



Let's Talk Folk Dance

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



Hi Everyone,

This month we get a Sydney-side view from one of our members in Oz.

I was reading the Folk Dance Australia monthly newsletter Footnotes and looking at the workshops and classes on offer on the other side of the ditch. There is a wonderful variety in several places around Australia.

So if you are planning a winter get-away to Oz, you might want to see if your holiday can link with a dance event and make some new friends in dance. If you prefer to travel further afield, there are also many opportunities to dance your way around the world. There are FDNZ members who have been on such tours and you can contact them for their recommendations.

My point is that when you are part of NZ's folk dancing network you are also able to reach into other dancing networks and have an immediate shared common interest. Dance needs no words so you can join in even when the language barrier is a hurdle..

Dance well this month and if you are dancing on your holiday ...have a good one! Regards Fiona

MEMBERS ARE THINKING ABOUTat class tonight

Dance Folkus group members were thinking about what makes folk dance fun.....they said "laughter; music; people; a sense of community; being in sync with others; keeping fit; getting it wrong....and getting it right!; arrhythmia; raising spirits before the weekend; exercising the brain; rhythm; & learning about other cultures; *[uplifting and powerful thoughts when around us there might be sadness, illness, or fear – Ed]*

DANCING IN ... SYDNEY Kaye Lauredet – A FDNZ member in Australia (and popular guest dance tutor in NZ) tells us that folk dancing in the Sutherland Shire of Sydney is alive and well!!

The SSFDG (Sutherland Shire Folkdance Group) offers 4 classes and all are very well attended. We have a membership of 65 and about half of our members attend 2 or more classes. We are a social lot and regularly have days out and lunches together plus an annual dance camp!

Our Tuesday evening class has a focus on fun dances and we regularly hold 'theme' nights. Dancers are encouraged to get dressed up, bring special theme food for supper, bring friends and have a great time. Theme nights this year so far have included Irish (for St. Patrick's Day), Greek (Independence day) and French (Victory day). On Wednesday morning we have a 9.30am class catering for beginners so most of the dances tend to be simple with lovely music, but the challenge of harder dances is always included for the more experienced people who attend this class. Wednesday morning at 11am we have an 'advanced' class. Because the participants are more experienced, dances are taught quicker and participants are encouraged to take an active role in their learning. All members of this class are given the music and instructions of all dances taught with the result that these dances are remembered well. They are often given 'homework' where a dance is nominated to be taught/revised the following week and as they all have the music and notes, they have the opportunity to brush up on the steps before it is revised – with the result the class moves along pretty quickly.

Thursday morning is our biggest class with up to 25- 30 dancers attending regularly. The focus this year has been on 'brain training' and the members have been taken through different exercises to improve their memories, understand the music better and improve their concentration.

It seems to be working! Each January we hit the local papers and use their free advertising to our advantage. Classes each year are advertised with a 'theme' e.g. Popular International Dances (which included dances like Zorba, Never on Sunday, Hava Nagila). Other themes have been 'Lines, Circles and Squares', 'Get Fit with Folk Dance' and 'Line dances from around the World'. Our Thursday class this year was advertised to 'Balance the Body, Boost the Brain'.

Our classes have been used for various University Studies on Falls Prevention and Preventing Alzheimers Disease; and we have been featured on several TV shows for the ABC. All good fun – and good free advertising!

Visitors and new members are always welcome to attend any of our classes – hope to see you join us one day! *[Ed: We hope so too Kaye!]*

Update from your committee: No new updates this month. we've put our update in the newsletter! Help is needed - we welcome assistance from anyone who has their own computer set up and can contribute editing / publishing skills 2 . 3 times a year to support our very busy newsletter editor - perhaps you know someone who might be able to volunteer some time. Let us know if there are members not on our email list so that they too can receive this e-news sheet. Any member can send 200 words or so on the key topics of Thinking about..... and Dancing in.....

**EMAIL
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