

The monthly newsletter of the Society for International Folk Dancing



SIFD NEWS

March 2019

www.sifd.org Registered charity number 284509

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

Crossword answers from last month and a quiz to keep up the problem solving are on page 11; the etiquette item below should raise a chuckle. A poster by Margery Latham is this month's cover; it was advertising a display at Leyton Orient Football Stadium (adults 1/- children 6^d) a very long time ago; motif and back page show Albanian men.

Ed.



Handy Tips on Etiquette for Folk Dancers

- * Always arrive late for class; as being early smacks of impatience.
- * Make sure people are aware of your entry to the class by letting the door slam. (Don't forget to use the door labelled "USE OTHER DOOR".)
- * As you go to the class try to visit as many other classes as possible on the way and bid them a polite "Good day".
- * During class, the teacher's instructions should be supported by your friendly discussions: also you could take the opportunity to demonstrate to your neighbours how well you know the dance.
- * In a circle, if you are opposite the teacher, just mirror their steps.
- * In an open circle, wait until the line is formed, then join the right hand end. Once the music has started however, it is considered friendly to insinuate your person into the middle of the line wherever dancers are closest. The welcoming looks you will receive will be ample reward.
- * Shoulder hold gives you an opportunity to take the weight off your feet gaining support from your neighbours: it is customary to pull their T-shirts off their shoulders.
- * In couple dances it is not good form to look at your partner or react to them in any way. Just imagine you are dancing alone and you will feel much more comfortable.
- * In the evenings make sure you join in all the group teacher's sessions especially those whose classes you have not attended.
- * It is considered 'pushy' actually to learn the steps. Just wait for the video recording session and stand between two good dancers who will be happy to call out the steps for you.

Anon of London

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- S.I **Apr.6-7: PETROS SELKOS** from Greek Macedonia teaches traditional folk dances from Northern Greece at Cliff College, Calver, Derbyshire. Residential option from £185, non-residential with meals £115. For details and a booking form please contact Cathy Meunier email cathy_meunier@hotmail.com website: www.balkanfolkdance.org or send send s.a.e to 23, Church Street, Keswick Cumbria CA12 4DX
- S.I **Apr.7: SIFD DANCE** see page 13
- S.I **Apr. 13: BALKANPLUS** - MC will be Brian Dowsett with a party evening following the first day of our Serbian workshop with Vladica and Saša held in Trefusis, Cecil Sharp House, Camden NW1 7AY, starting at 7.00pm. Admission £10.
- S.I **Apr.13-14: VLADICA & SAŠA - SERBIAN DANCE W/SHOPS**
Saturday: 10.30am - 4.30pm at Primrose Hill Community Centre, 29 Hopkinsons Place (off Fitzroy Rd.) NW1 8TN Party: 7pm - 10.30pm at Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Rd., NW1 7AY. Sunday: 10.30am - 4.30pm at Cecil Sharp House. Workshops: Saturday £40, Sunday £25 Party £10. Weekend package £55. Discounts for Balkanplus Season Ticket Holders. To book tickets, please send cheque payable to Balkanplus with SAE to: Maureen Felton, 28 Henslow Road, Ipswich, IP4 5EG For more information www.balkanplus.org.uk Tel. Brian 01992 582717 or Maureen 01473 272256
- S.I **Apr. 14: DANCES FROM EPIRUS** 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. taught by Dimitris Triandafyllidis at the UPS Club, Institute of Cancer Research, 15 Cotswold Road, Sutton, Surrey, SM2 5NG. £30 including refreshments. Cheques payable to 'Helios' to Sue King, 83 Upland Road, Sutton, Surrey, SM2 5JA
- S.I **Apr. 26-29: GREAT ALNE LONG WEEKEND** near Alcester, Warwickshire. Fri. pm - Mon. pm Int. Folk Dancing with Karin Bellaart Other varied dancing, making music, handbell ringing, Maypole dancing, part singing, walking and cycling. www.greatalnefolk.org.uk or phone Paul Lindley 0121 689 1802 or André Hobro 0121 777 3722.
- May 2-5 EASTBOURNE FOLK DANCE FESTIVAL**
www.eiff.org.uk or International@eiff.org.uk

May 11: DANCES FROM GREECE TO THE EAST with Chrisandra Harris (Greece, Armenia, Turkey, Central Asia) 10:30 am-4:30 pm (Hall open at 10 am) at Unstone Community Centre, Crow Lane, Unstone, Derbyshire, S18 4AL. Cost £10 including refreshments (bring own lunch). Info/booking ddu3ainternationaldancing@gmail.com

Jul. 2-7: LLANGOLLEN EISTEDDFOD LL20 8SW 01978 862003

Oct 25-28: 3 NIGHT INT. FOLK DANCING & 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, Longmynd House, Church Stretton, Shropshire SY6 6AG For details ring HF on 0345 470 8558 or Phil & Brenda on 020 8397 9649

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.*

All material for the April issue of the SIFD NEWS must be received by the Editor in writing by 18th March



Teacher development: Progress so Far:

Following last month's notice in the News, I received a few offers and nominations for a team who will help create a new teacher training and listing scheme, along with some feedback from the committee. We are now working on a more detailed draft of the proposal.

We need a few more people with an interest in making a contribution to the SIFD's future who could read and respond to the proposal and possibly be available later in the year to observe a class or two.

The more people who can offer help in the early stages, the better the result will be.

Please contact me on jeanettehull@blueyonder.co.uk or 07722 655481. The best time to reach me is late morning.

Jeanette Hull

Narendra Kotiyan (1931 – 2019)

It is with deep sadness that I announce the death of Narendra Kotiyan, Naren to all his friends. He had been suffering from dementia for some time.

Naren had already been fascinated by Scottish dancing before he left India to study in London in 1957 and it was not long before he was killed and enjoying the dance scene in England. Not just Scottish. He soon discovered the world of international folk dancing and threw himself into it with possibly more passion than anyone before or since. Whether it was a Russian, French or Balkan dance group, Naren's presence added sparkle to any performance. It was said that, on a notable occasion at the Albert Hall, he had to perfect his quick change routine to perform with several groups in the same show.

Naren dancing with the Balalaika group



His talents extended beyond dance. Many of us associate Naren with his tapan (large drum) accompaniment of the Bulgarian dance Kamišice. Over the years, Naren taught himself to play an assortment of instruments including gajda, kaval, tamburitsa, frula and double bass. However, it was principally for his drumming that Henry Morris and John Baldwin invited him to join their newly formed music group Dunav in 1963. So began Naren's unique contribution to the Balkan scene in England. Henry had already inspired students like me to take up Balkan dance at the Hendon Folk Club (later to become the Barnet International Dance Club after Henry left to devote more time to Dunav) and Naren then became a friend and mentor – encouraging us to take it to another

level by joining groups like Danny Lumley's Bulgarian group and Živko Firfov. In fact, this was another of Naren's talents: to bond with people and encourage them to participate. Many a new recruit to Dunav has come through Naren's gentle persuasion. It was Naren's ability to network that made the Balkan Festivals such a success.



These were shows put on at venues like St. Pancras Town Hall organised by Dunav but featuring the London groups plus Balkansko Oro from Oxford – a group he had a special attachment to. My memory is of a professionally staged and entertaining evening of music, song and dance. Naren always spoke with pride about these festivals. Later on, Naren ran a Balkan dance class near Kennington Oval – initially with John Fisher (ex Živko Firfov co-leader) – with special guests like his friends Ian Price and Hamdi Ataoglu, a talented Turkish dancer and musician, who lodged at Lucile Armstrong's house. Lucile herself encouraged Naren to take over her role as President of the board of judges at the Llangollen International Festival. This brought Naren in contact with many dance groups and, on Dunav overseas tours, we were often aware of the special respect he garnered. Later still, his encouragement and help was appreciated in the early days of Balkanplus.

When Naren's dementia worsened, he was fortunate to be living as a tenant in Caroline Thomas' next door house. He could still enjoy the Dunav rehearsals but, more importantly, Caroline selflessly attended to his every need and organised his eventual transfer to an excellent care home.

We will prefer to remember the Naren of old. Some readers who have known him longer than me will doubtless reminisce about special moments in his long career. I haven't mentioned his relatively recent and happy involvement with the London Bulgarian Choir. Nor have I touched upon his mildly anarchic humour. He told me that in an early visit to Bulgaria, there was a Russian delegation at the hotel he was staying in. One night, he noticed several pairs of shoes put outside the rooms for polishing. I hope no employee was shot for putting them back outside the wrong doors. →

Talking to Yves Moreau recently - on his final teaching tour of the UK – we agreed that we had lived through a golden age of Balkan folk dance to which Naren had made a major contribution. The news of his death came on the day of the Balkansko Oro party in Oxford. It was a poignant moment when we danced to his memory. We intend to organise an event in celebration of Naren's life later this year.

Brian Dowsett



Report on the December 2018 Committee Meeting

Following the EGM

*** Officers**

It was agreed that Dalila Heath would continue in office as Secretary, and Judith Payling as Treasurer, with Richard Mellish continuing as acting Chairman.

*** Constitution Amendments**

The amendments are being made as authorised. A revised version of the Constitution will be submitted to the Charity Commission and put on the SIFD website.

*** Charitable Incorporated Organisation**

Brenda Steventon has commenced work on the project to obtain this status for the SIFD.

*** Teachers List and discussions at the EGM**

The Committee noted the opinions and ideas from the EGM, which will be appropriately implemented.

Membership

Two new Affiliation applications have been received and approved, for London Balfolk and Peak Dance. The Committee noted that it looks forward to the next progress report from the subgroup considering Membership Structure.

Publicity

The Committee understands that the redesign of the website is almost complete. A new batch of publicity cards has been produced, as have the annual leaflets. It is hoped that work on the production of a new SIFD banner will be completed shortly.

SIFD material

It was noted that it is several years since P10 was produced. An enquiry will be made in the SIFD News as to what recordings, if any, the membership would like the Society to produce in the future.

Sunday Dances

It was reported that for 2018 the Dances ran at a small deficit (excluding Band expenses which are covered from other SIFD funds). Bookings at PHCC have been made for 2019.

Daycourses

It was noted with disappointment that there had been no response to the items in the News by Brenda Steventon (suggesting and inviting group participation/ leadership of Daycourses, leading to sharing of varied material), and by Judith Payling (asking what sort of courses /repertoire/ etc dancers would like the SIFD to organise).

Eastbourne International Folk Festival

The Committee has had contact with the 2019 organiser of the "international" side. A donation is being made in support of efforts to encourage people to "try international".



Letters

Dear Janet,

Having perused the list of Hon. mems last month I would like to suggest that few people have ever been so valuable to the Society as Ron Wilks. He has been a pillar of strength on matters technical, compiled the archive, videoed competently countless courses and occasions and turned up to events reliably.

What are the criteria for this award?
Could they be listed in future magazines?
Who decides?

Fiona Howarth



Friends Re-United

For more than 50 years Mercia Macdermott and Susan Iggleden had not met since their days dancing with the Vasil Levsky Bulgarian Dance Group in London. Sue, now Haydock, and dancing with Kitka Bulgarian Folklore Group in Rochester, was browsing through the internet looking for items of Bulgarian costume when she came across a book about Bulgarian culture written by a name she knew – Mercia Macdermott.

Mercia (left) and Sue meeting for the first time in over 50 years.



Through a bit of detective work – the internet is good for some things! – she located Mercia, now 91, and living on the south coast. Sue went to visit and found a very spritely and active lady with many memories of our time together and the people we used to dance with. We had a lovely lunch and Sue left promising to visit again.

As a result Sue is now trying to trace former members of the Vasil Levsky Bulgarian Dance Group. Any still alive are likely to be quite elderly. They remember their drummer Narendra (sadly no longer with us, see page 6).

Sue is also trying to trace ex pupils of the Gordon Girls School, Gravesend. The school had its own Bulgarian dance group, lead by Honor Jackson née Levine. Again if anyone knows of anyone in this group, please get in touch.

If you have any information please email Sue on susanjhaydock@aol.com

Sue Haydock



Rivieradance News

It was a joy to have our much-loved teachers, the “dream-team”, Yves, France, Cristian and Sonia at Rivieradance 2019. They have brought us so many great dances and well chosen music, it was difficult to decide which ones to include in the evening programmes. But it was also a very special occasion, because it was the last workshop of Yves Moreau’s 52-year teaching career. So it was a privilege to celebrate this with him and France in the UK. We have much to thank them for, as we have many dances still popular in our repertoire, and many happy memories of times we have spent with them.

The dates for the next Rivieradance are: Wednesday 5th - Monday 10th February 2020.

I am delighted that Erik Bendix has agreed to come and teach. We very much enjoyed his workshops in 2015, but it is rare that he comes to the UK. A second teacher is yet to be decided.

More information will follow. Please save the dates!

Cathy Meunier



Dear Janet,

I’m hoping to find a good home for a book of mine entitled ‘An Introduction to Meter and Rhythm in Balkan Folk Music’ by Walter W. Kolar printed in 1974 by Duquesne University Tamburitzans Institute of Folk Arts, Pittsburgh.

It is roughly A4 in size, with a soft cover.

The first 30 pages are devoted to explaining Balkan meter and rhythm, the rest (another 60 pages) contains musical examples of songs and dances from Romania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Greece, and Serbia. Several of the titles of the musical examples are in Cyrillic but there are indexes for each of three sections with the titles in Latin/Roman script. The words to the songs are in Cyrillic.

If anyone is interested, I would appreciate postage and packaging cost or, where possible, I could pass the parcel! My email for anyone interested is helendebray@gmail.com

Helen de Bray

Dear Janet

It was with some sadness that I learned of the death of Nigel Glendinning a few days ago. He was in his mid nineties.

'Glen' and his wife Mary ran an International Folk dance group at the Croydon YMCA in the 1980's. I attended there regularly each week on a Monday evening, as well as attending Steve and Joy Steventon's Merton Folk Dance group on a Wednesday evening. Thus was my introduction to regular and intensive International Folk Dancing. Mary was the extrovert dance teacher, regularly telling us that the next dance was 'our favourite', especially when we tried to sneak out at home time. Glen stayed in the background operating the reel to reel tape machine to provide the music. He also made the tea during the break.

I left the group in the mid 1980's to pursue other dancing interests, but saw Mary and Glen regularly at the Eastbourne festival. Mary herself died a few years ago. I knew their son Adrian from when we both worked at Smiths Industries in New Addington.

I don't know if Mary and Glen were ever members of the SIFD, but some of their group may have joined the SIFD in later years as members of other groups.

The group has since become the Croydon International Folk Dance group which meets every second and fourth Monday each month at the Shirley Methodist Church Hall. I last saw Glen there at the Christmas party. He appeared in reasonable health, but did not remember me.

Alan Picot



SIFD March Dance

This month the MC on Sunday 3rd March will be Jeanette Hull.

The SIFD dance is held at Primrose Hill Community Centre, Hopkinson's Place, Fitzroy Road, London NW1 8TN. The SIFD Band will be playing for us as usual and we start prompt at 6.45pm, finishing in time to clear the hall by 9.30pm (hall available from 6.30pm).

The next dance will be led by The SIFD Band on Sunday 7th April. See you there,

Brenda Steventon



SIFD Committee

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WHAT'S ON IN MARCH

- S.I **Sunday 3rd SIFD DANCE** see page 13
- S.I **Mar. 9: BALKANPLUS** - MC - Bob Robinson, held in Trefusis, Cecil Sharp House, Camden NW1 7AY, starting at 7.00pm. Admission £6.
- Sunday 10th CONCERT & DANCE WITH KLEZMER BAND**
She'koyokh 15.00 at Crookes working Men's Club, Sheffield. Details on their web site or Greg Boyd gregboyd99@aol.com
- Saturday 16th RUSSIAN & UKRAINIAN DANCES** 2pm - 4.30pm
Storrington & Sullington Parish Hall, Thakeham Road, Storrington RH20 3PP Suitable for all, £9 to include tea and biscuits. Book with Sue but pay on the door. Part of the Horsham Year of Culture, see website for details. suekewley@outlook.com
- S.I **Sunday 17th IPSWICH DAY WORKSHOP - MAGGIE O'REGAN**
with Balkan Dances at Witnesham Village Hall near Ipswich. 11-4, cost: £12. Contact Sally Fletcher on 01473 252824 or emailfletchersm@aol.com
- Fri. 29th-Mon.1st 3 NIGHT INT. FOLK DANCING & WALKING**
led by Phil & Brenda Steventon at HF, Freshwater Bay House, I.o.W. PO40 9RB details: HF 0345 470 8558 or Phil & Brenda: 020 8397 9649
- S.I **Saturday 30th GREEK DANCING - CHRISANDRA HARRIS** at the New Stapleford C.Centre, Washington Drive. Jctn 26 of M1, A6002 onto Coventry Lane, past Bramcote Hills Park, right at 1st mini r/about, left 2nd r/about; 2.15-5.30.p.m. £7.00 gill.morral@ntlworld.com