. The so-called "Laws of the Sardana" open it to everybody without distinction, provided that they know sufficient to keep in step. But give different groups the honour of your participating. Whereas it would perhaps be better to join a group before it starts, you can join in part-way through, being careful to enter with steps appropriate to the sequence.

It is essential that you relax - otherwise you will be stiff in your joints and slow in your mind. As a result there is a risk you could spoil the dance for your new-found friends as well. Relax and be happy.

You may soon tire. You could get into training by practicing bouncing on your toes and holding your arms up for increasingly long periods.

You can identify the leader of each circle as the person who is concentrating on the counting and who gives the commands towards the end of each section. I prefer to have the leader a quarter circle away from me and watch his or her feet out of the corner of my eye. If, however, the leader is opposite you in the circle, try to watch and follow only one of his or her feet. If you do this, your other foot will follow. You will find that you avoid the problems of having to convert his left - which is on your right - to your left - if you see what I mean.

Think more about the "feel" of the dance than worrying about the details. It will make it easier and more enjoyable. The only unforgivable mistake is to break the "couple" formed by a man and the lady to his right.

Whilst you are learning, from this - or any other method - take a small section at a time, and do not proceed until you have grasped it thoroughly. That way, you will find things just fall into place.

You will not be perfect from the first steps. Even the Catalans have to learn it through practice and pleasure, albeit over more time. Practice and pleasure go together.



This is an extract from **The Sardana how to dance it**, by **Brian R. Bishop**. It was published in collaboration with the SIFD and is available for purchase from Alison Scrimshaw.

With an empty page (multiples of 4) this month - I took the opportunity to pass on his good advice - much of which also applies to other country's' dances. **Ed.**

Barinya



The picture above is a result of my search on the internet for Barinya. It has the name Alexandru David stamped upon it, is obviously extremely old, and shows the dancers for Barinya. **Ed.**



Dear Janet,

The only **Bareenia** (or **Barynia**) that I remember is a 'performance' dance - if that is the right expression - from the days of the Society's Russian dance group, the Troika Ensemble, taught by George Orloff. The name means lady; not merely a woman but a lady. It was performed by one couple and I remember Margaret Colato in the lady's part but I have forgotten who took the man's role. Well, it was a long time ago.

However, as it is in the Wilf Horrocks Collection, it is likely that it was a different dance, one more suited to group or social dancing.

Perhaps someone else will be able to provide more relevant information. Sorry I can't be of more help.

Arlene Hansell



Hennie Konings taught us **Barinya Rassipucha**; a mixer dance with alternate stamps, then claps, a back to back (dosi do) and drobni chod steps on (men clockwise, ladies anti-clockwise) and back, passing by partner to next. I chose it for the Southdowns Folk Festival this month as part of our workshop "Around the World in 80 minutes".

The music is different, the dance that Hennie taught is much faster and there is nothing romantic about it. So it is probable that Wilf's music is for the performance dance that Arlene remembers.

Ed.



Bareenia

In the long distant days when I was accordionist for the wonderful Balalaika Dance Group, I remember the late Jenia Graman insisting that we pronounce the name of this dance with the emphasis on the first syllable. A barin is a landlord, again with emphasis on 'bar', and a barinya is a landlady, so the emphasis stays on the 'bar'. Spelling it with 'ee' creates a temptation to misplace it to the second syllable, so I would recommend '**Barinya**'.

Caroline Thomas



Next month's offering from the "**Wilf Horrocks' Collection**" - **Anian Pellon Jenkka** from Finland may be known to some of you and hopefully you can share anything you know or remember with us.

Ed.

Barenia Russia

Lightly - romantically for girls entrance

Heavier - for men

Musical notation for measures 1-5. The piece is in D major (two sharps) and 2/4 time. Measures 1-4 are marked 'Lightly - romantically for girls entrance' and feature a piano accompaniment with a treble clef and a bass clef. Measure 5 is marked 'Heavier - for men' and features a more rhythmic piano accompaniment.

Musical notation for measures 6-8. The piano accompaniment continues with a steady eighth-note rhythm in the bass and chords in the treble.

Musical notation for measures 9-16. Chords are indicated below the staff: A (9), E (10), B7 (11), E (12), A (13), E (14), A (15), E (16).

Musical notation for measures 17-22. Chords are indicated below the staff: E (17), A (18), E (19), A (20), E (21), A (22). Measure 22 includes a 'C (x4)' marking.

Musical notation for measures 23-33. Chords are indicated below the staff: E (23), A (24), E (25), A (26), E (27), A (28), E (29), A (30), E (31), A (32), E (33).

Musical notation for measures 34-40. Chords are indicated below the staff: A (34), E7 (35), A (36), E7 (37), A (38), E (39), E (40). A note above measure 35 reads 'D (In chords - watch change of emphasis)'.

Musical notation for measures 41-44. Chords are indicated below the staff: A (41), E (42), A (43), A (44).

Musical notation for measures 45-50. Chords are indicated below the staff: E (45), A (46), E (47), A (48), A (49). Measure 50 is marked 'Pause'.

Musical notation for measures 51-56. Chords are indicated below the staff: E7 (51), A (52), E7 (53), A (54), E7 (55), A (56).

Musical notation for measures 57-60. Chords are indicated below the staff: E7 (57), A (58), E7 (59), A (60).

SIFD Committee

Registered Charity Number 284509

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WHAT'S ON IN OCTOBER

- S.I **Sunday 1st SIFD DANCE** at Primrose Hill 7-9.45pm
Fri.13th-Mon.16th: 3 NIGHT INT. FOLK DANCING with walking, led by Phil & Brenda Steventon. Dancing morning & evening. 4-5 mile afternoon walks led by an HF walking leader at The Peveril of the Peak, Dovedale, Derbyshire DE6 2AW. Details ring HF on 0345 470 8558 or Phil & Brenda on 020 8397 9649
- S.I **Saturday 14th BALKANPLUS** - see page 5
- S.I **Friday 20th RAINMAKERS 41ST ANNIVERSARY DANCE** 8-11pm at St Michael's Parish Hall, Broadway, Letchworth, Hertford-shire, SG6 3PQ. £8.00. MC Jill Bransby with live music from Cloudburst. Bring food to share. More info from Roger (01438 812766) or Mark (01462 454210).
- S.I **Fri. 20th-Sun.22nd SIFD WEST MIDLANDS BRANCH WEEKEND** with Cathy Meunier, at Willersley Castle Hotel, Cromford, Nr. Matlock, Derbys. For more details and booking email Maggie Kaye (margaretkaye@blueyonder.co.uk) or phone 0797-464-9311
- S.I **Sat. 28th-Sun. 29th DANCE AROUND THE WORLD** Two days of performances and workshops with over fifty groups, representing more than thirty countries. Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regents Park Road, London, NW1 7AY. 10.00am-11.00pm. £17 full day (incl. eve), £10 eve. only, £30 whole weekend, £2 reduction for concessions. Children free (accompanied by adult)
- Sat. 28th - Sun. 29th COSTUME EXHIBITION** Grindleford Parish Church, St. Helen's S32 2JN, 11am-4pm: Free (donations to UNICEF refugee children fund)



All material for the November issue of the SIFD NEWS must be received by the Editor IN WRITING by 18th October.