



Let's Talk Folk Dance



Membership network email update and musings on local folk, historical, traditional and community dance
Folkdance.org.nz

Happy 21st Birthday to us in Te Wai O Pounamu – check out the next national FDNZ newsletter for photos of this celebration held as part of the Farandole Folk Dance Weekend workshop with Gary Dawson.

A big “thankyou” to Irene, Katy and their committee for organising a fun event for folk dancers.

Other celebrations this month include the International Day of Dance on 29 April - how did you celebrate? Why not send your stories to our Newsletter editor Kieron at editor@folkdance.org.nz

We also celebrated ANZAC day, and it is interesting to read Gaby's thoughts about the role of folk dance in these commemorations.

Winter is a time to dance your socks off – it's a great way to keep warm and fit during the cold months – why not invite your summer walking or cycling buddies to try folk dance to keep dry while exercising! The research strongly supports dance as the intervention of choice for a healthy brain and heart.

Remember to keep 23-25 September free to celebrate our 21st birthday in Te Ika a Maui at the ‘Rhythm and Grapevines’ Folk Dance festival in Gisborne!

Regards, Fiona

Members are thinking about.....Gaby Johnston is based in Tauranga. Gaby is currently thinking about mixing World War commemorations with folk dance opportunities” In Tauranga the Athena Greek Dance Group is preparing for a performance on 22 May at the local Commemoration of the Battle of Crete. Over the last 10 years this has become an annual fixture for Athena. When we first participated the Greek Ambassador would come from Wellington and the local Hauraki Regiment officiated. It was a rather grand occasion. Dancing was an informal interlude at the end as people mingled and chatted as they moved to the morning tea area. There is no longer a Greek Ambassador in NZ, and the Haurakis have been reorganised and relocated. The gathering at the Mt Maunganui RSA is now a simpler one for the families and veterans of the Cretan campaign. Short prayers, a guest speaker, a wreath laying and a concluding dance performance - on a wonderfully generous dance floor! We vary our display from year to year - introducing different costumes, format, music, dances. We are again dancing with children from the Gate Pa School folkdance group - always a popular addition. It is lovely to see the veterans (fewer each year), seated formally before us, enjoying the Greek music and delighting in the vitality and happiness of the children. Contact Gaby at : gabemail2@gmail.com

Dancing in..... the Bay of Islands

Shared by June Jacobson – International Folk Dancer and tutor, Belly Dancer, Medieval musician, and founding member of ‘Green Ginger’

The Paihia folk dance group is currently in recess, but that doesn't mean that we have no dancing in the Bay of Islands! If you are lucky enough to find your way up to Northland over the summer you can join me on a ferry ride to Russell on a Sunday evening, where there is a small but very enthusiastic dance group led by Eileen Kopec. Eileen hails from San Francisco where she dances on a regular basis, both international folk dance & Israeli, as well as at the annual Stockton Folk Dance Camp. Russell has an interesting population made up of locals who have lived there forever and swallows who arrive annually to enjoy the Bay of Islands summer. Many have sailed to Russell, then fallen in love with its charms & stayed permanently, so there are yachties with interesting stories to add to the mix.

The dance group usually runs from mid December to mid March and includes 2 locals (from Paihia & Russell) plus 6-8 ‘swallows’ from the US, Europe and the UK. We all gather & dance together over the summer months, with great enthusiasm & lots of laughter. I have learned a lot of new dances from Eileen and particularly enjoyed the Albanian dances she shared with us this summer. It really is magic to unwind after a couple of hours dancing, gazing at the lights of Russell and watching the sunset sky darken over the water on the 9 o'clock ferry ride back to Paihia.

The rest of the year there is a regular ballroom dance group in Russell on a Wednesday night, well supported by locals all year round and joined by the ‘swallows’ who come to enjoy their summer holiday homes. Quite a few people from Paihia and even Kerikeri make the trek over for that class, so the Wednesday night ferry is very social. I catch the same ferries going over to Taize (singing). So you can see there is a lot happening in our small communities, where music and dance are alive and well! Of course there are also the homegrown festivals, but that is another story**We'd love to hear more June (Ed)**

Update from your committee: Coming up – FDNZ Newsletter / Social media and Folk Dance in NZ / 2016 AGM in September. **Remember to check the FDNZ website for updates, happenings & contacts - plus as a member you can advertise your dance event for free... contact editor@folkdance.org.nz**

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