

SIFD NEWS



January 2021

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

Let's hope we can all look forward to a

Happy New Year and a Return to Freedom

I have received quite a few seasonal cards and phone calls in appreciation of the SIFD News throughout 2020; our little publication seems to have succeeded in helping to divert attention away from the pantomime surrounding us. This is only because of the items that have been sent in. Keep it up!

Pam Rayment took the back cover photo at Billingham a couple of years ago; and I spent some of my enforced solitude creating the Mexican theme. I am also making some Mexican costumes because I know the girls (officially ladies now!) in my group will love them - so I must brush up on the few Mexican dances I have been taught.

The latest issue of Folk Dancer Online (magazine of the Ontario Folk Dance Association) announced that Dorothy Sloan had died in September aged 90. She was an Honorary Member of the SIFD way back from the early years. (The magazine may be viewed on the OFDA website: <https://ofda.ca/wp/magazine/>).

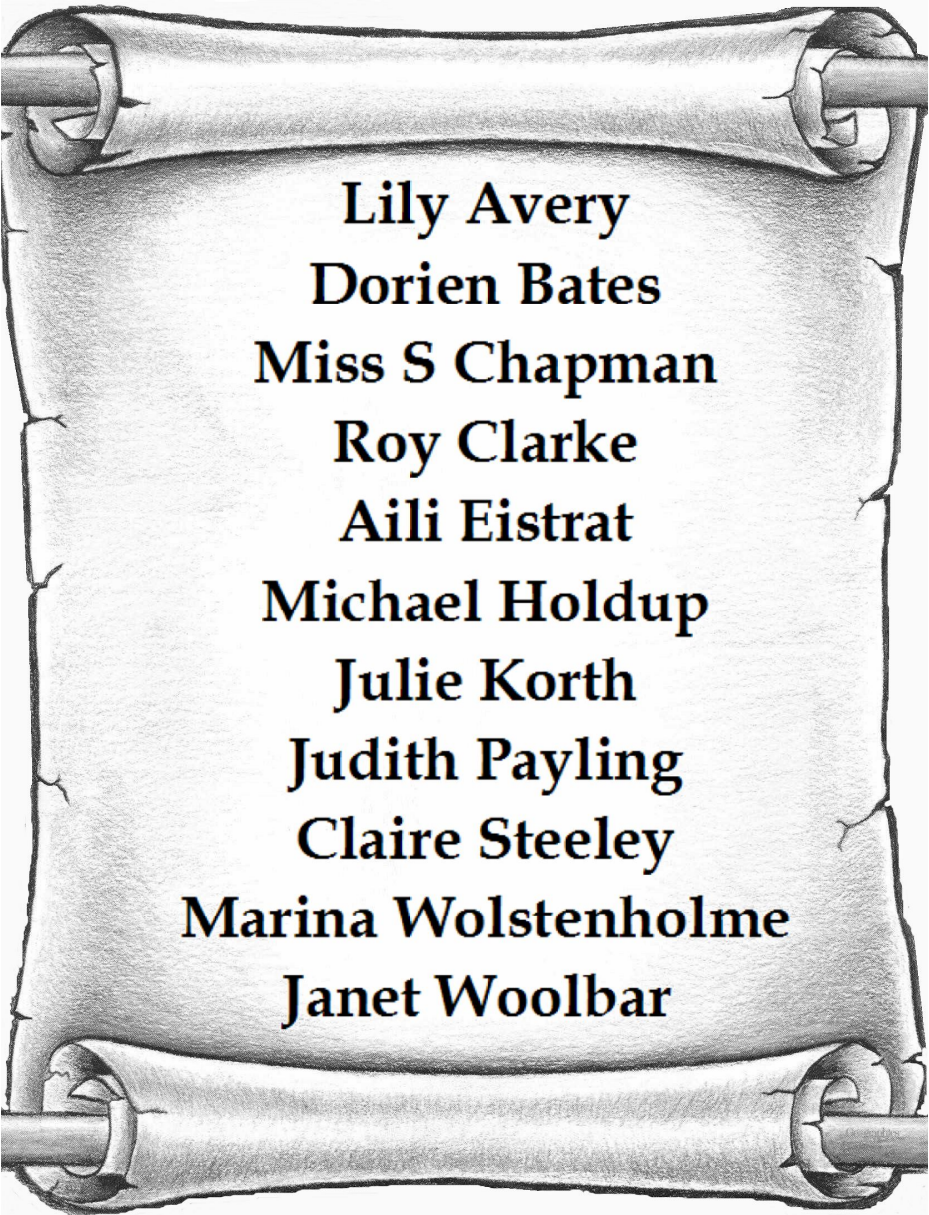
Lastly, all my hopes of a pre-Christmas dance were dashed by Pulborough council just **two days** before the planned event. It had been shaping up to be pretty good. I just hope I managed to warn everyone in time and that nobody shivered alone outside the hall on that wintry day. Next time, (and I will keep trying) I will definitely take contact details of prospective dancers in case of calamity.

Apparently tiers are to blame.....

as for 2021, I certainly will not be lining up for the untested, dna changing vaccine and its evergrowing list of adverse reactions (including death) for a disease you don't know you've got unless you're tested.

The list of S.I.F.D. Honorary Members is overleaf.

Ed.

A scroll with names written on it. The scroll is unrolled and held by two wooden rods. The names are written in a serif font, centered on the scroll. The scroll has a textured, parchment-like appearance with some creases and shadows.

Lily Avery
Dorien Bates
Miss S Chapman
Roy Clarke
Aili Eistrat
Michael Holdup
Julie Korth
Judith Payling
Claire Steeley
Marina Wolstenholme
Janet Woolbar

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- S.I **Apr.30-May 3(4): SIFD HALSWAY MANOR WEEKEND** of dancing, walking, sight-seeing at Crowcombe in Somerset. Details: Ian Green - icgreen@tiscali.co.uk or Robin Morris - robinnimbo@aol.com

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.*



The Diary of Caroline Thomas

I have been typing out my teenage diaries: a project that evokes memories I thought I had lost for good. I read that on 17 November 1959, aged 17, I trotted up the road from my home in Folkestone to play the piano for the Folkestone District National Dance Group run by Olive Field, whose daughter was at my school. My piano teacher had recommended me to them, and the lure of earning 7/6d clinched the deal. They gave me a ticket for 'See How They Dance' at the Royal Albert Hall on 9 December. Thus began a life-time of playing for folk dancing for them, for the SIFD when I moved to London, for evening classes, groups, the Balalaika Dance Group and now Dunav and the Balkan scene. If I had decided that 7/6d (£6 in today's money) just wasn't worth giving up an evening of television, I might have missed all that!

Caroline Thomas

Folk Dance activities in Lockdown

What does an old folkie in his mid seventies do now that we are either shielding or in lockdown? I had been a regular attendee at the SIFD Sunday dances, Woodvale FDG and the Croydon FDG. I had found that due to advancing years dance opportunities were diminishing. I found it harder and harder to keep up. I then discovered folk dance and music clips on youtube. I researched American folk: The Carter Family songs, Cajun music. I looked at the English folk music scene: Fishermen's Friends, Steeleye Span. This was traditional music from my youth. After one SIFD meeting in London on a Saturday evening I went upstairs to look at the London Barn Dance Company event. The live music was American in style, the sort I had liked in the past. I sneaked in and stayed for about three dances. I found to my surprise that I could cope. I went to the LBDC event the next month, and again I found I could cope. I didn't have the energy of the young people there but what I lacked in energy I made up for in skill and experience. Subsequently I went regularly for about two years until the dances were cancelled due to the pandemic. The International Folk Dance groups I attended were also cancelled. I was now back on youtube clips. Phil and Brenda Steventon started on line ZOOM dance classes on a Wednesday evening and a Thursday morning. I regularly followed these. Brenda cleverly rearranged the dances so that you could do them on your own at home. This helps to keep people in touch and to hear any news. But otherwise I was back to youtube folk dance clips.

I then discovered songs by the Maori people of New Zealand. At the last Dance Around The World event at Cecil Sharp House in October 2019 one of the displays was by the London based Maori group Ngati Ranana which meet at New Zealand House in London. I really liked this display. Subsequently I dug up every youtube clip of Maori singing I could find. I soon found favourites: "Pokarekare ana" sung by Hayley Westenra,

" te iwi e" sung by the New Zealand Youth Choir and others. There is the hauntingly beautiful te hokinga mai (the return) performed by the children of Pakipaki primary school. The St Joseph's Maori Girls College choir produce many lovely songs in the Maori language, too numerous to mention. These songs were mainly written in the middle of the twentieth century. It is possible to translate some songs into literal English, but in doing so the actual or spiritual meaning is lost. I have referred to "folksong.org.nz" for translations.

The SIFD ran a day course of Maori dance in 1984 as can be seen on the SIFD Digital Archive. Some of the dances taught that day are just about recognisable when compared with those on Maori youtube clips. The one stick dance we did do regularly (Hoea te waka – Paddle this canoe) at SIFD events is rather slow and lacks slickness when compared with the real thing. The sitting down stick dance on the archive (generic type Titi Torea) is shown as E Papa Waiari (Oh Uncle Waiari) on most youtube clips. It seems to be mostly a children's singing game.

The Maori of New Zealand (or Aotearoa) were first encountered by Captain James Cook in 1769. He was leading an expedition to the island of Tahiti to observe the Transit of Venus across the face of the Sun. By comparing his observations with similar observations made in Europe would enable the distances to Venus and the Sun to be determined. The expedition was feasible because developments in navigation made it possible to accurately locate Pacific islands at that time. Cook visited other Pacific islands and noted that compared with English dances of the period some Polynesian islanders had quite intricate and beautiful dances. Could he have been thinking of Playford and English country dances here?

Back in the present day I have been perusing Maori songs on youtube. Many songs have actions associated with them. I was wondering if it was possible to learn some of these actions, and

possibly some of the Maori words from youtube. In some songs poi balls are used. These are balls about the size of tennis balls but much lighter on the end of a light piece of cord. The singer/dancer sways these balls to a routine in time with the music. This is seen on the SIFD digital archive, but not very expertly. There are youtube clips showing how to make them.

The Maori people suffered considerably under the British Empire. Although a treaty was signed at Waitangi in 1840 guaranteeing rights it was generally reneged upon in later years. After a series of disastrous wars they lost their lands to the white Europeans. In the 20th century the Europeans tried to eradicate Maori culture and language by forbidding its use in schools. However, today the language is making a comeback. Maori songs are taught to most school children. Many of the songs are about holding on to your culture, beliefs, and your people.

Nowadays there seems to be a general move worldwide that indigenous culture - music and language in particular - should not be lost. Today there are Maori language TV stations and Maori music and dance festivals. I am sure that we have all seen the Haka on TV at rugby matches.

Organisations like the SIFD and the EFDSS have a role to play in preserving dance and music from the World over.

Alan Picot



News from the West Midlands

Many of you may already have heard, that Willersley Castle Hotel in Cromford, Derbyshire has closed and is being sold off by Christian Guild Holidays. We have held our SIFD West Midlands Branch weekends there every other year since 2007, so this is very sad news.

I had a weekend in October 2021 booked for the next one, which has now obviously been cancelled. I made a few enquiries in the summer about alternative venues, including Hothorpe in Leicestershire, but have not yet found anywhere else, that fulfils our requirements and is not too expensive. If anyone has any suggestions, please contact me: margaretkaye@blueyonder.co.uk.

During this last strange year, we have not resorted to zoom dance classes in the West Midlands, but I have tried to keep everyone in our two dance groups engaged by sending out a 'Dance of the Week' in term-time since the end of March - a total of 31 weeks up to Christmas! The emails included video links to Youtube, an mp3 of the music, dance notes in many cases and my comments about the dances. Feedback has been mainly appreciative, though I did receive one or two complaints, that people were bumping into the furniture!

Let's hope that with vaccinations now underway, we may be able to return to 'normal' dancing together at some not too distant time in 2021.

With best wishes for a Happy New Year to everyone.

Maggie Kaye



Phil & Brenda Steventon - Zoom Online Dancing

We have been running our Zoom dancing for 7 months now. If you haven't tried it yet you are welcome to join us. Here's the list of the dances we've done, some with slight adjustments!

Albania

Chaj Zibede

Armenia

Karoun Karoun

Austria

Radetskymars

Siebenschritt

Belgium

De Kolom

La Pieternelle

Bolivia

Chilili

Bosnia

Ne Klepeci

Brazil

Samba Mixer

Bulgaria

Karamfil

Tropanka

Czech Republic

Bystricky

Denmark

Danish Schottische

Mellem Kagel

Estonia

Kalamies

France

Bannelou Lambaol

Branle de Cosnay

Chapelloise

Germany

Kleiner Schottische

Greece

Gaitanaki Rodou

Never on a Sunday

Hungary

Farkas Jatek

Israel

Hora Chadera

Musica Nisheret

Nigun Atik

Lithuania

Polka Keturine

Macedonia

Jano Janke

Koce Berberot

Mexico

Chotis de la Frontera

Netherlands

Paula's Dans

Riepe Riepe Garste

Poland

Zagrodnik

Portugal

Fado Blanchita

Indo Eu

Romania

Alunelul

Hora de la Langesti

Hora de la Risipiti

Russia

Moi Muzhenka

Vesyolaya Kadril

Zabaluda Dunina Galowka

Serbia

Davorike Dajke

Djatchko Kolo

Makazice

Switzerland

Stella di Maggio

Switzerland

Stella di Maggio

UK (England)

Duke of Kents Waltz

Halfe Hannikin

UK (Isle of Man)

Hop Tu Naa

UK (Scotland)

The Coanwood Stuarts

UK (Wales)

Ffaniglen

Migldi Magldi

USA

Grand Square

Stepping Out

Twelfth Street Rag

We shall be continuing in 2021 so do join us. We dance for about 50 minutes then have a short chat. It's been great to meet SIFD members from as far away as Edinburgh and even the South of France.

Classes are on Wednesday at 10:30am and/or 8:00pm - Both meetings will have the same programme. Our dances are mainly gentle ones that can be adapted to being danced at home on your own.

You are welcome to join us! Email us or give us a call for details.

If you're not a Zoom expert we'll help you get setup.

Take care everyone,

Phil & Brenda Steventon

Email: philip.steventon@btinternet.com

Tel: 020 8397 9649



Hora Mințita

My research on Hora Mințita has borne very little fruit; there is a recording of a soloist, one Nicolae Plesa playing jew's harp on youtube. It is very, very fast and must be a totally manic dance, it would take a genius accordionist to play at that speed.

To enrich your Romanian experience here is a photo taken by Andrew Hardwick at the Campulung Festival. It shows Romanian men doing some dance or other - maybe even Hora Mințita - who knows? There is a hint of humour in their knock-knees and facial expressions.

Opposite: a Romanian colouring-in offering as a filler.

Ed.



Hora Mințita

Romania

A *Fairly Fast*

6 Bb Eb Bb F7 Bb F7 Bb Eb

11 Bb F7 Bb Bb7 3 3 Eb

15 F7 Bb F7 Bb 3 3 Eb Eb

20 F7 Bb Gm 3 3 Cm Gm

25 Cm D7 Gm

31 Cm Gm Cm

36 D7 Gm fine F7 Bb Eb Bb

40 F7 Bb F7 Bb Eb Bb

F7 Bb F7 Bb DS al fine

Play: AABBCDDC

Transcribed by WH from a tape

"Wilf Horrocks' Collection"



Next month **Jabadao** from France will be featured - what do you know? **Ed.**



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C.I.O. number 1189141



WHAT'S ON IN JANUARY

Sunday 3rd January: NEW YEAR DANCE PARTY via zoom from Sheffield and other places starting 14.00 finishing 16.30 (approx.) in three sessions with dances presented by Greg Boyd, Sally Fletcher, Dawn Wakefield and others. For details and link to zoom please email: gregboyd99@aol.com Join for all or part. Bring your own food and drink but not to share!



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