

Society for International Folk Dancing

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July 2020

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

This month is marked by the sad news of the deaths of three of our members; Sue Clark, Dennis Turner and Graham Crowder. There are obituaries for Sue, Dennis and Graham from their friends.

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The front cover picture (Také Podkrkonoší mělo bohatě yšivané kroje) and the back cover picture (V úrodné oblasti jihočeských rybníků se nosil honosný blatský kroj) are two of several that Dennis sent to me last year. The motif produced from an Akhtamar performance photo.

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The International Folkdancers in Ottawa have a calendar of virtual folk dance events from all over the world:

<https://www.internationalfolkdancersofottawa.ca/en/welcome/#section4>

The Ontario magazine may also be freely viewed on the OFDA website:

<http://ofda.ca/wp/magazine/>

Also, these are the links from 5th and 12th of June which Mitko Petrov has provided to his YouTube dance sessions.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_9X9PCU_d6A
[youtube.com/watch?v=jLhw-q7oL0U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jLhw-q7oL0U)

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Ed.



Balaton and Doina

Dear Janet

As you might have guessed, in the end we had to postpone the Embankment performances for Balaton and Doina. I live in hope that we might do something by the end of the summer, or into September, but I doubt it.

For both groups this will be the first Embankment we have missed for 30 years (we missed one before when they replaced the old stage with the current one).

Best wishes

Leslie Haddon

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Oct. 3: WORLD DANCES WITH ANNE LEACH + some by Gill Morral. A mix of partner and non-partner dances. 10.30am -4.30pm with a lunch break 1-2pm. Day course £10.00, ½ day £7.00. Bramcote Memorial Hall, Church Street, Nottingham, NG9 3HD. For further details please contact Gill Morral – gill.morral@ntlworld.com or 0115 9171831.

S.I Oct. 16: RAINMAKERS 44th ANNIVERSARY DANCE, 8pm-10.45pm at St Michael's Parish Hall, Broadway, Letchworth, Hertfordshire, SG6 3PQ. £10.00. MC Jill Bransby with live music from Cloudburst. Please bring food to share. More info from Mark (01462 454210). **SUBJECT TO CORONAVIRUS RESTRICTIONS BEING LIFTED.**

Nov. 6-9: THREE 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 Harrington House, Bourton on the Water, Gloucestershire GL54 2BY



*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.*



Out of Lockdown

Soon I'll find delight
In flowering dawn. Sunlight'll
Fracture doubts so ill-gotten.
Despair, sempiternalis forgotten.

Can you spot the gimmick behind this verse?
Answer on page 11

Simon Guest



Evoline - Switzerland

Social distancing dance kit – not your usual dance instructions!

With the relaxation of corona restrictions allowing six people from different households to meet outside with appropriate social distancing, I provide details of our measures taken to allow us to dance outside which we have now done several times in June. The idea is to mark out a social distancing circle on the ground that will provide an indication of the correct distance apart. The circle actually turns out to be a hexagon. Assuming you are on grass and as illustrated below, you will need the following:

- One piece of rope/cord 12m long marked at 2m intervals
- One piece of rope/cord 2m long with a loop/eye in one end
- Wire tent pegs
- Hammer (for the pegs)

Decide where you want to dance and mark the centre of the circle with the tent peg and attach the 2m rope. At the end of the 2m rope will be the first point of your circle/hexagon. Drive a peg into the ground and trap the 12m rope under it at one of the marked positions on it. Ensure peg is flush with ground so there is no trip hazard. Establish the second position by using the 2m rope and the next marked position on the 12m rope. Where the two ropes meet will be the next position which is also marked with a peg. Repeat until all positions are marked. Remove the 2m rope. It might seem a complicated set of instructions but it should take no more than 5 minutes or so to set up.



If you are on a hard surface then you might be able to use chalk or spray paint as long as nobody objects to the graffiti!

The idea is never to step over the rope into the centre. The distance between each other in the line of dance can only be maintained by being vigilant using the points marked by the rope as reference. Obviously in a dance that requires movement towards the centre of the circle then you will need to dance further away from the rope to allow you to take steps towards the centre without crossing over the rope! Note that this method of social distancing isn't fool proof as there is no physical barrier and if two of you decide to dance in opposite directions then you will meet!

Greg Boyd



"Dancing in Isolation" last month reminded me of the occasion when Philip Thornton danced in isolation. Many years ago, when the SIFD used to put on a full show at the Royal Albert Hall (three performances, one on the Friday and two on the Saturday). The custom was to open the show with something that would impress the audience - which Philip was well able to do.

The lights were turned off and there was just a spotlight on him alone in the centre of the vast arena. I cannot remember much about the actual dance he did but I remember the magnificent Balkan costume he wore, the very intricate footwork, the Balkan music in the background (I seem to remember some daggers being involved in the dance!) and this solo performance was a superb opening to our show. The audience was transfixed.

At another of our R.A.H. shows Philip was again chosen to give the opening item with a solo performance, this time playing an alpenhorn (an instrument several feet long, the 'bowl' resting on the ground) to summon the Austrian team to get ready to come on. It is a great feat to blow into it and produce the right noise but Philip, ever the showman, managed it superbly.

I wish I had photographs of these performances to put in the News but I was just a girl then and photography hadn't been invented! Perhaps there are some etchings on the walls of a cave somewhere!

Lily Avery

Sue Clark – obituary



We former members of Pembrokeshire International Folk Dance group, which folded in 2018, are saddened by the death of our leader Sue Clark. Sue was well-known in SIFD circles, having been a prominent member and accredited teacher for many years.

Her knowledge and experience of the great range of dances she taught amazed us, her enthusiasm was infectious, and her insistence on correct posture and timing kept us in line and gave us a sense of pride in our performance. She broke down the most challenging dances such as Hora Vechia from Romania and Kreuz König from Germany into short sections until we mastered the whole.

After running a dance group in Newport, Gwent, she and her husband Vic moved to Pembrokeshire where in 1986 she founded PIFD, with a tiny core of members, hardly enough for a set or a complete circle. By the Twenty-first Century the numbers had grown, with nearly twenty at the maximum, until shrinking as old age crept over Sue and the remaining members, until the group was no longer viable. With Sue's encouragement several members taught at other groups the dances they had so thoroughly learned from her.

She missed the group enormously. As poor mobility and Parkinson's disease restricted her life she bore her afflictions with great fortitude and proud memories of many years of teaching. She deserves the grandest of funerals with all her favourite music, sadly not possible in these cramped days, but when these restrictions are lifted we will have a party and give her a suitable send off. Restless always in life, may you now rest in peace Sue.

Signed: All your PIFD friends

Another Past Disaster Tale

Whilst writing the scripts for a book which **may** be accepted by the Publisher, and reading some of the memories in the current News Letter, I remembered one which is very much in my memory -

Selpar's very first appearance in the Central Hall, in Birmingham on
the night of the

BIRMINGHAM BOMBING.

It was one of many programmes 'put on' by the (WMMDA) West Midlands Movement and Dance Association - at one time an annual 'get together' for all groups to demonstrate their newly acquired dance skills.

From our changing rooms off the balcony, we could see not hundreds but a thousand-plus seated in the main hall. We heard many sirens - as of Police, Fire and Ambulance services but a message came round to all the leaders of the groups - that after the Finale, all groups must exit via the 'back door' of the building and disperse with great care to their cars, etc., parked behind the Hall. Then the drivers must examine their vehicles carefully - including exhaust pipes etc. in case they had been 'tampered with' or even 'booby-trapped'. What a commotion **that** created. I had my brother, in the car of a friend, to look after and I had also had a very happy congratulations from the Head of P.E. whom I met during the evening.

Anyway, we ultimately got to our respective cars. It wasn't 'till the next morning, via T.V. and radio, that we had details of the two attacks (both on pubs) in the City Centre. As it happened, two of the Sixth Form of the Grammar School I was teaching in at that time were badly injured but survived the incident, Thank God!

Along the way, Selpar will celebrate its 50th Anniversary in 2023, and although dance can no longer be part of my 'activity', I hope there will be some sort of re-union.

Sybil Chapman



Social Disdancing

June 1st arrived and at last six of our group could dance together in the garden. We have managed the following ‘social distance’ dances:

Ashrei Haish	Lago Sopu Sopu
Charachan Odori	Librazhdit
Chilili	Mal Hao
Dagh Gorani	Ram Wong
Gelin Halayi	Senhor da Serra*
Kerimoglu	Valle Dardhare
Koshua Bon Odori	Valle Kosovare
Kotataki Ondo	Yattusaka



* We started dancing Senhor da Serra and all realised at the same time that it was a *touching* dance! Two (mother and daughter) happily carried on, two did some weird freestyle avoidance technique, but my partner just grabbed my hands and said “Don’t be silly” which made me nervous because no less than three neighbouring houses are homes to fairly senior policemen!

Valle Dardhare and Valle Kosovare lent themselves to distancing at the ‘jab your neighbour in the ribs bit’. Our Monday evening sessions have certainly caught the attention of the neighbours, one parks his wheelchair in the drive to watch; he loves Albanian music and wishes

he had heard it earlier in life. My next-door neighbour is happy for any ‘overflow’ to dance in his garden so we are able to increase our number to twelve.

Valle e Rexhës is on my social distance list, but I’m a bit worried that if we tried it someone would end up in a rose bush or an undercover nettle, the dance covers so much ground. There are, of course, many more Japanese dances besides those on the above list that we could try but I have encountered some resistance on that front (apparently four from Japan is enough). So I would be grateful for any suggestions of likely dances to fit the current 2m guidelines (rumoured soon to shrink)

Janet Douglas



June Caption

My caption for the small girls on page 13, making them honorary Bulgarians for the purpose:

Dezinteriya za rutse? Kakvo e tova? Moga li da ya yam?

(Hand sanitiser? What is it? Can I eat it?)

Caroline Thomas Dunav Balkan Group



Dear Janet,

How about: If that’s my right hand, why is that your left?

Philip Lloyd,
Barlow Group, Manchester.



Answer to ‘Out of Lockdown’.

All the words start with S,F,I or D and within each line the initial letters are in order. **S.G.**

Dunford House



Sheila Cott; 'May News', gave us an overview of the history of Dunford, and how it came to SIFD use. Dunford became special to those who knew it during the period 1972 to 1986 when the Rev. Peter Hayman was Principal. He was appointed in 1968 on terms to ensure that it was a financial success as well as being part of the YMCA educational programme. Sadly his wife died six months later leaving him with two daughters aged six and eight.

Hence the house became his home and part of their education. Realizing that change was needed to ensure financial stability; the house was rearranged and the accommodation increased progressively to allow larger groups and for commercial companies use midweek. Peter Hayman also gave much attention to making guests feel welcome with an atmosphere which hit you on entry. It was this that made Dunford special; with a waiting list for weekends there. Following his retirement in 1986 and a change in YMCA policy, this atmosphere disappeared and Dunford became just another centre. Well summed up with the ending of Jonathon Swift's words on Blenheim Palace, "It is a house but not a home"!

Richard Cobden set up Dunford as we knew it with the aid of the public subscription of £80,000 given to him for his seven years selfless work for the Anti-Corn Law League, and to allow him to remain in Parliament. His work is interesting, and now part of our national heritage. It is sad that the YMCA have not given full regard to that, which was transferred to them by the Cobden family.

Roy Clarke



Dennis Turner

Dennis Turner died on 9th March. His home was in Kent, at Gillingham but I know little about his early years. National Service was with the R.A.F. Following demobilisation, Dennis took advantage of the campaign for ex-servicemen to take up teaching. With his physic, tall and thin and with a broad range of interests that suited him. Sadly he lost the sight of his left eye and was handicapped by another cataract in his right eye. Despite difficulty he was a good walker and member of the Medway Ramblers. He was a long standing and strong supporter of S.I.F.D. dances, courses, summer schools and weekends away. On retirement he took an O.U. Degree and enjoyed residential short courses covering music, history, religion etc. to continue and complete a full life.



Roy Clarke

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Dennis took part in several Bognor Regis dance courses and an Ohrid Macedonian dance course. There, we visited Struga with him to chance on a festival of traditional dance and costume. (photo above) **Ed.**

Remembering Graham Crowder –

by one of his dance group members

Zdravets, the Balkan dance group started by Graham, met for the first time on 24 July 1989. It was not long before he found a suitable venue in St Ninian's Church hall in Comely Bank, Edinburgh which was "home" for our fortnightly meetings and various dance parties for over 20 years. Although we regularly told him we would be happy to pay more and I pointed out that other groups charged more for an hour than he did for 90 minutes, Graham refused to charge us a realistic amount even as numbers reduced over the years. Still, he continued to subsidise the group. We put our money in an honesty box and I don't think he ever checked that the amount in it was correct. When numbers went down to 4-6 we were lucky to move to a room in the flat which a group member used as a cultural centre. Little did we know on 21 March 2019 that would be our last meeting after almost 30 years. After a long break over the summer Graham tried to find a suitable date to start up again but this proved impossible and sadly he decided last December that the group would end.

We were so lucky to have such a beautiful dancer as leader who was so enthusiastic, knowledgeable about style and music – and also had big feet so that in the line it was easy to follow him! Graham never cajoled people to get up and join the line (though he did give me a look if I was not on the floor for the start of a dance). He didn't like to spend lots of time teaching, so as a result of this we regularly did around 20+ dances in our 90-minute sessions. Sometimes he taught a dance he'd learnt at a course, always clearly and never laboured. If we liked it, it became part of our repertoire. I was also grateful for his encouragement to lead a dance I had liked on a course and I appreciated his gentle, supportive clarification if something was unclear.

Over the years, I became very aware that he would carefully tailor the choice of dances to those who were actually at the session and always achieved a balance between gentler ones and other faster or more intricate dances that fewer people would do. Sometimes he set his i-pod to 'random' and we'd do whatever came up - if we knew it. It could be that remembering the patterns was a collective effort but it was good fun to try to remember a dance we hadn't done for some time.

Graham was well supported by Jane over more than 25 years. They were a good team and the banter between them often entertained us – a great double act.

With friends, Graham formed the Balkan band, Tsarvuli, with the idea that they would be able to play for dancing. Over the years they gained in confidence, skill and repertoire so that on a party night the proportion of dances they played grew to more than 50%. They even played at Graham and Jane's wedding party in 2010. On more than one occasion Graham started the intro playing with the band, then joined the head of the dance line to start us off as no-one felt confident enough to lead the dance, then when he reckoned we were OK he bounded back to the band. Their repertoire was mainly Bulgarian and Macedonian as that was the music the core members preferred. Many will be familiar with Graham's music-making and also occasions when the other band members came to play during an evening at one of Cathy Meunier's weekend courses

I will always be grateful for the fun and friendship of Graham's dance sessions and for the music and dance which he introduced me to and the joy it gave me. I am sure I am not alone in this.

Ruth Bowman

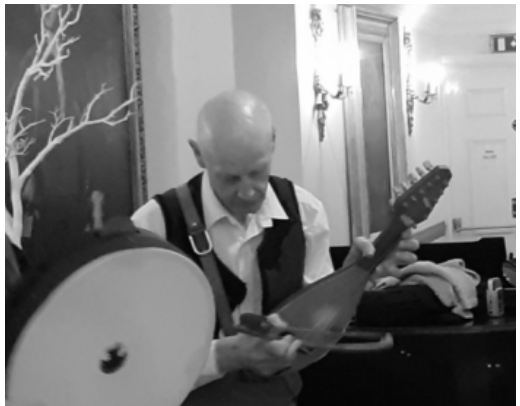


Graham Crowder

At the end of May, we lost a most treasured member of our dance community.

Graham Crowder, wonderful dance leader, Balkan folk musician and a dear friend, died after a short and completely unexpected illness.

It was always a great pleasure to have Graham's



company on our dance courses and holidays. Sitting at dinner, or at any social occasion with Graham, was enjoyable and entertaining. He had a great sense of humour and was a delight to be with. *Cont.>*

He often led the dances which others hadn't the confidence to lead, and with Jane next to him they made a wonderful leader "team". His rare musical talents enabled us to enjoy live music with traditional Balkan instruments (including the Bulgarian gadulka), played with amazing dexterity. And you could always rely on Graham to be able to understand and interpret the most complex of Balkan rhythms. I have often sought his opinion on choice of music and dances when organising dance events, for which I am very grateful. Since I sent out the sad news of his sudden illness and passing away, I have heard from so many dancers and musicians who recall the things that he said and did with great affection. Some go back to our dance trips and courses in the 80's and 90's, and some are much more recent. Graham never pushed himself forward, but his infectious enthusiasm, outstanding abilities as a dancer and musician, and delightful sense of humour caught everyone's attention and left lasting memories. Hugely talented, but modest and gentle, Graham was a gem who brought sparkle to our dance events.

Cathy Meunier



Balkanplus, Barnet and more

It is with regret that I announce the cancellation of Iliana Božanova's UK workshops scheduled for September and also, in common with other groups, that our monthly Balkanplus meetings will not resume until further notice. I expect our dance activities will revive as soon as the restrictions are lifted but prospects of recovery for Cecil Sharp House are much less certain. These are hard times for such institutions. Balkanplus has booked Mitko Petrov for 9th/10th October next year – something pleasurable to look forward to when the pandemic has, hopefully, been shown the door.

Iliana tells me that she and Todor have been participating in a series of ZOOM sessions organised by the Folk Arts Center of New England (FACONE) based in Boston, Massachusetts. Their final workshop is on Saturday 11th July from 7pm to 9pm our time. Yves Moreau, Tineke van Geel and Steve Kotansky have been among the guest teachers. Visit: www.facone.org for further information.

The Barnet group has been ZOOMing too thanks to the combined skills of Charlotte Clare and Phil Dobison. We have been meeting fortnightly and hope to finish the season with a bang on Friday 10th July although it will be hard to match the exuberance of our traditional summer party. In these link-ups, the pleasure of seeing friends outweighs the impact of the inevitable technical problems. We can share joys and sorrows. Alas, we mourned the death of a cherished long-term member and dear friend, Stella Mayhew – a victim of Coronavirus.

I have just heard the sad news of Graham Crowder's death. Graham was as nice a person as you would ever wish to meet. A man of intellect and gentle humour, I regret not having the opportunity of seeing him much in recent years. In 1989 we were participants at a dance seminar in Plovdiv organised by Cathy Meunier. It was there that we first met Iliana. She was assisting the esteemed choreographer Dimitar Doicinov and it was her first experience of teaching foreigners. Apart from the dancing, the week was remembered for the light-hearted moments. Word got around that I had been asked to deliver some brassieres to Milka, a guide on an earlier Dunav visit, and so was forced to pose for photographs by a market stall displaying underwear for ladies of fulsome figure. Then there were the earnest but probably wasted efforts by Graham and myself to cure Val (Lenny as was) of her smoking habit.

I have dug out the video of the trip by Alan Morton – another much missed man. It includes Iliana and her colleague Stanka demonstrating all the dances in the official programme and, interestingly, the men (including Graham) showing the results of a private tutorial by Ivan, Stanka's husband and dancer with Trakia ensemble, of a specially created version of the men's dance Capras. It has reminded me to find a suitable recording so that I could introduce it to anyone who cares to try it. It would be appropriate to dedicate the dance to Graham. I gave Iliana an abridged DVD copy of the video when we next met in 2008 during Yves Moreau's tour of Thrace. She and Todor accepted my invitation to visit the UK the following year. They thoroughly enjoyed their visit to Edinburgh on that tour and Graham and Jane were the perfect hosts. I proffer my deepest sympathy to Jane.

To everyone, keep your spirits up and try to remember the steps when the music starts again.

Brian Dowsett

Friss Magyar Csárdás Hungarian

A Mod.

8 Am Dm G E7 Am C AmG C

13 Am E7 Am D G7 Dm Am

20 G C G C F C7 F

25 C7 F Bb C7 F Dm

C Presto

31 Dm G C F Dm A7 Dm G7 C7 F

Dm A7 Dm G C7 F Dm A7 Dm

"Wilf Horrocks' Collection"



Friss Magyar Csárdás has elicited nothing, better luck next time.

Perhaps next month the music, with the words for the song, of **Bourrée à Sept Sauts** from France will trigger some interest.

I can manage to translate that (seven jumps) but the Czechoslovakian on page 3 is another matter. **Ed.**





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NOTHING ON IN JULY



All material for the August issue of the SIFD NEWS must be received by the Editor in writing by 18th July.