

*Society for International Folk Dancing*

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***September 2024***

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The packaging and posting is done by Dalila Heath.

A Catalonian couple from Pallars dancing the Contrapás de Xinxina is shown on the front cover. It was an illustration by Lucile Armstrong for “Dances of Spain II”. The motif, also from the book, demonstrates the men’s arms; “raised to shoulder level, one bent across the chest, the other extended sideways. The position is reversed with a semi-circular sweep, hands still at shoulder level; the hands and wrists are flicked upward to mark the rhythm.”

Also on the back cover is the (pink) logo on the Tshirt (p.5).

**Ed.**



### **For the attention of Associated and Affiliated Groups**

The Committee are pleased to announce that with effect from the subscription year commencing on 1st September 2024 all groups (ie Associated and Affiliated) will have a ten hour teaching entitlement under the “free to groups” scheme the annual subscription for all Affiliated Groups will be £40

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### **Subscription renewals**

A reminder that subscriptions for the 2024/25 year are now due.



## **Barnet International Folk Dance Club**

Our next meeting at Barnet will be on Friday 13th September.

We meet on the second and fourth Fridays of each month at the new time of 7-9.30 pm.

We usually have easy starter dances plus some teaching from 7-8 pm, then a break followed by requests till the end of the evening.

The address is : Church House, Wood Street, Barnet EN5 4BW

Everyone is welcome.

**Meryl Abraham**



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**Oct. 3- 6: TENTERDEN FOLK FESTIVAL** with Morena Slovak Dancers [www.tenterdenfolkfestival.org.uk](http://www.tenterdenfolkfestival.org.uk)

**Oct. 5: NUTBROOK DANCE WORKSHOP** 11.am – 4.pm at Bramcote Memorial Hall, Nottingham, NG9 3HD. mainly Greek dances plus one or two from Georgia & Azerbaijan – led by Chrisandra Harris. Info: Gill Morral 0115 9171831 or [gill.morral@ntlworld.com](mailto:gill.morral@ntlworld.com)

**Oct. 12-13: WORKSHOP WITH IRA WEISBURD** Oving, near Chichester. [rosemary.gledhill38@gmail.com](mailto:rosemary.gledhill38@gmail.com)

**Nov. 16: BULGARIAN DANCE COURSE** with Desi Radulovska at Calver Village Hall 10.30 - 16.30. Further details from Greg Boyd on [gregboyd99@aol.com](mailto:gregboyd99@aol.com) or 07810181273.

SI **Feb. 23: SLIGHTLY FOREIGN DANCES FROM ABROAD** at Pulborough Village Hall, RH20 2BP. £10 Times :10:30am - 3:30pm details: Janet Douglas 01243 265010. Bring a picnic lunch. DIY Tea and Coffee available all day

*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.*

*All material for the October issue of the SIFD NEWS must be received by the Editor IN WRITING by 18th September.*



Dear Members,

The Committee have agreed that it is no longer viable to continue with the SIFD shop. The remaining items have been taken to Halsway Manor and Cecil Sharp dances this year where several items were sold. Below (and on back page) are some photos of the items left:

- 1 Ladies pink T shirt size 14.
- 2 Dolls, shoes size 39, 30 SIFD badges, and a belt (60 inches first hole 40 inches).
- 3 Shalom china wall plate, Romanian wooden carved wall plate
- 4 Selection of dance sheet music books (large) and one small book of instructions.
- 5 Selection of vinyl records Interfolk EPs 1,3,4,5,6,9,10,13.

If you are interested in any of these items please contact me, Brenda Steventon: [brenda.steventon@btinternet.com](mailto:brenda.steventon@btinternet.com) Telephone 020 8397 9649 or mobile 07722 428140

If you are interested in the Society's CD's or Books, Alison Scrimshaw still has a large stock of these available here:

<https://sifd.org/music-cds-and-booklets/>



**Brenda Steventon**



Dear Janet

“**Captivating Rhythms**” could have been the title of the book I never got to write. For many of us there are pieces of music that we would consider part of the soundtrack to our lives, reflecting our many moods or stirring memories of good times or special events.

We are sometimes thankful for being in the right place at the right time. For example, while queuing to pay for an LP at the HMV record store in London’s Oxford Street, a man in front of me let the world know that he appreciated most of the classical music composers but couldn’t abide Bela Bartok. The Gramophone magazine had that month given a glowing review of Bartok’s 2nd Violin Concerto played by Isaac Stern with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Leonard Bernstein. I had to buy it and after only a few plays it became a firm favourite in my record collection.

I was still at school when Chris Barber’s band was regularly performing at Barnet jazz club. Lonnie Donegan played banjo with the band and a part of the evening was given over to American folk songs. Skiffle music became widely popular and inspired many, myself included, to buy a guitar. The author Pete Frame describes this period well in his book *The Restless Generation*. It spawned scores of groups including the Beatles. Later, as an apprentice at the aircraft manufacturer Handley Page, I studied at Hendon Technical College where I heard about a local folk club run jointly by Henry Morris and Clifford Beck. Fellow students warned me about the compulsory dancing but that didn’t deter me from going. The club’s members included au pair girls as well as students. It was my introduction to international folk dancing and I was particularly fascinated by the intriguing rhythms of the Balkan dances. I was one of four members to travel by train to Sarajevo to attend the annual folklore festival before becoming groupies of the newly formed Dunav Balkan Group. Linda Swanton née Fox was one of the four. She later on joined the Zivko Firfov group while I chose to join the Bulgarian dance group led by Danny Lumley. Of course, the 1960s folk revival was in full swing led by Ewan MacColl, Peggy Seeger and A L Lloyd. Their Radio Ballads were highly praised and I particularly recall Bert Lloyd giving a BBC radio talk on Bela Bartok as a folklorist. Because of his communist sympathies, he was given access to a wealth

of Bulgarian folk recordings. He was happy to come along to one of our informal Dunav Club meetings to talk about the music of Maramures, the subject of another of his radio talks.

The SIFD monthly Sunday evening dances at Cecil Sharp House were an attraction to some of us because of what was called the “Balkan Interval” when the musicians had a half time break. We played recorded Balkan dances that were generally not part of the SIFD House musicians’ repertoire. Friends - including Frances Horrocks, Cathy Meunier, Uri Gerson and Nick Green - shared my ambition to organise a monthly meeting where Balkan dances would predominate. It was Frances who suggested the name Balkanplus and the Swiss Cottage Community Centre was our first venue. Dunav Balkan Group supported the venture by providing live music every month. Indeed, Dunav played an important role in popularising Balkan music in England. Yves Moreau noted that the group were possibly the first non-native musicians to play the music of the Balkans. To be precise it should be said that Dragan Miletic (accordion) was in the original lineup. Dragan’s connection with the Serbian community at the St Sava church in Ladbroke Grove, London meant that Dunav was often invited to play there. The band also provided live music for parties at Balkansko Oro in Oxford and at the Barnet International Folk Dance Club which had relocated from Hendon after we had completed our studies.



Henry (*left*) had the perfect engaging personality to present the band at a folk club gig while John Baldwin was the academic more suited to formal presentations. Narendra Kotiyan was another conspicuous presence as a musician and dancer. Naren’s affable nature made him the ideal person to bring dance groups and musicians together. In partnership with Henry, the first Balkan Festival was presented on stage at St Pancras town hall.

Caroline Thomas deserves special praise for taking on the leadership of the band so competently following the passing of both Henry and John. Thanks also to Dominic Coltman (violin) for contributing new, high quality pieces to Dunav’s repertoire and for his useful knowledge of all matters concerning computers and the Internet. *Continued overleaf >*

The London Balkan dance scene evolved when new friends such as Ian Price brought an awareness of the recreational international folk dancing as practiced in the USA. We heard about folk dance camps in California, Stockton, Idylwild and Mendocino. Then, Holland was the source of a whole new repertoire of dances. Eddy Tijssen, Jaap Leegwater and Bianca de Jong regularly visited England. Yves Moreau made his first visit to England and from that came the invitation to Cathy and myself to join him on a tour of Thrace along with other dance leaders from USA, Germany, Holland, Japan and Taiwan. Filling two coaches, ninety people travelled to Turkey, Greece and Bulgaria meeting village groups as well as professional ensembles. Yves had also brought along dance teacher friends to share the presentation of daily workshops. Among these was Iliana Bozhanova with Todor Yankov (accordion).

Iliana (*right*) had organised the Bulgarian stage of the tour so impeccably that we had no hesitation in inviting her and Todor to teach in England. So began a great friendship which continues to this day and we have had the opportunity to participate in the amazing tours she subsequently organised along with friends from Europe and beyond.



The one enormous omission from these reminiscences is that a young lady named Elizabeth Guthrie visited Cecil Sharp House having just returned to England from the USA to gain nursing qualification at the Royal Free Hospital. She had enjoyed Balkan dancing in both Chicago and California and wanted to know if it could be found anywhere in London. Being from the North-East she knew about the Billingham Folk Festival. She noticed a Dunav card on a notice board and made enquiries. Naren Kotiyan and Cliff Beck evidently enjoyed visiting the student nurse apartment to tell her all about the London Balkan scene. In tying the knot, our marriage has been one of countless to have come



about from a first meeting on a dance floor.

With recreational Balkan dancing in very capable hands, I have written these words with affection for an activity that has been a perfect counterbalance to a career in the world of engineering. I feel privileged to have been able to dance with Balkan communities both here in England and in their native land - welcomed into the horo, kolo or hora. Iliana put it very simply when she said that, in a circle dance, we are all equal.

I believe someone may have uttered it already but . .

**KEEP DANCING!**

**Brian Dowsett**



another excerpt from **'The Dictionary of the Dance'**

by W.G.Raffe

### **Vava Vadmal (Sweden)**

A 'longways dance' performed by men and women, showing the processes of weaving. In lines, facing each other, the couples move through various figures making 'weaving' patterns, at one point showing clearly the moving back and forth of the shuttle. In the modern revival of Swedish folk dance, the dancers wear the traditional costume of their own regions.



## Paschada Flugs-ummi

Austria

Musical score for Paschada Flugs-ummi, Austria. The score is written in treble clef, 2/4 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is accompanied by chords. The score is divided into four systems:

- System 1: Measures 1-6. Chords: D, A7, D, A7, D, A7.
- System 2: Measures 7-11. Chords: D, A7, D, D, G. Includes first and second endings.
- System 3: Measures 12-16. Chords: C, G, D7, G, C, G.
- System 4: Measures 17-18. Chord: D7. Ends with "D.C. al Fine".

## Wilf Horrocks' Collection



I had absolutely no joy researching **Paschada Flugs-ummi**, it remains a mystery. However I do know something about **Vava Vadmal** which will feature next month.

Having danced it only three times it seems a bit over-ambitious to teach it; but I will endeavour to do so at Pulborough next February! (assistance from experienced Vava Vadmal dancers will be enthusiastically accepted). It will be part of a workshop entitled 'Slightly Foreign Dances from Abroad', this is because most of those attending will be regular English Folk dancers; so most of the workshop dances are danced in sets (much less daunting for them).

I am also leading a morning Balkan workshop as part of the Southdowns Folk Festival on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> September. It will be in the William Hardwicke pub (Bognor Regis) and consist of very basic simple dances.

**Janet Douglas**



## **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:**

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- John Stewart 129 Glebe Road, Thringstone Coalville, Leics.  
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**C.I.O. number 1189141**





## WHAT'S ON IN SEPTEMBER

- S.I Sat.14th - Sun.15th BALKANPLUS ROMANIAN-VIRGIL TĂBUȘ**  
**Saturday** at Trefusis, Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regents Park Rd, NW1 7AY  
 11.am - 4.pm. Balkanplus evening dance 6.pm - 9.pm.  
**Sunday** at St Paul's CE School, 1 Elsworthly Rd, NW3 3DS 11.am - 4.pm.  
 £30 for Sat. w/shop. £10 for Sat. Balkanplus evening, £35 for Sat. w/shop &  
 evening. £25 for Sun. w/shop. £50 for whole weekend.  
[maureen.felton@btinternet.com](mailto:maureen.felton@btinternet.com) or [www.balkanplus.org.uk](http://www.balkanplus.org.uk)

