

Society for International Folk Dancing

SIFD NEWS



JUNE 2021

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

A bit of a Hungarian theme this month, on the cover a very old picture from Mesokovesa. I am fascinated by the head dresses - are they giant pom-poms?

Ed.



Dear Janet,

The sad news of Aili Eistrat set me reminiscing. In the late 60s / 70s I worked at the Daily Express in Fleet Street, and somewhere nearby Aili held a Keep Fit Dance Class, not sure which, that I joined. She taught us a 'Rain Dance', Mayim, Mayim, which I really enjoyed. Then I found Margery Latham's class, from there I went to Gaye Saunte and Ken Ward's classes. Somewhere along the way I joined SIFD and a whole new world opened up. Day events, weekends away and holidays - Albania in particular.

In 1975 I went to the week of dancing at Swansea and met my future husband Ray Jones. We were dancing Dinga - not sure of spelling - and my watch chain caught on his Tshirt, and here we still are 44 years later. (We did disentangle the chain though.)

We both continued enjoying Evening Folk Dance Classes, Day Events, Dunford, Sidmouth, Eastbourne and Halsway Manor. We were at Halsway Manor when the snow came and we were Snowed In. I was expecting our Son at the time. Such lovely memories and so thank you Aili for introducing me to the wonderful world of International Folk Dancing.

With all good wishes,

from **Doreen Jones**

PS. Before Covid, we joined a Fitness with Friends Class which, again, included some Folk Dance steps, so I think I've come Full Circle!



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

S.I **Jul. 4: SUMMER'S DAY DANCE** 1pm - 4pm. at Pulborough Social Centre, Swan View, Lower Street, Pulborough, West Sussex, RH20 2BF. Cost £5. tel: 01243 265010 or sifdnews@hotmail.co.uk

Aug. 7-8: THE OLD SILK ROAD see below

Sep. 18: DANCES FROM AROUND THE WORLD, led by Anne Leach. 2.00–5.30pm at Bramcote Memorial Hall, Nottingham, NG9 3HD. £7.00. Contact Gill Morral – 0115 9171831 or gill.morral@ntlworld.com

S.I **Sep. 25: THANK YOU FOR THE DANCES** A Balkanplus day of dance at Cecil Sharp House led by Brian Dowsett. More details later. Subject to Covid restrictions being lifted. Contact: Brian email bvdowsett@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.*



Future Events

August 7th and 8th 2021 Nottingham

Dances and stories from the Old Silk Road with Chrisandra and Dalila Heath. A wonderful 2 day event in Chrisandra's Secret Studio. Details from Chrisandra, chrisandraharris@gmail.com



March 26th - April 2nd Taroudant Morocco 2022

Dances and stories from the Old Silk Road with Chrisandra and Dalila Heath, optional holistic yoga with Chrisandra. Award winning guest house with pool, gardens, fantastic staff and amazing food. Authentic Moroccan experiences in the gentle spring sunshine. Something to look forward to! Details from Chrisandra, chrisandraharris@gmail.com



Sept 14th - 25th 2022

Dance and Cultural tour to Georgia and Azerbaijan with Chrisandra. Dance classes with Baykal Dogan and local teachers. Discover these fascinating countries on this once only amazing holiday. Information from Chrisandra, chrisandraharris@gmail.com for a brochure, itinerary and full details.



Dances from around the World

September 18. 2.00 – 5.30pm

We invite you to come and join us in Nottingham to dance international folk dances from around the world, led by Anne Leach. This event was sadly cancelled in 2020 and we are very excited to be able to advertise it once again! Anne is an excellent teacher, known to many of you and she will lead a mixture of non-partner and partner dances from many different countries. It is not necessary to come with a partner. Everyone welcome. Bramcote Memorial Hall is a large, roomy hall, well ventilated if necessary and further details, especially around COVID regulations will follow nearer the time. Please see the diary entry above for cost, venue and contact details.

Trish Griffiths

Secretary

Nutbrook International Folk Dance Group

Dance Alphabet

Bakony Herdsmen's Dance (Hungary)

This is danced now chiefly as a pastime by the swineherds of Bakony district, Matra and Bükk. They carry axes or long crooks, wearing a festival costume of white, brilliantly stitched with coloured silks. For music they may use a bagpipe or the long flute. The central part of the dance is a mock combat, using polished small axes, or substituting these with gilded wooden swords. The Herdsmen's Dance also represents the killing of a boar, and is performed by two or more men. Shouting alternates with occasional singing of ancient refrains. The dance, with much stamping, is a display of dexterity in the handling of the axe or stick which each dancer holds. Whirling the weapons in their hands, they throw them to each other, pass the axe under the legs, squat and kick out the legs alternately, or leap in the air, striking the ankles together. In one version, the boar is represented by a hat placed on the ground between two dancers facing each other. A third man, squatting on his heels, tries to remove the 'pig' while the dancers whirl their axes horizontally above it, with twisting movements of the hands. Another version has the boar represented by a man, who chases the swineherd. Wielding his axe continually, the herdsman retreats in rhythm with the music, finally killing the 'boar' by striking the ground beside him with his axe. In a third version, a youth with an earthenware pot on his head, and enveloped in a sheet, is the boar, which the herdsman "kills" by cleaving the pot on the unfortunate youth's head.

A favourite dance of herdsmen and shepherds is Kanasc Tanc in which a crude stick cross is made (as a solar cross of the calendar dates) with two axes or crooks. According to the season, the steps of the dance (in each alternate quarter of the circle thus indicated) begin and end with the quarter of the year for the celebration. The swineherd traditionally carries his axe (for defence against attacking wolves), while the cowherds have staves; and shepherds have thinner crooks; but all these may serve to mark the small dance circle.



Bodnartanc (Hungary)

Hoop dance of the coopers in the region of Hegyolja, where Tokay wine is made. Depicting certain operations in the work of cask-making, such as sawing wood, and fixing the hoops while moving round the cask, the dance has many figures (in Erdobenyé there are fourteen), and is usually accompanied by gypsy music. It is danced at the vintage festivals by five men plus a sixth, who performs the balancing feat of rhythmically swinging a glass full of wine, without spilling any. Danced in circular formation, various patterns are made with hoops, one of which each dancer carries. Holding the hoops low, then high, the men first move round with skipping or running steps, in one direction, then the other, three times repeated, the circle drawing closer each time. There follow various figures - each man jumps over a hoop held low on the ground by his neighbour; an arch is formed with two hoops, through which the other dancers pass; the circle facing inwards, hoops are held as though interwoven, while the ring revolves three times; the interwoven hoops are raised and lowered three times, while the men sing a triple verse; the men dance in and out of spaces made by placing the overlapping hoops on the ground. Change of figure or direction is indicated by a stamp from the leader and the tune varies with the figures. Finally, a circle is formed and the hoops held high, while the sixth man 'swings the glass'. Standing in the centre of the circle, he sings "The gentleman drinks from a full glass", at the same time standing a small tumbler brimful of wine on the horizontal base of a stirrup-shaped hoop, which he holds at the top, between middle and forefingers. The glass is not fixed. In rhythm with the music, he swings hoop and glass in a figure of eight several times; then kneeling on the left knee, supported by the left hand, he turns nearly on his back, continuously swinging the glass. This is repeated to the right. Finally, he stands up, hoop and glass still swinging, while the circle of dancers clash their hoops together at the successful conclusion of this feat, which also ends the dance.

(These items were obtained from a "Dictionary of the Dance"
by W. G. Raffé)



News from the Committee

Encouragement and Assistance for Groups in the light of Covid-19 restrictions

For over a year the Society's Groups have been unable to meet in their usual way or hold events or workshops. As and when dancing resumes the Committee wants to offer groups incentive and assistance, in pursuance of the Society's objectives.

The Committee accordingly makes the following announcements:

1. Unused Teaching Fee Entitlements

Last summer it was announced that any unused teaching fee entitlements for 2019/20 would be carried forward to 2020/21. In the intervening period no in-person courses have been held so far, and any activity between now and the end of the membership year on 31st August 2021 will presumably be small. Therefore as at 31st August 2021 the 2020/21 teaching fee entitlement will be almost entirely unused, as will the amounts brought forward from 2019/20.

It has been agreed that these unused entitlements for 2019/20 and 2020/21 can be carried forward for use up to 31st August 2024.

2. Affiliation Fees for 2021/22

As a goodwill gesture the renewal fee for 2021/22, which would normally be due for payment by August 31st 2021, will be waived. This decision has been made in recognition of the fact that whilst the Affiliated Groups paid a full renewal fee back in August 2020 they will for the subsequent year running up to 31st August 2021 have been prevented from holding their usual SIFD-subsidised workshops or courses. The waiver is made in the interests of International Folk Dancing, to encourage and financially assist groups to resume activities when restrictions are lifted.

The teaching fee entitlement for 2021/22 will be unchanged.

Groups should note that it will be necessary to complete the renewal application forms as usual.

3. **Affiliated Groups with Public Liability Insurance under the SIFD Policy**

It is recognised that last summer participating groups paid for cover for 2020/21, in the hope that events and classes would be resuming soon. In the event, of course, dance activity was not as anticipated, and some if not all of the cover was probably not needed. It is therefore proposed that when the Insurance cover is renewed this summer the contribution required from groups wishing to remain within the scheme will be reduced to £20.

This proposal is being made as a goodwill gesture, to encourage and assist groups in the resumption of their activities, in pursuance of the Society's objectives.



Opanci



These are size 5 shoes I'd like to pass on.

As you will see, one strap of right hand pair is broken but a shoe repair man might be able to repair? I'm happy to give to anyone who could come and collect from Finchley as I'm not going to post office often. Maybe some day dancing in groups will start again?

Anyone interested can contact me by email helendebray@gmail.com
Warm wishes

Helen de Bray

Csibe Tánc

Hungarian



"Wilf Horrocks' Collection"

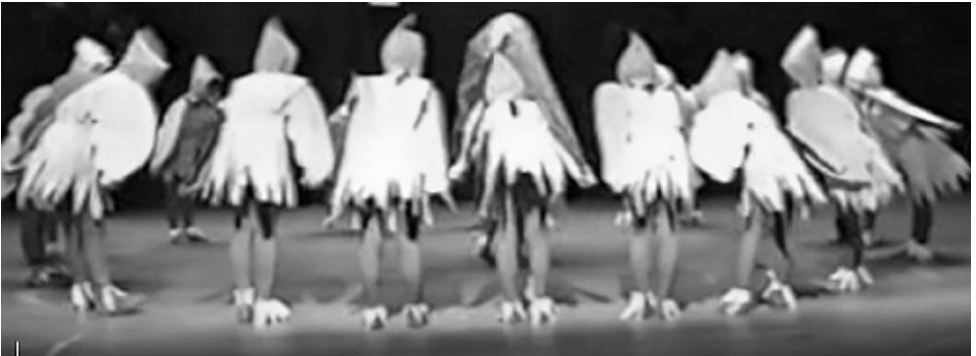


A search on the internet for information about **Csibe Tánc** has thrown up the following:

The music for **Csibe Tánc** is actually part of Mussorgsky's famous piano composition, Pictures at an Exhibition [1874], a suite of ten pieces including **the dance of the unhatched little chickens**.

Whether his music or the actual folk dance came first begs the question:

“What came first - the chicken or the egg?”



It seems to be danced by children, usually dressed as chicks or at least wearing a beak, and a bigger dancer as the mother hen. They run around in circles flapping their arms a bit and stop to bow (peck?) and lift one foot or the other.



La Montagnarde de St. Chartier will be featured next month and all information about it will be welcome. **Ed.**



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XXL Tour to Georgia, Armenia and (optional) Iran

June 2022

Following the successful XXL tour in 2018, Tineke & Maurits van Geel plan to organize a second XXL trip to 3 countries in 2022.

We are working hard to make it a wonderful experience. Would you like to be informed? Sign up for our Newsletter.

Send an email to: vangeel@xs4all.nl

tel. is +31-521 380 382 or mobile Tineke +31 -6 121 57 827.

We expect to publish more details on the tours before summer.



*All material for the July issue of the SIFD NEWS must be received by the Editor **in writing** by 17th June.*