



SIFD News



December 🌿 2022

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

Dancers from Tetry, in costumes from Kurpie, and the Tibetan group are pictured on the front cover; the Iberian group, in Mallorcan costume, pictured on the back cover. They were all part of the October DATW (page 12).

Dilyana (page 10) also sent a photo which I'll publish next month.



Thanks to all who have contributed to the SIFD News of 2022 - and especial thanks to Dalila for distributing it. **Ed.**

Merry Christmas



Sheila Cott sends thanks to Phil and Brenda Steventon for their organisation of the A.G.M. from the many grateful participants.



*(Unlike the Folklore Festival Association who .. "as always will provide careless festival organization" .. (according to their ad!). **Ed.***



Happy Christmas and Happy New Year 2023, to all of the members of SIFD, Best Wishes, Keep Dancing,

Susan Chetwynd



*All material for the January issue of the SIFD NEWS must be received by the Editor in writing by **16th December.***

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Jan. 8: NEW YEAR PARTY at Calver Village Hall, Hope Valley 11.00 to 16.30. For more information contact Greg Boyd on 07810181273 or gregboyd99@aol.com

Mar.11: CATHY COMES TO CALVER , We are pleased to invite you to come and dance with Cathy Meunier at Calver Village Hall, Calver, Derbyshire S32 3XR 1030 - 1630. Further details from Janet 01629 57065 or Gill 01246 410020. Cost of the day £10. Bring your own lunch but drinks supplied.

- S.I **Mar. 25: DORRIDGE DAY OF DANCE** - in Dorridge, Solihull (south of Birmingham)). Morning and Afternoon sessions of Int. Folk Dancing with Cathy Meunier – Balkan & Israeli dances. Evening dance of English folk dancing led by Kim Smith with music from The Cat's Whiskers. Venue: Dorridge Village Hall <http://www.dorridgevillagehall.org/>, which is within easy reach of Birmingham and the M42 and easy walking distance of Dorridge train station. Contact: Paul Lindley on 0121 689 1802 or 07913 615002. See website at www.greatalnelfolk.org.uk on 0121 689 1802 or 07913 615002.

April 1: NUTBROOK DANCE WORKSHOP 11.00am – 3.30pm – at Bramcote Memorial Hall Community Room, Nottingham, NG9 3HD. Enjoy and learn dances from many countries – led by Brenda and Phil Steventon. Everyone welcome, no partners needed. Cost: £8.00. For further information please contact Gill Morral on telephone 0115 9171831 or gill.morral@ntlworld.com

- S.I **Apr.28-May.1: SIFD HALSWAY MANOR WEEKEND** International Dance & walking weekend in Somerset. see pages 6-7

- S.I **Apr.28-May.1: MAY HEYDAYS** see page 9



*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.*

Albanian Folk Festival & Dancing

I would like to organise a group trip to the Aulona Festival which will probably take place next year at the end of May in the southern coastal town of Vlora. The organiser hasn't set the date as he is waiting to find out when the Albanian national elections will take place. The Aulona festival usually takes place over three days - a Friday-Sunday- and there are usually about six to eight folk dance groups from Albania and abroad.

I would like to link up with a dance teacher to organise dance classes in the morning and there could be visits to local places of interest. The festival performances happen in the evening.

I would also like to make a round trip to Vlora taking in the southern most coastal town Saranda with its UNESCO World Heritage ancient city, Butrint, and Gjirokaster, the best preserved Ottoman city in the Balkans and also UNESCO.

If you are interested in joining me, please let me know by emailing me at penny.munden50@gmail.com. I will be working on a price.

Penny Munden



Scenic Holland & Oriental Turkey

Tours in September 2023 with Tineke and Maurits van Geel and Ahmet Demirbagh. Scenic Holland - € 2450 (early booking) € 2350
Oriental Turkey € 2450 (early booking) € 2350 is a great tour to see some amazing places and to dance with local teachers.

The two tours can be booked separately or consecutive (direct flight to Kayseri from Rotterdam).€ 4400 (early booking) € 4200
Detailed tour program and (pre)registration: www.tinekevangeel.nl

Society for International Folk Dance

Friday 28 Apr 4pm - Monday 1 May 4pm, 2023



Come to a wonderful weekend of dancing at Halsway Manor near Taunton in Somerset !

For further details or for a booking form do please contact Ian Green. We would like to know numbers as soon as is possible.

- Phone: 07934 909968
- Email: icgreen@tiscali.co.uk

A wide selection of International Dances take place at dance sessions during the weekend. You will also have the opportunity to explore the beautiful varied area of the Quantocks and Somerset coast and to join organised walks. The period of stay is Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights with the choice to stay the Monday night should you wish.

Who's it For?

Dancers of all levels of experience are invited to take this opportunity to widen your dancing experience. Walk-throughs and calling to suit all, including novices. Children very welcome. You do not need to be a member of SIFD to book onto the course.

The Team

This partnership event is organised by the Society for International Folk Dance, with Janet Woolbar leading the dancing to live music.

Halsway SIFD Weekend 2023

You may have received a slightly panicky email from me via Cathy Meunier recently, concerned that the Halsway SIFD Weekend would not be able to go ahead next year! Thanks to our widespread publicity and also pledges of support from the SIFD Committee, the weekend is no longer in doubt, but we should welcome more bookings.

The SIFD Weekend takes place in Somerset over the May Day Bank Holiday weekend: (Friday 28 April until Monday 1st May), with the option to stay an extra night and leave on Tuesday morning (thus avoiding the bank holiday traffic!). It is a lovely relaxed weekend of International dancing and music, walking and visiting the local area, or just relaxing in the beautiful surroundings at the foot of the Quantock Hills. Halsway Manor offers a good selection of accommodation and improved facilities for eating and dancing since the building work that was completed during the Covid shutdown. Have a look at their website for more information and photos: halswaymanor.org.uk

We run an informal programme over our weekend. In the evenings there is dancing to suit all levels with Janet Woolbar and others leading and mostly live music. During the daytime you can go on an organised walk (length can be varied to suit!), join an informal dance workshop with me in the mornings and music and singing workshops in the afternoons or you are free to visit the area - there are lots of lovely and interesting places within easy reach.

If you've never been to Halsway Manor before, it is certainly worth a visit and this is the only opportunity in the year to join an International dance and music weekend there! With events such as Revieradance and Willersley not happening since covid, please consider joining us next year! For more information and a booking form contact Ian Green: icgreen@tiscali.co.uk or phone 07934 909968

Maggie Kaye

Iris Birch (1934 – 2022)

It is with great sadness that I announce the death of my sister Iris Birch. She died after a short illness on 5th November 2022. Iris loved to dance and was a long term active member of S.I.F.D. She continued to dance up to the time she was admitted to St. Barnabas Hospice in Worthing. She will be greatly missed, not only by her family but also the dance community in Sussex.

Mike Allison

Canna Park, Bridgerule, Holsworthy, Devon EX22 6XY



Mary Fergar, who was an early member of Zivko Firfov Group died on November 11th.

She is in this old photo, 2nd from right, between Irene Keywood and Lily Avery.

Fiona Howarth



May Heydays 2023

After this year's successful inaugural May Heydays at Evesham and the government's announcement that it will not move our bank holiday, we can confirm that next year's dates will be Friday, 28 April, to Monday, 1 May!

Dilyana Kurdova will be our main teacher for the international side of the festival. She is a native of Varna, Bulgaria. She studied Bulgarian folklore choreography, has been involved in coordinating the Plovdiv Folk Seminar at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, Plovdiv since 2010 and is assistant to the dance programme director. Dilyana is currently finishing her PhD thesis on the topic of how traditional dances have transformed throughout time.

Dilyana is an experienced teacher and specialises in traditional folk dances and rhythms of Bulgaria and Greece. She has been a guest dance teacher and lecturer at different recreational folklore groups all around Bulgaria, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, Denmark, Sweden and Norway as well as in Israel, India and Thailand. You can see her teaching here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e7QKyCv1wrw>.

I have asked her to keep her programme at a level that will suit experienced dancers who are advanced in age. So we are aiming at 'relaxed to medium difficult'. If any of you who are seriously thinking of attending May Heydays would prefer 'fast and furious', please let me know. It can be arranged.

As usual, the festival will have lots of English and American dance workshops, some music and singing workshops (including singing for international dancing). The draft festival programme is online at: <https://www.mayheydays.org.uk/programme.html>.

Hope you can make it!

Mecki Testroet Director May Heydays

Dilyana sent a transcript of an interview about folk dancing in Bulgaria and how things have changed.

overleaf>

Quest News Interview Questions

What led you to study about folklore of the Balkans?

I acquired my BA in Political Science from Panteion University in Athens Greece and I actually started dancing folklore dances more seriously there. The music, the rhythms and the ancient rituals represented made me want to explore more our own Bulgarian tradition. Since according to Balkan mentality art people do not earn money and cannot support a family, I went on with an MA in Project Management from Hochschule Bremen, Germany. However, folklore never stopped calling for me and I did a second MA in Bulgaria, this time in Bulgarian folklore choreography while simultaneously researching and going on village field trips in order to learn from the roots. Now I cannot stop and this is what I do for living – “folkloring”.

Why do you feel it is important to teach dance and folklore of this region?

A predominant part of the ancient mystery schools were here on the Balkans. Due to the Ottoman yoke for five centuries our part of the world has been able to preserve its traditions while the church never banned dancing and rites like it did in many other Western countries. Anthroposophy and folklore always went hand-in-hand in my life and looking at folklore through an esoteric prism opened a whole new world for me. I still have a lot to walk on this path and learn.

You are currently working on your doctorate concentrating on the topic of the transformation of Bulgarian dances in recreational groups. Can you tell us about this theme?

Bulgarian dances have been quite popular among foreign dance connoisseurs since the 60s of the 20th century. In Bulgaria during Communism folklore was the pride of the nation along with sport achievements and used as a trademark. Taking as a base the stage folklore of the Soviet Union and the state ensembles there, the government here developed folklore high schools and university programs as well as created 16 municipal ensembles for Bulgarian folklore only. A few chosen choreographers were allowed to go abroad and teach our national folklore.

We have never had recreational groups for dances the way the Western world had. One could either dance in an ensemble for root folklore from his/ her region or dance in an ensemble for stage folklore.

After Communism, Bulgarians were eager to learn as many dances as possible and after the year 2000 the so-called folk-revival started. Nowadays we have many groups, folklore dance competitions, horoteques... In the search for new teaching material many group leaders started creating dances, sometimes far from what village people would do in their root folklore program. Different choreographies are created every day hailed as traditional. However – what is traditional? What is folklore – shall we put it in the museum and not change it? Is the dance of today the folklore of the future generations? Do we keep the traditional or do we make it more accessible by modernizing it?

In your classes, you present dances, which you have collected throughout Bulgaria. What can we look forward to in your workshop at our upcoming conference?

I will try to present the most common dance rhythms in Bulgaria through traditional dance examples. The most important for me will be the interaction between dance-dancers and teacher. How does this rhythm make me feel? Can I picture the people from the particular ethnographic area through their traditional way of moving? I will also simultaneously try to explain the traditional dance attire of the dance region under discussion (Bulgaria has five main ones). What was the part of dancing in social terms? What is it today?

Being a coordinator of the annual folklore seminar at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Art in Plovdiv you must know our host city very well! What are a few things you would suggest our participants do while in Plovdiv?

Feel the city! Lose yourself along the meandering streets of the old central! It is one of the oldest cities on the Balkans so explore as much as possible! Eat something sweet at the pastry shop of the Dzhumaya Mosk in the Old Town. Bulgaria is on the crossroad between East and West and Plovdiv has the best of both.

Dance Around The World - October 2022

Walking into Cecil Sharp House for Dance Around The World on Saturday morning was like entering a hive with a buzz of activity emanating from all directions. First stop for me was Kennedy where the Iberian Folk Dance Group were performing traditional Spanish folk dances in Mallorcan costume (*photo-back page*).

They were followed by the Polish group Tatry, who made a spectacular entrance with one dancer carried aloft and they subsequently displayed dizzying dances from Kurpie at great speed. I have no photos of their dancing as I had decided to be too clever with my camera - so most of the day's pictures were abysmal! Those I took outside however were a little better (*front cover photo of Tatry taken in the marquee*).



Trying to be everywhere at once I managed to join in a little of the well attended Balkanplus workshop in Trefusis (*above*), and then scuttle back upstairs to catch Balaton displaying dances in a variety of colourful costumes from different regions of Hungary. I missed Flagging (no idea what it was - perhaps someone will enlighten us) as I was flagging by this time and the aroma from the canteen had got the better of me (it's like the heart of the hive) As always there are so many choices and it is impossible to see and do everything, but I am happy to report that one of my choices introduced me to the music and dance of Tibet - priceless!

The Tibetan group sing, dance and play their instruments at the same time (*front cover*); the result is earthy, almost mesmerising. We realised it was more difficult than it looked in their workshop, but managed to more or less assimilate the basic steps of gorshey, the 'welcome-get-together dance', and understand something of their culture.

Before the Tibetan workshop in Storrow I caught the tail end of the energetic Balaton Hungarian dance workshop. (*right*).



Tanec entertained us with some lively Bulgarian dances, but, all my pictures of them are just a blur of black, white, red and gold. There were plenty of children in attendance; dancing and looking beautiful and happy in their colourful costumes from around the world - but sadly there are no decent photos to show.



The girls in the Sri Lankan group (*left*) had never danced together before, having travelled from their respective towns to meet and dance for the first time. The adults danced delicate temple dances with intricate movements.

It was a lovely day -

Dance Around The World - is the highlight of our calendar.

Janet Douglas

Boarischer Aus Der Ramsau

Austrian

Musical score for 'Boarischer Aus Der Ramsau' in 2/4 time, featuring a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The score consists of two staves. The first staff begins with a '7' above the first measure. Chords are indicated below the notes: F, C7, F, C7. The second staff continues the melody with chords: F, C, G, C, G7, C. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Boarischer Aus Der Ramsau

There are several Alpine villages called Ramsau, but this one is in Bavaria, for 'Boarischer' is a dialect version of 'Bayerische', meaning Bavarian. It is a beautiful village west of the notorious Berchtesgaden where Hitler had his mountain home. I visited that spooky place 60 years ago with the Folkestone District National Folkdance Group when we performed in nearby Salzburg and neighbouring villages. A few years later I spent two summers in

Bavaria working as a Thomas Cook holiday rep, perfecting my 'boarisch' version of German and dancing in my Dirndl. Happy days.

A 'Ram' is, as in English, a male sheep. An 'Au' is a meadow or pasture, so Ramsau could translate as Sheepsmead. 'Au' is a feminine word (definite article 'die') but this becomes 'der' because 'aus' (from) requires the genitive case.



Caroline Thomas (Leader, Dunav Balkan Group)



The music for **Polka du Talon d'Othe** (French- Chalonaise) will appear next month: over to you! **Ed.**

SIFD Committee

mail@SIFD.org

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C.I.O. number **1189141**

www.sifd.org



WHAT'S ON IN DECEMBER

- S.I **Friday 9th BARNET CHRISTMAS PARTY** 8.00pm - 10.30pm
at Church House, 2 Wood Street, Barnet, Herts. EN5 4BW £10
incl. food, wine and live music by Dunav. For more information
contact Brian on 01992 582717 or bvdowsett@aol.com
- S.I **Saturday 10th BALKANPLUS** - in Trefusis, Cecil Sharp House,
2 Regents Park Road, Camden, NW1 7AY starting at 6.00 -
9.00pm. Multiple dance leaders plus live music with Dunav.
Admission £10.

