



# Let's Talk Folk Dance

Membership network email update and musings on local folk, historical, traditional and community dance  
[Folkdance.org.nz](http://Folkdance.org.nz)



**Hi Everyone,**

On 13<sup>th</sup> August why not have A Good Morning - aka an AGM . with fellow members of FDNZ and share a convivial breakfast before - or a brunch after - dialling in to the AGM proper. We'll keep it fast & flowing, and there are no hard jobs that must be filled. It's not too late to become a member and definitely not too late to encourage those around you to contribute to supporting folk dance in NZ.

You can warm up your winter dancing tootsies on 12<sup>th</sup> August with two options - A workshop on the 2017 Andre Van De Plas programme, followed by the community dance extravaganza at The Winter Warm-up in Auckland (hosted by the Ruritanian Folk Dance Network); or be a little more elegant at the Canterbury Historical Dance Society's Regency Dance in Christchurch.

We've got our planning hats on at FDNZ and are thinking about guest tutors and venues for national workshops in 2018. Perhaps you've come across a folk dance tutor that you think would be great.... why not let us know.

If you can't wait until then, the Israeli Dance network website details the Machol Pacifica workshop to be held in Nelson over Labour Weekend.

Dance warmly - Fiona

## MEMBERS ARE THINKING ABOUT... Andy Smith of

**Auckland muses on ageing in dance and culture with...** "Have you danced the Kolo? In February this year I attended Dallies in the Valley a Dalmatian gathering in Henderson. Families from Auckland and Northland meet and swapped stories of how they were related and who had dug kauri gum and planted grape vines. I went to see the dancing as I needed a group to dance at the Auckland Folk Festival. They brought on the junior Kolo dancers who were under 10 years old that did the dance in full costume; then the intermediate dancers in their teens. This was followed by a choir, which consisted of people aged above 50 and singers of traditional songs. The senior dancers performed next. They were dressed in beautiful costumes of embroidered flowers and shoes of leather stripes. The seniors were aged in their 20s. Can I repeat that - the senior group were university aged students. The MC then started asking audience members the question 'have you danced the Kolo?'. "Oh yes when I was young" answered the middle aged and older men and women. 'I now sing in the choir'. Now that is a great way to present your dance culture. Get the young and fit to do it and it will always look great..... However, the Dalmatian dance team never got booked for the Folk Festival as 20 year olds are very difficult to tie down to a date 10 months away. I play music for a Morris team and the average age is 60. Is your group of dancers aging? How do we change that around?+.... [Thanks Andy: keeping culture and especially dance culture relevant to the young is an ongoing challenge. However - look at Polyfest in Auckland; and Israeli Dance Culture where teens to twenty-somethings are the stars. Definitely a topic worthy of more space - send in your thoughts. Ed]

## DANCING WITH... DANCE FOLKUS IN HAMILTON

Dance Folkus is alive and well in Hamilton and the class has been running for 23 years with Fiona Murdoch as Dance Director [Ed Yes! That long!]. It is run as a class rather than a club or group. Over the last 6 years the programme of themed courses interspersed with dance parties and 'Request Nights' has been popular and has helped increase the number of people coming along, so that we regularly feel our little hall is maybe not big enough!. After a bit of trial and error we have settled on four themed courses of six weeks duration over the year (7 courses were too many and 5 weeks was too short). We do a mix of 'hard core' international folk dance repertoire with the usual European and Israeli influences; along with dances from historical or 'vintage' eras. While generally people come to most classes, a few will prefer a specific style - so ensuring variety keeps the Dance Folkus family growing even if we don't see them every week. Interestingly the vintage styles of dance (which are mostly partner dances) have been very popular with the twenty somethings. In the past couple of years the themes have included Circle Dances; EuroGypsy; Colonial Heritage; Festival Dances; Caravanserai; and The Orient Express;... and coming up are Time Warp/Courtly Capers and The Continental Drift. We like a good dance party at Dance Folkus and so there are regular forays into Celtic Ceilidhs; Café Folklorico Dance Parties; Miner's Balls; Colonial Heritage Balls; Masque Dances; and Jane Austen Regency-style Assemblies. We have fabulous musos who live locally and love to play for dance - plus other favourite bands for the style-specific extravaganzas. Each themed course is generally followed by a dance party. We love visitors and we enjoy collaborations with World Voices a cappella choir that sings while we dance. Request Nights (with no specific theme) revisit dances from previous courses and old favourites. We make time for workshops and occasional performances. It's FUN.

**Update from your committee: The AGM is coming... 10.00am on 13<sup>th</sup> August.** Thanks to corporate sponsorship you can join the AGM by teleconference at no cost to you. Why not grab a cuppa, wear your pj's, put your phone on speaker and keep snug and smug knowing that your FDNZ duty is underway! All the current committee are happy to stay in their roles Reports, Agenda, and Proxy voting forms will be available by email / post very shortly, or on the website.

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