



SIFD News



October 2021

Editor: Janet Douglas, Oak Cottage, 92 Rose Green Road, Bognor Regis, West
Sussex PO21 3EQ. Tel: 01243 265010 *sifdnews@hotmail.co.uk*

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

Dalila's holiday and mine are going to overlap next month. Hopefully, I shall have access to a computer so emails (up to the 18th) will not be affected, but **I will be unable to read any post via Royal Mail after the 10th of October for the November issue** of the SIFD NEWS.

Another offering, from a long past issue, on costumes from the former U.S.S.R. is on page 5. The front cover from Balkanplus, B.R.I.D.E, and Kitka (back cover), all back in action; and this month - a Macedonian milkmaid motif.

Ed.



Balkanplus is Dead. Long Live Balkanplus!

I wish to give my personal thanks to everybody who contributed to the success of "Thank You for the Dances". It must have been a big decision to shrug off the inhibitions that had gripped us over the past eighteen months. The potential for a low attendance had been a concern, particularly as the evening party was billed as the final Balkanplus. I need not have worried. The attendance was good and the House bounced to the music of Ygra and virtually non-stop dancing in a programme conceived by an array of former MCs.

In the days that followed, I consulted my Balkanplus committee (Maureen, Andrew, Sally, Meryl, Ron, Jean and Charlotte) on how to wind up the operation and what to do with the remaining cash. I was moved by their unanimous reaction suggesting that Balkanplus should continue as an organiser of occasional dance parties, maybe twice a year and preferably at Cecil Sharp House. What else can I say but "WATCH THIS SPACE".

Brian Dowsett

The cover photo is of Frances presenting Brian with a surprise gift from the Balkanplus committee during the "final" Balkanplus party on 4th September.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

S.I **Apr.29-May.2: SIFD INT. DANCE MAY WEEKEND** see page 10

*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.*



Lockdown and Resuming Dancing in Person

It has been a long time since we were able to enjoy dancing together in person. Over the past 18 months I have very much enjoyed participating in online dance sessions which have proved to be a valuable lifeline for so many of us from all over the world who have been lucky enough to have the technology to connect in this way.

I would like to say a special “thank you” to Greg Boyd and Dawn Wakefield for their commitment and skill of having mastered teaching dances online. I have learnt many lovely new dances and am indebted to them both for my weekly dance “fix” via zoom.

As Covid restrictions are now lifted and we are all attempting to tentatively get back to some sort of normality, I have felt that it is time to consider restarting my own dance group in person. I have booked my regular hall to start back in October, but I am curious to know what other dance teachers are doing and what safety procedures they are putting in place to start their groups up again.

Sue Smith



Brian Dowsett summed up my approach last month: “*We will respect peoples’ wishes whether or not to join hands or to wear a mask*”. **Ed.**

Dos and Don'ts for Costumes of the U.S.S.R.

Some time ago a lecturer from a University which shall be unnamed told me they were having a Russian Evening, and his students wanted to wear national costumes. But when I showed him photos and drawings he said this was far too complicated - the boys would wear a Russian man's blouse, "normal" trousers, and a fur hat; the girls would wear these flower-embroidered blouses one can buy, full flowered skirts, white knee-length stockings and black shoes. He was quite upset when I told him I was sure the girls would look very nice but a costume like that had never been seen in the whole of the U.S.S.R. In fact, it seemed Bavarian or Austrian to me - and the boys would be all right but without the fur hats, please!

This is, of course, not by any means the only instance of getting costumes wrong. I have seen ballet tutus, Hungarian boots, Bavarian bodices, little lacy aprons, as worn in a French farce by the lady's maid, and - horror of horrors - a "Ukrainian" costume of just the blouse, long bodice and red boots - without any skirt, underskirt or apron at all! That was, I hasten to add, in a nightclub.

So, as no really reliable and understandable guidelines are readily available, here are some Dos and Don'ts. (Don't at any price!):

- DON'T Nowhere in any region of the U.S.S.R. do girls wear plunging necklines, sleeveless dresses or tiny puffed sleeves.
- DO Wear elbow-length or long sleeves, depending on the region, either narrow or wide, open or gathered at wrist or elbow.
- DON'T Wear red boots for any but the Ukrainian costume, both girls and boys.
- DO Wear character shoes (girls) for any style - unless you are rich enough to buy the Ukrainian red boots as well. (Character shoes are those worn for Spanish dancing, though preferably with a lower heel, or tap dancing shoes without the taps.)
- DON'T (Men) wear trousers for any style or region that are shorter than knee length - and these are gathered at the knee, or tucked into the high boots. (Children can, of course, wear short trousers).

continues overleaf >

- DON'T For any region wear ankle socks or white knee-length socks, with the exception of certain Baltic costumes, which are very Germanic-influenced anyway. In fact, either wear no stockings at all, or flesh-coloured stockings or tights. Wear white blouses or shirts for both girls and men for Russian, Ukrainian, Moldavian, Tartar and Georgian dances, with the proviso that Russian, Ukrainian, Moldavian and Tartar blouses and shirts are embroidered in various places and various ways. Georgians never are.
- DO In addition, if you like, let men wear coloured shirts (plain colours only) for Russian and Tartar.
- DON'T Think, PLEASE, that all Russian men wear big, longhaired fur hats all the time. These are in fact part of the Turkmen men's national costume. (Turkmenia is in the Asian part of the U.S.S.R., and about as far from Moscow as London is from the Sudan).
- DO For men, either wear no head-covering at all (Russian, Ukrainian) or a short-haired Persian lamb style hat (Moldavian, Caucasian) or a closefitting embroidered skull cap (Tartar and Uzbek).
- DO For girls, ALWAYS wear some kind of headdress. Russian: either a headscarf, tied in various ways, a "Kokoshnik" (the diadem-shaped typical headdress), or a ribbon tied over the head with a bow at the back. Ukrainian: a ribbon, as above, or a flower-wreath with long coloured ribbons streaming behind. Moldavian: a headscarf with a rose tucked behind one ear. Caucasian, Tartar and Uzbek: various stiff headdresses, sometimes with veils.
- Colours:**
- DON'T Wear anything lilac, mauve or purple West of the Ural Mountains (the border between Europe and Asia). Don't ask me why. (Why don't Irish dancers wear these tones, or pink or red?. Why don't Scots wear dotted kilts?). Best stick to "happy" colours - red, pink, orange, yellow, royal blue, turquoise, forget-me-not blue, but avoid greys and browns, though, men's trousers and boots are often black.

DON'T Wear green in any Georgian costume. It is the Muslims' holy colour, and the Georgians are emphatic Christians, as are the Armenians. Blue, green and brown should be used very sparingly for Uzbek and Moldavian, gold and silver can be used for Russian, Georgian and Uzbek girls and for Tartar girls and men.

Skirts for girls can be knee-length or long, but Caucasian girls (Georgian, Armenian and Azerbaijan) **ALWAYS** wear long skirts.

Footwear:

Time was when one could buy a pair of men's boots for £8 - and girls' for £5 - but now you can add a '0' to that, which makes it very difficult for most people to get the right footwear, if you have only an occasional U.S.S.R. dance in your repertoire. So what to do?

If you are a schoolteacher and want just a little dance for the Christmas Party, let the girls wear soft pink ballet slippers - to look bare footed (NO white stockings/socks!), and the boys short trousers (NO jeans!), and ordinary walking shoes (plain ones, please, no fancy ones!). If you are a ballet teacher, your girls probably have character shoes, and the boys, if any, shoes with heels.

Apart from this list of DOs and DON'Ts, there is of course an infinite variety of coats, waistcoats, belts, capes, jackets, aprons, head-coverings, decorated boots and shoes, jewellery etc. These are just general guidelines.



This article was written for the SIFD News several decades ago, before the break-up of the U.S.S.R. by the late **Jenia Graman**. Born in Odessa, she died in 2003 aged 94.



Broadstairs Folk Festival and Medway Walk for Peace



What a time it has been! Difficult to rehearse, dancers self-isolating, and longer-term health difficulties. We have all been there. But there is light at the end of the tunnel, and this enabled the organisers of both the Broadstairs Folk Festival and the Medway Walk for Peace (an interfaith event) put on their events at which Kitka were invited to dance.

Both events were held under strict Covid rules applying at the time, but that did not impinge too much on the enjoyment of the events.

At the Broadstairs Folk Festival Kitka was not able to include members of the public in their hora, and we had to keep a little distance back, but the weather was good and the crowd was very welcoming and appreciative.

At the Walk for Peace in Gillingham, Kent, the walk itself was much shorter and the final gathering place was St. Mark's Church Gillingham. Being a few more weeks down the line some of the audience were happy to join us in a hora. It felt good to be back there dancing in public and bringing smiles to people's faces. That feeling was much missed. If you are interested in joining Kitka please email susanjhaydock@aol.com for more information.

Susan Haydock Secretary

Southdowns Folk Festival

Our folk festival in Bognor Regis resumed this year with plenty of events around the town. Saturday was very hot but Sunday brought showers, which meant we ended the weekend dancing in a pub.

Our star attraction (*pictured in her kaftan*) was celebrating her third birthday!

She can dance Yerek Vodk, Ashrei Haish and Kerimoglu quite perfectly, and has almost mastered Dagh Gorani. Comudum is a dance she enjoys - with her scarves (which predictably landed in a puddle).

It is very satisfying, at last, to have once again succeeded in learning and displaying international dances. Resulting in the promise of a couple of new dancers for our next season.

I can't wait to get started on the planned Russian dances!



dancing Comudum



Janet Douglas

Farandole

Taken from tape by W.H. 91

Catalonia
Play G Key First

Play Brightly

7 D A7 D D
13 A7 D G A7 D
19 G D7 G G D7 G Am D7 G

"Wilf Horrocks' Collection"

Next month the music for **Chotis de la Frontera** (Mexico)...
over to you.....



SIFD International Dance May Weekend 2022

At Halsway Manor

Friday April 29th – Monday 2nd May 2022 with option to stay until the morning of Tuesday 3rd May. The International Folk Dances are led by **Janet Woolbar** with music provided by our amazing band.

There will be evening dancing sessions together with some additional sessions for those who would like them. There will be also be free time for guided walks each day, or you can visit places in the local area in beautiful West Somerset and the Quantock Hills.

If you are interested in coming on this really enjoyable weekend you can contact: **Robin Morris** 01564 773482 email robinnimbo@aol.com or **Ian Green** 07934 909968 email icgreen@tiscali.co.uk



SIFD Committee

Acting Chairman Richard Mellish 15 Lancaster Road, Harrow, HA2 7NN
Richard@Mellish.uk 0208 863 7807

Treasurer: Judith Payling Rosebank, 56 Quickley Lane, Chorleywood,
Rickmansworth, Herts. WD3 5AF.
judithcpayling@yahoo.co.uk

Secretary: Dalila Heath 102 High Street, Landbeach, Cambs
CB25 9FT *dalila.heath1@btopenworld.com*

Other Committee Members:

Caspar Cronk 8 Langbourne Avenue, London, N6 6AL
0208 340 4683 *caspar.cronk@blueyonder.co.uk*

Holly Payling 07784 117599 *hollycp@hotmail.co.uk*

Brenda Steventon 92 Hamilton Avenue, Surbiton, Surrey KT6 7PT
020 8397 9649 *brenda.steventon@btinternet.com*

John Stewart 129 Glebe Road, Thringstone Coalville, Leics. LE67 8NU
j2ohn@yahoo.com



C.I.O. number 1189141



WHAT'S ON IN OCTOBER

Saturday 23rd DAY OF DANCE IN SHEFFIELD 10.30 -17.00
at Ecclesall Parish Hall, Ringinglow Road, S11 7PQ. £10.
Contact Greg on 07810181273 or gregboyd99@aol.com

*All material for the November issue of the
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in writing by 18th October.*

*(Items sent by Royal Mail must be received
by the 10th October)*

