



Let's Talk Folk Dance

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



Hi everyone,

Well! We're past the mid-way point for 2016 – a scary thought...but on the other hand summer is coming ☺

I'm really grateful to all the contributors to these monthly email news sheets. I have found that we all have so much to share about this dance form we embrace with such passion, and there is no shortage of words when I've tapped people on the shoulder. While space is limited here, the FDNZ newsletter allows for more comprehensive articles and photographs and I encourage you to keep those thoughts coming. Members have told me that sharing the news sheet promotes interesting discussions between dances at class.

What's coming up...

- **Folk Dance workshop** - Selections from the Andre Van de Plas 2016 collection in Auckland 20 August
- 20 August Annual Auckland **Winter Warm-up in Auckland**
- **Rhythm and Grapevines Folk Dance weekend 23 – 25 September**
 - Register now
 - Book your accommodation
 - Bring your friends
 - Make music as well as enjoy dances
- 21 – 24 October – **Israeli Reunion Weekend** Hamilton
 - Register now – the weekend will only be held subject to minimum numbers

Happy Dancing - Fiona

MEMBERS ARE THINKING ABOUT: Gwen Mann dances in Auckland and writes..... I was thinking about what it is about folk dancing that so entices me. I found this definition of 'circle dance' which in part epitomises my enjoyment of the form of dancing that brought me back to dancing in 1985 on Skyros Island . "Definition: **Circle dance**, or **chain dance**, is a style of [dance](#) done in a circle or semicircle to musical accompaniment, such as [rhythm instruments](#) and [singing](#). Circle dancing is probably the oldest known dance formation and was part of community life from when people first started to dance. Dancing in a circle is an ancient [tradition](#) common to many cultures for marking [special occasions](#), [rituals](#), strengthening community and encouraging [togetherness](#). The dance can also be enjoyed as an uplifting group experience or as part of a [meditation](#). Circle dances are choreographed to many different [styles of music](#) and rhythms." [Wikipedia – Gwen provided the full definition which I have abbreviated –Ed]

The energy that emanates from the music, rhythm and movements that accompany the dances that I resonate with provide a visceral response that promotes a sense of pure spontaneity and joy that make me feel in harmony with being in the here and now. Some rhythms and songs promote contemplation which is restful. I know people who come to classes come for different reasons and respond emotionally very, differently. So how come we can't attract more people to this powerful form of movement and tradition? It provides an understanding of ritual and cultural links.

[Thanks Gwen for sharing these thoughts –Ed]

DANCING IN WELLINGTON FDNZ treasurer, Michele Dickson, shares what's happening on her home turf

The International Folk Dance Group in Wellington is a small bunch **enjoying dancing** dances from recent workshops and long time favourites. But partner dances and European dances requiring a good number of people are off the menu at the moment!.

We were surprised to be joined by **six college students** (year 10) recently for **5 weeks**, doing an 'outside of school' project of their own choosing that they would recount to their class. We took them through about 25 easier dances that hopefully might give them an appetite for community dance in later years. (*Excellent! Ed.*) Another happening this year has been **Greek dance lessons** from Jo Matsin in her own 'Feet with Heat' professional dance studio (swing and other ever popular social dance types). Jo is of Greek ethnicity and was dismayed that many recent Greek immigrants do not know Greek dancing. So she has been running Greek dancing classes on a Sunday evening. While the numbers have been small and the local Greeks have not rushed in to learn, two or three pupils have become hooked.

Israeli dancing in Wellington is moderately strong with a hard working leader and committed committee. The **group runs a beginner course** usually at least every second year with a few new dancers resulting. An enjoyable initiative that has taken place about twice a year for the last two years is the **3Ws (Wellington, Waikanae, Whanganui Israeli groups)** workshop/gathering in Waikanae, with a shared lunch and dance revision.

Regarding other dance, a glance at the programme for the **annual International Dance Day** along with our existing knowledge shows that various ethnic dance teachers or groups exist in Wellington, including Polish, Morris Dance, Scottish Country Dance, Cuban, Chinese, Indian, South American, a few African countries and a collection of Pasifica styles

[Thanks Michele – sounds capital in the capital!-Ed]

Update from your committee: Not much new this month...too busy dancing!

Remember to check the FDNZ website for updates, happenings & contacts - plus as a member you can advertise your dance event for free...

If you can't find the info – then email FDNZ 's webmaster Kieron at editor@folkdance.org.nz

EMAIL UPDATE
June 2016
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