



Celebrating
Half a Century
of
Perth International Folk Dance Group
and
Perth International Dance



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Perth International Dance**



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the following are some key questions to resolve

tenses and 1st/2nd person think!

Quotation page?? Is it needed? Or use regular quotations?

What font sizes, page sizes etc

Should we use left and right justification of text?

Where to put photo pages?

Which photos to use!!

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Dance is the timeless interpretation of life

Don't just breathe to survive; dance and feel alive

Dance is the ritual of immortality

Shah Asad Rizvi



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Foreword

This document traces the life of the dance group over its fifty year history. While there is some debate about the actual start date, for this history, 1976 has been taken as the nominal start date.

During the intervening fifty years we have been Perth International Folk Dance Group, Perth International Dancers and Perth International Dance. Other names were considered that included terms such as 'World Dance', 'Traditional Dancers', 'Global Dancers' and Dance International Perth! The KISS principle prevailed.

Many, many people have contributed to the success of the group over half a century, including teachers, performers, choreographers, visitors, members, life members and many other characters. Some were influencers, some were initiators, many were low key; one thing they had in common - they all enjoyed dancing! The group has welcomed them all; some left, some departed, many stayed but in one way or another they have all contributed to the success of the group and helped to make us what we are today.

Our Golden anniversary celebrations build upon earlier milestones, the 10th, the 20th, the Silver, our 30th and our 40th. Who knows what will come next!

We would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the dance group over its fifty year history. The current Committee is proud to support this document on behalf of its members and dancers.

Perth International Dance Committee

January 2026

1. In the Beginning

The key question is 'when did the dance group actually start and just how old is it?' If 2026 is the fiftieth then we started in 1976, right? Well, not quite! The actual start date seems to be a bit lost in the mists of time and needs some interpretation!

International Folk Dancing was likely introduced to Perth by Arthur Weston (originally from the USA), Chris Druid-Sutton (from Sweden) and John Watson of the WA Folk Federation, some time in 1972. One of the early venues was The Stables in Malcolm St.

Some of the early participants were Naomi Segal, Bob Sutton, Mary Drake, Helen Tyrell, Ken Pinches, and Robyn (Yutika) Juniper, who remembered being asked in 1973 to announce on her ABC radio show that the dance group was running.

By December 1975, the group had dwindled to only a handful, when fortunately, Eve and David Blair arrived after two years in the USA where International Folk Dancing was all the rage on University campuses. They brought with them many new dances and reels of taped music and luckily bumped into Chris Druid-Sutton and Bob Sutton at the WAFF New Year's Eve Bush Dance. So 1976 saw a re-activated group that met on Monday nights and that year is now taken as the birth of the Perth International Folk Dance Group (PIFDG). They met in Museum St, Northbridge in a building that was demolished a long time ago.

Chris and Eve shared the teaching until about May when Chris and husband Bob departed for Africa. Chris did leave us with her famous purple speakers which we used for many decades. Eve, by then 4 months pregnant with Palenque, was the main teacher with some help from David and from occasional visiting teachers. Eve only missed one week of teaching in 1976; that was when Palenque was born!

Pam Gunn was one of the original dancers from that era; she started in May 1976 when she returned from living in the UK, just before Chris and Bob left. She remembers being encouraged by David Blair whom she had met in the UWA Physics Dept. There were 30 or 40 people present on her first night.

So those were the first few steps for PIFDG; when and by whom it was actually christened is a moot point.

See May? Nov 96 Grapevine

2. Dancing on Mondays – From Pillar to Post?

For most of the rest of the century PIFDG dancing was held on a Monday evening. It did move around a bit though, from The Stables in Malcolm St. (1973), to 30 Museum St (1976), Henry Street, Shenton Park (1976), St Brigids, Fitzgerald St. (1978), Northwood St. West Leederville (1978), Peninsula Community Centre; Maylands (1981), North Perth Town Hall, View St. (1984) and Wembley Scout Hall (1986). True gypsies!

It remained there until the Scout hall was demolished in 1998 when the Wembley experience was farewelled with a big party, a wake, on 17th August 1998. The following Monday it moved to St Margaret's Church Hall in Nedlands on the corner of Tyrell and Elizabeth Streets, where it stayed until the group was evicted just before Christmas 2020.

That eviction called for another wake, a dress-in-black event, which was held in Nedlands on Monday 21st December 2020 after almost twenty-two fond and successful years.

The 2020 Christmas party was held in the new hall, Dalkeith Hall Waratah Avenue, Nedlands. The Saturday Group, formed in 2001, also moved to the new hall at the same time.

Will that be the last of our moves? Time will tell!

Only two of our current dancers have followed all those moves, Eve Blair and Pam Gunn, so congratulations to them for staying the course!

They probably ask themselves, as many of us do, where did those fifty years go?

There have been so many events and milestones along the way; much teaching, including visiting teachers, many performances, many theme nights, parties and celebrations including the 10th at Café Folklorico, the 25th at a week-end camp at Pt Peron, and the last big one the 40th in 2016 at St Margaret's. All great events.

So, are we thriving?

3. Differentiation – a Niche

Some would say that we have done really well to reach fifty; to survive all that time! There has always been competition, always temptations for dancers to join other groups. Local assaults some might say, from country dance, contradance, line dance, French dance (Soulieado), Ballroom, Belly dance, ballet, Tango, Morris Dance, Hora Shalom, other Israeli Groups, Chinese, Indonesian and others!

Over the years we have shared dancers with some of them, and lost members other dance movements; many have returned, some have not!

Then there are the other local 'folk' dance groups that tend to be based on communities of immigrants or descendants of immigrants, keeping their dance culture alive. They have their own dances, music, flags and they are fiercely proud of their cultures. They have their own brand you might say. Typically, they have a singular view of their culture which they keep within their own community.

There is quite a choice of 'folk' dancing, certainly in Perth, including Bulgarian, Croatian, Serbian, Hungarian, Polish, Russian, Macedonian, Greek and two Turkish groups.

We told ourselves that we were different and that we differentiated ourselves from them all.

'We are International', was the mantra, although Eve made the comment early on that starting with a spectrum of dances drawn from the Faroe Islands to Israel, Russia to Portugal, and an emphasis on Eastern Europe made her feel "a little uncomfortable in calling the mix 'international'. It does include many nationalities but there's nothing indigenous and there are no dances from Asia or Africa".

PIFDG stuck with it, promoting itself as a recreational dance group, maturing and sharing – the focus on performing for others was engendered very early on.

The small number of dances grew over the years, driven by visiting teachers and by dances collected during visits overseas. Some dances developed into "our village's" version, in true folk dancing tradition. Perhaps Perth's isolation helped with this!

Development. Tenses????!!! - Small Steps and Giant Leaps!

4.The first few years - getting established

So, in late 1975 Eve and David Blair arrived after two and a half years in the USA where International Folk Dancing was all the rage on University campuses. They had danced with the Swamp Stompers based in Baton Rouge at Louisiana State University who were incredibly supportive of the intention to start a group in Perth and provided access to all their music and files full of dance notes.. They left the US with many reel-to-reel tapes of music for hundreds of dances, many more dances than they had actually learned in the US.

That kept the nascent PIFDG going for the first few years, after which Eve travelled to workshops, Bulgaria on one occasion and Macedonia on another, where she bought records – the vinyl variety - of the workshops' music.

Later, dance teachers started visiting Perth and they had dance music for sale, adding to the group's repertoire.

So that was the start of Perth International Folk Dance Group, in that long demolished building in Museum St. until May 1976 when Chris Druid-Sutton departed leaving us with her purple speakers.

In the beginning we had a small number of authentic dances.

One dance for one piece of music which is par for the course in this genre.

Eve described those as the glory days when the group ran 'on the smell of an oily rag'.

Yes, performances started early on – one classic one at the Fremantle Arts Centre on 29 March 1976 - was on grass with most of the ten dancing bare footed. Two more barefooted performances followed in 1977 with the ladies in white blouses and simple red dresses.

By the time of the Shell Folkloric Festival at the Perth Concert Hall in 1981 the performance group had its own costume, although some thought that they looked more like the Beefeaters at the Tower of London than authentic folk dancers. Was that working on the PIFDG 'brand'?

It would take few more years before there was a logo, designed by Terry Manly, and later still incorporation, a Constitution in September 1987; eleven years on!

5. Sharing and Performing

Performance, both as a fun activity and as part of sharing the experience of international folk dance with an audience has always been a big feature of the group, and it started very early on. Back in 1976 there was that performance in the courtyard of the Fremantle Arts Centre not long after it re-opened in 1973. Ten enthusiastic dancers, yes, mostly barefooted on the grass in the courtyard.

Two more barefooted performances followed in 1977 with the ladies in white blouses and simple red dresses.

By 1981 the performance group had its own costume, in time for the Shell Folkloric Festival at the Perth Concert Hall.

In 1982 they were in Fremantle at the city's festival and the Children's Festival.

Their first Toodyay festival followed the year after, when they also performed in Kalamunda and again in Fremantle.

So the pattern was set; regular appearances at the annual Toodyay Folk Festival, Hyde Park Festival and at Whiteman Park. In 1984 they went up in the world and danced on the flat bed of a truck at the Guildford Festival!

Looking back at the old photographs one can see that the repertoire was set quite early on with inclusion of dances such as Somogyi Karikazo, Hora Medura, Ajshino Oro, Sitno Zhensko, Rov Brachot and Zvarniara

It may have been a way of sharing a love of dance but it didn't attract any new dancers and at times it was clear that the message may not have got through to the audience who made comments such as. "How clever that you are able to dance so many different dances all to the same tune!" That was after a performance at the Quakers Annual Fair at Darlington in 1976. The same year at a performance in York, at the opening of a Girl Guides Centre, someone expressed genuine concern that the group was too poor to afford any shoes and offered to take dancers to the local OP-shop! Those were days of the simple red skirts and white peasant-style blouses. It was felt that the bare feet gave them that authentically folk dance look! Apparently the main reason for donning shoes was lawns that had jo-jo and bindi bindi – really painful on the feet!

Over the years there were regular performances at the Music Festival in Nannup which is held in late February/early March. It was always hot, it was 44°C in 1994, and particularly hot when dancing outside the pub in the sun with the tar melting on the road under the feet. The audience, meanwhile, were under the shady verandah with cool drinks!

Of course, not all performances go totally to plan. There are always mistakes and the best thing to do with a mistake is don't repeat it, just move on and keep quiet. Peter Carter hadn't read that script and was known to utter loud expletives when things went a bit wrong!

In 1986, PIFDG's 20th year, Art arrived on stage at Toodyay Festival without shoes; his white socks looked quite fetching!

In preparing for a tight and close-hold Turkish dance at Cafe Folkloric' the line lost its balance and collapsed in a heap! The moral of the story? Don't lean too far!

But, considering the number of performances over the decades there were very few mistakes.

Perhaps practice does make perfect, although there is such a thing as doing too much practice, and Palenque says four identical performances on the same week-end – as at Fairbridge in 1996 is really something to avoid.

In later years the pre-recorded tapes, CD's and USB's were often replaced by live music, usually with support from The Last Five Coins. That added an extra dimension both for the dancers and for the audience.

Over the years there were some really imaginative choreographies. These include the interweaving lines of Hora in Doua Parti (Toodyay, 1994), various Can Can presentations, and a tricky choreography done to the tune 'Three Slips and a Gully' written by Steve Barnes, one of the Last Five Coins band members. The piece de resistance was probably the Australia Day performance in the Entertainment Centre in 1999, representing a family scene in a Bulgarian village.

Our thanks to all our choreographers but especially to John Whaite, Eve Blair and Palenque Blair.

There must have been hundreds of performances over the fifty years, although the annual number has dropped recently; is that age or was the Covid epidemic a trigger. It certainly didn't help. Some might say that the quality has gone up; others might disagree! The Perth Town Hall, part of Multicultural March, in 2021, was a good one. It was suggested by some that that should be our swan song!

Some performances were done in conjunction with other events such as the Shanty festivals at Albany in 2022 and 2023. Others came by invitation such as the Mandurah Performing Arts event in 2024.

Another performance by invitation was in 2018 at the Turkish Republic Ball in the new Westin Hotel in Hay St. Perth. Great involvement and organisation by Tuna Dincer, thanks Tuna, through the Turkish Australian Culture House. It was part of celebrations for the 95th anniversary of the creation of the Turkish Republic, with a guest band flown in from Sydney for the event.

Others took a very different form, such as the involvement in the Fremantle street parades in 1996 and 2015.

Some led to classic photos such as this one that we used for years in promotions and as a footer in our newsletter *Grapevine*. It was taken by Dave Currell at a Sunday afternoon *Kulcha on Swan* event at Baskerville in 2006.



There was no specific audition for performers but selection was by no means automatic. It did get easier over time as dancers moved on or they damaged themselves.

The costumes still look authentic and really have stood the test of time – sincere thanks to Fiona Murdoch and Berni Maginn.

There's a list of selected performance dances in an Appendix – Tarantella was a classic, as was the combination of Sitno Zhensko and Ajshino Oro and of course the CanCan always went down well!

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[Photoset 1 covering 'chapters' 1 through 5]

1. *In the Beginning*
2. *Dancing on Mondays – From Pillar to Post?*
3. *Differentiation– A Niche*
4. *The first few years - getting established*
- 5 *Sharing and Performing*

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/qnyNeJhGNb7PeQym7>

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6. Change - Music, Dances and Technology

In its 50 years the dance group has witnessed huge technological advances, with improvements in the quality of music and the wide availability of video on-line. The key words are flexibility, adoption and utilisation.

Dance music has been available on a variety of media and there has been move from reel-to-reel tapes, vinyl records, cassette tapes, mini-disks, CD's / DVD's, USB's and on to various digital media.

The group has also made the move to PC's. The use of iTunes particularly, has provided additional function and flexibility. Likewise, the use of the internet and the development of a Perth International Dance web site. Who can forget the early PID-Web site with its focus on frogs!? Thanks to Jenny Currell for hosting that site and for the early adoption and development. John Whaite took over the web support and development for many years before passing support to Martin Williams in 2021.

Sincere thanks are also due to John Whaite for his work on the video collection and the maintenance of our music in its various forms, particularly after the move to digital.

Thanks also to Martin Williams, as archivist, for collecting, indexing and promoting photographic and video material.

In terms of collecting dances there has been a real shift over time. In the early days it was difficult to find suitable dances and quality recordings which typically involved long-distance travel.

Workshops by visiting teachers added a new and very effective source of dances. PIFDG and PID tapped into that mode very effectively.

No need now to travel overseas to foreign workshops to collect dances. The modern internet has not only changed that enormously it has basically delivered a totally different problem. The problem today is selecting suitable material from the multitude of dance music and videos on-line; there's just so much of it. There's a regular flood of new dances and new choreographies, particularly Israeli.

7. Workshops and Visiting Teachers

In 1973, long before PIFDG was formally established, Arthur Weston conducted a workshop on Balkan Dance at The Stables in Malcolm St. in Perth. And so the die was cast, although the next workshop wasn't until 1978 as part of that year's Perth-based National Folk Festival, when Ronaldo from Sydney taught dances from Mexico, his country of origin.

That same year saw workshops by Bora Ozkok and Krishnan Nair. Bora, from Turkey, returned two years later for a workshop on Penguin Island.

There then seemed to be a further paucity of workshops until André van de Plas's first visit to Perth in 1986. His first visit to Australia was in 1983 when he did workshops for Sedenka in Sydney and for CIFDA in Canberra.

André returned to Perth in 1988 and again in 1995, 1996, 1999 and 2000 before a run of 10 years between 2002 and 2011. He was back in Perth in 2013, then every year until 2018 when there were no workshops due to that Bali volcano, although we did learn his dances that year thanks to Jennifer Eyre who met him at the airport for a non-standard workshop.

That was twenty-two year's worth!! Was it Perth or Australia that was his second home? Over those years André brought 724 dances to Australia from 51 countries. In Perth it was 294 dances; about 40% of our total.

For more than two decades we relied almost solely on André van de Plas to select suitable dances for us, but sadly that gift was snatched away with his sudden, untimely death on 30 January 2019 which left us in shock. No more 'look to me'! He was friend and a true institution.

There was always great enthusiasm for André's workshops. In 2006 we had 50 dancers over the two days of his visit.

His legacy was continued 'One More Time' by Kaye Laurendet when she presented his 2019 programme.

Kaye Laurendet, André's Australian collaborator, is based in Sydney where she runs an active dance group in Sutherland shire. She arranged all André's visits and wrote the English version of his dance notes.

Before his passing, André sent Kaye some material for 12 dances in his planned 2019 tour. She presented ten of those to the 42 dancers at PID's two day workshops over the week-end 5th / 6th October 2019. The end of an era!

In the early years the late and well respected Frances Young, with husband Roger, from America, conducted a number of workshops (1989/90 & 2003) some for the group and others at folk festivals such as Toodyay.

Fiona Murdoch wrote a very moving tribute to Frances in 2010.

Fiona Murdoch, herself, was with us as a key teacher, performer and mentor for over five years before returning to her native New Zealand in 1994 where, in 2025, she was awarded The King's Service Medal for services to dance. Surely, very well deserved

She came back to Perth for five successful workshops including a residential one at Point Peron in 2008, where her dances included Boker (Israel), Ciobankat (Albania), Dana (Gypsy/Romanian) and Hassapikos Politikos from Greece

At her Nedlands workshop in 1996 she taught Shdemati.

Fiona's 'Oz-Aateora International Dance Experience' in 1996 included dances from Israel (Alizut), Armenia (Hey Par, Ambee Dageets), Greece (Vrachos Hassapikos), Taiwan and Ireland.

Her 'Spring Workshop' in September 1998 included Azche Jerazanke (Armenia), Dontia Pikna (Greece), 'Jegg' (Norway), Mom Bar (Armenia), Tagadi (Israel), Welenki (Russia) and Yaldati (Israel) some of which we still dance.

For our anniversary celebrations in 2001 Fiona presented a 'Silver Jubilee Workshop' which included Baraka (Israel), Cosnencuta (Romania), Opsa (Balkan) and Riverdance (Israel).

We also had regular dance injections from other visiting teachers and from our dancers who returned with dances from workshops elsewhere.

The early years saw visits from Al Wiedemann (1978), Mihai David (1981), George Tomov (1982) and Yves Moreau (1989). The latter talked about 'the disappearing smile syndrome' the thing that happened when he added arm movements when he was teaching a dance!

Yves Paliern came to Perth in 1991 as part of his French military service – and joined the group in a number of ventures, including a partner dance workshop at North Perth Town Hall, a Breton Dance Workshop in the Guildford Town Hall and a Bastille Day event at Observation City, Scarborough; before heading home later in the year.

In October 2001, as part of our 25th year celebrations, Tineke van Geel gave us an Armenian workshop in Mosman Park that included Tamzara, Gorani, Hoi Nare Nare and Trabzoni Bar. Over the years several dance members have attended Tineke's workshops in Bali, Georgia and in Armenia.

Yorgo Kaporis came to Perth twice. In October 2010 he taught nineteen dances which we ranked in that month's *Grapevine*; we still dance Sulejmanovo, Ti Li Be Giorgi and occasionally Pembe. Two years later he brought his amazing energy and a smaller number of interesting and more challenging dances. Of the nine, Vojdaki, The Water Carrier's Dance, was five dances combined into one!! The very fast fifth part was presented as a separate dance Ratevka.

During their European trip in July 1992, John Whaite and Fiona Murdoch attended Belcho Stanev's Folk Dance Summer School in Varna. They returned with many favourite dances such as Kutsata, Devoiche, Opas and Gankino and a favourite new teacher and choreographer, Belcho Stanev. It took a few years but in 1995 Belcho had his first trip to Perth supported by the WA Government through grants from the

Department of the Arts. He brought us twenty dances that year and many of them have been regulars in our repertoire since. Absolute classics and just as classic was the booklet that John Whaite put together describing the culture of Bulgarian Folk Dance and the steps and patterns of all the dances.

The workshops, the dances, the parties and most of all the dancing, the humour and the friendship of Belcho live on in our memories.

His 1995 dances included Danets, Dvazhdi Trizhdi, Eleno Mome, Jove Male Mome, Kamishitsa, Ludo Mlado, Ograzhdensko Horo, Opas, Ovchata, Paidushko Horo, Rodopsko and his variants of Vlashko and Sborenka.

Belcho visited the following year and added eight more of his magic dances, including Koledarsko Horo, Brestanska Rachenitsa, Ljavata and Oi Ela Mi, Libe Le. His 1996 workshops were residential at Point Peron.

Belcho came back to Perth for his third visit in 1997. He retaught Ograzhdensko Horo and added twelve more of his classic dances, including Bachkovsko, Gigenko Horo, More Sokol Pie, Paidushkata and Kyustendilsko Horo. We never did master the last dance which had fourteen parts!

Later in 1997 several of the group visited Belcho in Bulgaria – a unique adventure for many of the Group - more of that later.

In 2019 and in 2024 we had visits from Dorien van de Belt from Holland who taught us Setnala de Mitra and Gankino ot Selo Roman, both from Bulgaria.

There were also musical visits such as those from Les Derniers Trouvers in 2008 and 2011. Superb performers, great presence and full of character. Musical fun at the home of The Last Five Coins, at Alliances Francaises and down by the river with all those friendly mosquitoes!!

And who can forget the visits from Xenos in 2002 and 2005. They were joined by local Macedonians Petre Georgievski and multi-instrumentalist Stefche Stojkovski. Dancing in a large circle

around the musicians with the gaidas, the zurna, the kaval and clarinet, the tablas and a banjo were touches of magic!!

Perth may be billed as the most remote capital city in the world but considering that we have done really well over the decades with so many visits from inter-state and overseas teachers. They have boosted our dance repertoire and the variety of our dances enormously. Add to that dances picked up from Hora Shalom and their visiting Israeli teachers and from some ten workshops organised by our own teachers over the years.

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8. Visits Abroad

A search through *Grapevines* will soon convince one that our members have spent a lot of time travelling the world. Our dancers really have been a pretty mobile lot!

Typically these trips have involved regular visits to workshops and festivals and many have led to the collection of dances.

An exhaustive list that focuses on those dance trips is included as an Appendix. It largely ignores personal holidays of which there were many, many more! The following provides a flavour of the number and the scope of these visits and the energy that they require – some of these festivals are three weeks long!!

Eve Blair's first trips to Bulgaria and Macedonia to collect dances were in the late seventies / early eighties.

In 1992 John Whaite and Fiona Murdoch travelled to Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey and Azerbaijan for an extensive trip that also included a Belcho Stanev Summer camp and dance lessons with Romanian, Turkish and Greek teachers.

Following Belcho Stanev's successful three visits to Perth, eight group members joined with dancers from Europe and America in 1997 for a memorable tour that included Koprivshitsa, Lozen, Sofia, and Karlovo in Bulgaria.

Also in 1997 John Whaite embarked on a true grand tour attending the Sabor in Koprivshitsa then the Tchan Bulgarian seminar with Hristo and Kaya Ivanovi before heading off to the Traditionarius Catalan dance seminar. He rounded that off with St Chartier, Le Grand Bal de l'Europe in Gennetines and then the Pirin Pee festival in the Pirin mountains of Bulgaria.

The following year John was again at Major Festivals in Catalonia including the Traditionarius at Pobla de Segur; the Accordionists Festival at Arseguel d'Urgell and the Festa Mayor in Esterri d'Aneu. In 2014 he went to the Gucha Festival a gypsy festival in central Serbia.

2015 saw him at Le Son Continu and Gennetines for The Grand Ball of Europe and at Bulgarian and Serbian workshops in Zornitsa, SW Bulgaria.

In 2017 it was an Yves Moreau workshop and Albania and Kyriakos for a Greek Seminar, Le Son Continu and Le Grand Bal in Gennetines. In 2018 he repeated the last two and added Andanças in Portugal.

Then it was back to Gennetines in 2019 before heading off to the Lygkistes Seminar for another dose of Greek, Macedonia and Albania music, dance and folklore.

The now three-week festival of dance at Gennetines was also a favourite of Laurel de Vietri. She was there in 1999 for the 10th Le Grand Bal de L'Europe and at the Recontre Internationales de Luthiers et Maitre Sonneurs, Indre. She returned to Gennetines for the next three years and was back there in 2012, 2014 and again as recently as 2025. Laurel also attended many other traditional French and Celtic festivals including Le Festival Interceltiques, Lorient, [the Year of Australia] Brittany (2006), the Festival de Cornouailles, Quimper. Brittany (2007), Le Recontre International de Luthiers et Maitre Sonneurs, Chateau d'Ars, Indre (2012); Le Carnavale de Limoux, Aude, France (2012), the Festival de Cornouailles in Brittany (2014) and the Borbon, Fetes des Chavannes, Embraud, (2014).

2006 Tineke van Geel tour of Armenia (JC)

In 2010, several dancers went to Bali for the Yves Moreau workshop including John & Jenny Bardill, Jenny Currell, Jennifer Eyre, Mary Woodward, John Whaite, Michaela Hill and Brigita Ferencek.

Wherever the dances came from, whoever introduced them, we still hope that our dancers will remember their favourites and we rely on our regular teachers to reteach them. Both our regular teachers and our visiting teachers are essential to the group's success; it's not just the dances, not just the music and not just the technology.

9. Our Teachers - Who's who?

Quotation: "To teach - is to learn twice" Joseph Joubert

So, let's focus on our own teachers who have been many over the years although the core of teachers has remained quite stable over the years. The long-service award really has to go to Eve Blair who was a key teacher in the first year and is still teaching regularly today. On that basis, the following is a profile of our teachers over the last few decades. They have been a huge influence and have contributed immensely to the success of the dance group. Of these Eve, John, Peter and Jenny Currell are all life members.

Eve Blair: Eve grew up in a London suburb where her mother was a ballet teacher. Ballet being a prominent part of life till she left home.

Her introduction to international folk dance was in Louisiana, in a culture born of the children and grandchildren of primarily European immigrants. They wanted to dance but not to restrict themselves to the dances of their recent ancestors. This gave her a variety of dance styles without the technically challenging aspects of ballet.

After 2 years in the US she moved to Perth, where communities of recent immigrants were keeping their dance cultures alive, but strictly within their own community. In order to continue international dancing she created her own venue: Monday nights with one novice teacher, much help with the technical aspects of music from her husband and the inheritance of two purple loudspeakers from a similarly dance-starved Scandinavian folk dancer who was moving on.

Now 50 years later she is certainly no novice teacher and still loves the variety and energy of our repertoire, pleased to share the teaching with our other teachers.

The American **Frances Young** taught between 1988 and 1990, and returned home in 2003. Fiona Murdoch remembers her for her thorough research and preparation for teaching. Frances would tie a scarf around one ankle to help her students work out

which of their two left feet they should use. Frances, and husband Roger, shared their time selflessly.

John Whaite describes himself as a dancaholic, loving the diversity of dance and an enchantment in the nuance of a simple repetitive folk dance, an exhilaration in the challenge of a complex energetic dance, delight in the camaraderie of set dances, warmth in the passion of many couples dances, and awe in witnessing the skill and athleticism of performances, from folk to hip-hop to ballet. He loves to share dance and has been teaching for over 40 years and learning for over 50 years. He says that he's still learning. He's travelled a lot, both in Australia and overseas to learn and teach dance and has spent many hours supporting dance by organising events, recording videos, writing notes, distributing materials and promoting dance.

John says he has the most important qualification for a dancer - he's happy to be the first person on the dance floor. It's just his passion.

Sara Friedman

Sara attended dance courses and taught dance in Israel in 1973 where she was a keen participant in their vibrant folk dancing scene, Israel being one of the few places where such dances are still being created, drawing inspiration from the wide variety of cultures contributing to Israeli society.

Sara Friedman arrived in Australia in 1975 and for many years she taught in collaboration with Eve to improve communication of her dances. Her delicate style was always an inspiration and a wonder to many.

In Australia she initiated the Hora Shalom dance group to foster the dancing of Israeli dance, and when teaching at PID she focused on dances from her native land.

She thanks us for being part of her life for over 45 years and says "I knew from her first lesson in Leederville in 1979 that it was always for me! Eve was teaching "Hava Nagila", which looked familiar, and then she taught Pleskavak. The different sound of another country and her neat footwork were captivating. You gave me opportunity to teach Israeli dance again but more so to learn, love and appreciate the steps and sounds of other places. My heart was and is always with you all."

Palenque Blair

As daughter of Eve Blair, Palenque was introduced to folk dance at an early age, a very early age – undoubtedly before birth. As we said 'In the Beginning' the only week of teaching that Eve missed in 1976 was when Palenque was born!

Music and folk dance have continued as a major part of her life. Her formal introduction to dance was through ballet which she gave up at age 11 due to the commitment demanded for higher grades and the cramps the toe pointing gave her!

At 12 she joined the adult group evening classes, by 15 she had joined the performance group and at 20 she began teaching.

At 25, after completing her formal FDA teacher training course Palenque headed off to France, Bulgaria and Romania to experience and collect folk dance for herself.

She loves to dance. She says it makes her happy and she loves the sense of community that dancing in a group provides.

The word 'extraordinaire' applies to Palenque as a teacher, a performer and as a choreographer.

In January 2019 she moved to the south coast and later that year launched dance groups in Albany – for adults and, having two young children, sessions for kids on Saturday mornings. While down there she has organised performances in Albany for Australia Day, in support of Albany Shanty Festivals and at Harmony Days both there in Albany and in Katanning.

She hopes she can instill the love for the variety of music and movement that international folk dance gives her, though her children whom she describes as the most misbehaved of her students!

Laurel de Vietri

Laurel first started teaching us French dances in October 1999. She had lived in France for 5 years up until 1993 where she danced with a Provençal Folkloric Group. After creating her group 'Les Enfants de Provence' in 1994 in Australia and subsequently the French dance group, Souleiado, she went back to France every second year to attend workshops, to dance with her former group around the Cote d'Azur and to explore dances from other cultures in France. She first attended her first two-week-long international dance festival, the 10th Grand Bal de l'Europe,

in 1999. With Souleiado, she has been performing French dances (and now Morris dancing) at the National Folk Festival in Canberra since the early 90s, as well as at Fairbridge Festival in WA. She took Souleiado to the National Celtic Festival in Portarlington, Vic, to the Australian Celtic Festival in Glen Innes, NSW, to several French Festival celebrations in Carrick Hill, SA, and to many Medieval Festivals. She has given French dance workshops around Australia for both children and adults.

There are many words that characterise Laurel including organised, enthusiastic, energetic, meticulous, detailed and stylish – just check out that birthday cake in our 2006 photo album. If it wasn't our group it was Souleiado, Alliances Francaises, Un P'tit Gout de France, Krazy at Kulcha, Christmas Bals, Sundays in Brittany or Leaping into Brittany, as on 29th February 2004. After numerous trips to Le Grand Bal de l'Europe, to Pays Basque and to Brittany, Laurel was an expert in Gavottes, Ronds, Bourées, Mazurkas and Branlés; which we actually think she had a PhD in!

Laurel was driven – she taught us over 200 dances, mostly French and she was involved in many facets of our dance including teaching and beginners' courses. We shared Eurodance performances with her at Fairbridge and in Canberra at the National Folk Festival – borrowing some of our dancers. She was quite forgiving too - we never did quite get the speed of the turns and the subtle footwork of Axuri Beltza!

After 25 years of 'Leve-toi et Dance' with Perth International Dance and with Souleiado Laurel morphed to Morris Dance and moved to Melbourne. Soirely missed!

Jenny Currell

Jenny was another of our teachers that learned ballet at school and later attended jazz ballet classes whilst at Uni. Then, while looking for dancing that didn't involve a partner, she discovered International Folk Dance at a folk festival. As someone who loved languages and all things foreign she was immediately hooked. After more than 40 years she still enjoys dancing and teaching. She has been in the performance group since the early eighties and she even admits to enjoyed rehearsing!

She started teaching early in 2002 on Saturdays and on Mondays in 2006. In between time she started the Hills Group in 2004 so she could dance locally and travel less, before handing that class over to Jennifer to run after five years. Later, it became a shared group.

Jenny has a penchant for Armenian dances, attending Tineke van Geel's dance tours in 2006 and again in 2012 in Bali with Tineke and Yves Moreau. More recently she has attended many Israeli workshops, an interest reflected in her proposal to set up the Midland group with a more advanced Israeli focus early in 2024; a group that in mid-year moved to South Perth.

All in all Jenny loves the combined mental and physical challenges of learning and remembering new dances, and loves dancing together with a bunch of other people having fun together. She loves the wide range of dance styles and the variety of the music and loves seeing others finally master a dance that she's been carefully teaching them. It keeps her fit and it keeps her happy!

Jennifer Eyre

Jennifer began her dance journey in New Zealand attending her mother's ballet classes as a toddler. She trained in classical ballet until her late teens with her teacher passing on her love of folk 'character' dance and providing performance opportunities ranging from a challenging Balinese wedding dance to an energetic Russian partner dance and everything in between! That led to her to teaching and finally to travelling in search of more dance. She arrived in Western Australia where she trained in Adult education and taught speech reading before meeting Jenny Currell who introduced her to our group. She joined the performance group and was soon teaching at the Hills group and in Nedlands.

PID sponsored her to attend the Ausdance 'Skillset for Teaching Dance' equivalent to the FDA qualification but one that provided more knowledge of social groups. ???

She says that she thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to dance with PID at the National Folk Festival in 2007 and made the most of a workshop in Bali partly funded by the Shire of Mundaring.

Jennifer has also had a number of other dance group involvements, including starting the River Group at East Fremantle in 2020 and the new Mandurah Group, with Maria Jenkins, in 2025.

She also teaches annual folk dance classes to dance and language students at a couple of High Schools in the Perth Hills. Jennifer describes sharing the language, music and dance of other cultures with the next generation as a highlight. Their positive energy and enthusiasm for learning is the 'icing on the cake'.

Peter Fallon

Peter was introduced to dance in 1970 while attending boarding school. A section of the ballet classes that particularly interested him was learning national dances within the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing syllabus and one evening in 1976 he was taken to meet a social group of people doing folk dances and was introduced to Perth International Dance. The rest is history.

He is, of course, interested in many varieties of dance; in 1991 he attended ballroom dance classes, in 1999 it was Cajun dance classes and in 2001 he joined a local Israeli dance group specializing in partner dances. He regularly danced with Souleiado, Hora Shalom and Perth International Dance, both in their weekly sessions and in performances. All those dance sessions had to be fitted in around playing bagpipes with the City of Cockburn Pipe band.

When he retired in 2015 he started to teach at Perth International Dance in the absence of the regular teachers and he's still teaching.

Maria Jenkins

Maria, a long time leader and teacher at Canberra International Folk Dance Group, moved to Western Australia and joined us in 2019. She brought with her a whole new repertoire including dances from overseas workshops and dances that André van de Plas taught didn't teach us on his visits to Perth.

She soon joined the performance group and took part in epics like the Curtin Orientation day on a 40°C day in February 2020, Multi-

Cultural March in the Perth Town Hall in 2021 and the Mandurah Performing Arts Centre in 2024 with The Last Five Coins.

In January 2025 she initiated our new Mandurah group with Jennifer Eyre.

Jenny Shah joined the PID teaching team in 2024

Pia and Yamuna

There have been other teachers along the way including Michaela Hill and in 2022 when teachers were thin on the ground Martin Williams tried his hand at teaching.

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10. Changes and Challenges

Maybe the old adage does have it that the more things change, the more they stay the same, but for the dance group we really have witnessed constant change. There have been many drivers: technology drives change, people change and people cause change, age brings change, dance halls change and prices change.

Price increases, driven by inflation, have been a constant over the years. In mid 2006, when Peter Fallon finished his twenty-seven year stint as Treasurer, he pointed out that when he was first elected treasurer in 1979, Peter Carter handed over the bank deposit book with a balance of \$6, classes cost 20 cents, room hire was \$1 and the teacher didn't get paid. Eve was an unpaid teacher for decades. We now pay our teachers \$40 for a session of teaching and our hall costs are **\$38** per hour

For many years we used to charge \$8 or \$10 for Christmas parties, now they are free, more change. We do still have live music, usually delivered by The Last Five Coins – occasionally with five of them; great musicians, even if counting isn't their strong point!

The performance group even graduated to wearing shoes! None of that barefoot nonsense!

The group always lives with the prospect of changing halls and finding suitable new homes has never been easy. The preference for a sprung floor is always a challenge – there are so very few left. St Margaret's Hall, our home for so many years, was really good; as has been the sprung floor at Dalkeith Hall, although it is showing signs of wear and there is the ongoing threat of redevelopment of the site in Waratah Avenue.

However, in terms of its objectives, its core dances, its performance dances and its key personnel there has been remarkable consistency across half a century. As we said life is full

of change and the dance group has successfully met many challenges and issues.

The Number of Dancers

Looking back through our *Grapevine* magazine the number of dancers and members was an ongoing issue. There was always a focus on attracting new members to bridge the experience gap which continued to grow over time.

Numbers continued to decline for many years although the last two years have seen a significant turnaround!

Maybe the incentive of being part of the 50th year celebrations will see the return of some more of our lost dancers!

One of the problems with International Folk Dance is that it's not easy! There are just so many dances, so many styles, rhythms and ethnicities. The key twin challenges are attracting dancers and then retaining them!

There were so many beginners' classes held over the years but rarely did they bridge the gap for very long and give new dancers a leg up into established groups. One successful initiative that did address that issue was the creation of The Saturday Group that was proposed by Joy Hill in 2001 our Silver Anniversary year. Each new group brings a few new dancers although sometimes at the expense of other sessions.

At the other end of the scale there was an advanced dance class initiative in 2017, called a 'Graduates Session' which worked well for a while. It was probably Covid that finally killed that off!

When Steven Janweicki arrived in Perth in 2015 his energy, interest and musical talents carried him in many directions including dancing, joining the Committee and starting Contradance. It was never quite clear whether it was run under the auspices of PID or St Margaret's Church but Contradance, which ran for a few years, was characterised by so many enthusiastic dancers and a stage crammed with musicians – they all loved it and there seemed to be a queue of musos to get a good spot. Quite a few dancers, lots of enthusiasm but they didn't transfer to PID.

Zooming around Covid!

The Covid years, 2019 to 2021, certainly delivered a challenge and demanded significant change.

The President, John Whaite, and the whole Committee deserve so many congratulations for negotiating the minefield that was Covid. Things were really fluid at that time with the rules, regulations and recommendations changing constantly.

Covid was variously; a disaster if you lost your job, a 'stop the world I want to get off' moment, a chance to catch up and take stock; or a time to sit at the PC browsing the catalogues and ordering things on Amazon!

The Committee was faced with a fast moving situation, needing quick decisions. The first problem was that they were in the middle of preparing for a Romanian workshop with Marius Ursu. That was in late March 2020 and with the international borders about to close Marius and his wife decided to return home part way through their tour of Australia, and not visit Perth. That cost the group about \$600.

Covid required a total rethink of how we worked, some might say that like lots of things, it never really recovered.

So many things to come to grips with; social distancing, no hand holding, mask wearing, hand sanitiser, not using cash to pay for sessions, not touching surfaces etc etc.

Later on there was isolation as the WA borders shut. Then there was no dancing; our main dance sessions were on Monday 16th and Saturday 21st March 2019 and suddenly everyone was into Zoom sessions.

John Whaite and Jenny Currell put together a number of Zoom sessions. Quite a few challenges there with synchronising sound and images to cope with different line speeds and service providers. They described their first Zoom test sessions as awful but they could soon create a video and play it back over Zoom.

The first Zoom session, on 25 April, included Opsa, Cumbia Semana, Damat Halayi, Aptalikos, Poloxia and Raghse Kurdi. The next week it was Esmer, Fado Portugues, Zajecharka, Ya Da

Kalinsuhku, Hastayim, Kritikos and Glasat Na Pirin. Quite hard work and quite intense preparing the lessons.

We also joined Zoom sessions offered by dance choreographers around the world including Ira Weisburg, Dorien van de Belt and Gergena Panova. Some of those were organised and partly funded with grants from Folk Dance Australia and our thanks go to them.

The fifth and final Zoom session was on 23rd May 2020 before Nedlands sessions restarted a week later with a new regime that involved booking a spot for the limited number of dancers allowed.

Committee meetings were also conducted by Zoom and there were even three 'CovidSafe' *Grapevines*.

The changes triggered by Covid did deliver some positives that have had an ongoing effect such as a whole new payment and monthly billing system.

There was no hand-holding for so long that it felt really odd when it was finally allowed! Some dancers are still reluctant to hold hands and that has an effect on the 'circle' and the general sense of community. For the dances that we learnt during the Covid period with no hand holding we have since struggled to regain the true feel of the dance.

... .. or out-of-doors with a neighbourly handkerchief connection as in the Hills group

[Photoset 2 covering ‘chapters’ 6 through 11]

- 6. *Change - Music, Dances and Technology*
- 7. *Workshops and Visiting Teachers*
- 8. *Visits Abroad*
- 9. *Teachers - Who's who, Who was? Who is?*
- 10. *Changes and Challenges*
 - The Number of Dancers*
 - Zooming Around Covid!*
- 11. *Parties and Celebrations*
 - Red Faces Anyone?*

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/hLBAqurt7V3b7WPW6>

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11. Theme Nights, Parties and Celebrations

Another thing that the dance group has always been good at is holding parties. Obviously Christmas parties, but also regular theme parties – when there were five Mondays in a month - and celebration birthdays such as the 10th, 20th, 25th and 40th anniversaries.

There were various themes with the most popular being country-based – all the normal suspects such as 'Bulgarian', 'Greek', 'Armenian', 'Romanian'; along with 'Dutch', 'Latin', 'Mexican', 'Polish' and 'Mediterranean' nights. There were a few 'Bring a Friend' nights, an occasional 'Halloween' night and a few colours thrown in with 'White' and 'Black' being the favourites. For many, the most memorable theme parties were the Macedonian ones in 2017 and 2019 which brought in lots of the local Macedonian dancers and musicians such as multi-instrumentalist Stefche Stojkovski, accordionist Dushko Bozhinovski and dance teacher Petre Georgievski.

The Saturday Group had a tradition of celebrating each of their birthdays – they even had one during Covid – and in their photo for that year they were all sporting masks. Other birthday themes included 'Political', 'Star Signs', '**Royalty**', 'Baubles and Bells', 'Flowers', 'Sweet Sixteen', 'Coming of Age' – twice! and eventually a 'Tramp' theme in 2023 when they were judged as the best looking tramps ever seen in Nedlands!

Santa was a regular visitor for the Christmas parties as were The Last Five Coins. Those parties also had themes, such as 'Starry, Starry night' (2021) and 'An Aussie Bush Christmas' (2023). The original Monday end-of-year Xmas parties were moved to Saturday evening in 2024.

And of course groups such as the Hills Group and the River Group held their own Christmas celebrations.

Jenny Currell started *Spring in the Hills* in 2005 and that has become another annual institution; a dance celebration followed by a gathering in Jenny's garden to catch up with friends and to be

impressed by her thriving plant life and to see if the fox had been kept away from the chickens for another year!

We didn't move halls too many times but those occasions were opportunities to hold a wake for the old hall and a welcome party for the new hall.

Most camps and workshops also had built-in parties and, of course there were a few birthday parties along the way.

Most parties were happy events but there were some sad occasions when we said farewell to dancers. These included Sue Keating (1995), Steve Hubbard (2009) and Michaela. The group held a memorable party to farewell Fiona Murdoch when returned to New Zealand in 1994 – she had another farewell party when she left after her workshops in 1998. There was an interesting party in 1993 to say au revoir to Tony Hoar when he went off to Iran on contract – he came back!

50th year parties

Red Faces Anyone?

There are many things along the way that have lead to red faces including the time when during the 25th ??? year party celebrations in St Margaret's, Yuthika sat on one end of a trestle table, which promptly collapsed. The other end of the table held the anniversary cake, which slid slowly and some might say elegantly down the table, a bit like an ocean liner being launched. It landed on the floor where it was quickly rescued and eaten before any more accidents befell it!

That and few performance faux pas, were just run-of-the-mill red faces, the real 'Red Faces' came later thanks to Leone Pitman.

Red Faces was an institution for over twenty years and for many of us Leone was the true face of Red Faces. She had a superb gift of picking acts, of creating skits, of convincing people to do them

and organising them; there was a great continuity in Leone's Red Faces – it was a great legacy!

Her personal take was "... it has been twenty years of fun, stress, delight, anxiety and relief each time I gathered this thing we call Red Faces together. It is with much sadness that I let go but also with much happiness. Best hopes and wishes that Red Faces will continue for years to come. Love to all, Leone." That was as she passed it over for Pam Massey who stepped in and agreed to take over in 2018, running it under the watchful eye of Leone.

The dance Committee did some ownership as it migrated from being held at Leone's house, then Eve's home a few times, at Pat Charlton's and eventually to St Margaret's Hall. The Committee decided that if it runs in the future it will be totally independent.

Love it or hate it, Red Faces was an institution for many, many years. There were some fabulous skits over the two decades, really memorable; for others you just can't get them out of your mind! They cannot be unseen!

Undoubtedly everyone has their own favourites. Some of those killer acts include:

1998 – Paula, PaM, Glynda, Berni – The Full Monty

1998 – Berni, Nina – You Can't be a Pirate

1998 – Pam Gunn, Laurie Scott, Sue Dauth – Mud, Mud – Hippos

1998 – Berni, Nina, Paula – France!

1998 – Brigita Ferencek and Leone Pitman – Moon River

1998 – Gisela, Barry - Tango

2002 - Nina and Peter - I've Got You Babe

2002 - Paula Day - Charlie Chaplin

2002 - Paula, Pam, Debra, Marcia – Do You Know the way to San Jose?

2002 - Martin, Art, Tony, Peter - Swan Lake - Cygnets

2004 - Lee, Eve, Palenque - Culiandra - The baby eggs

2004 - Pam, Martin - Ten Folk Dancers

2017 - Tuna Dincer - Ashuk and Mashuk

2017 - Anne Griffiths – Is there any news of the Iceberg?

2017 - Berni, Nina, Paula - Pink Panther

2017 - Paula, Nina, Berni, Pat - Pop Song
2017 - Leigh Richmond, Laurel et al - Rond de Balinup
2017 - The Classic Can Can introduction (led by Leigh Richmond)
2017 - The Forgetables
2017 - The Physician - Nina
2018 - Pleasure and Pain - John & Martin
2018 - Maureen, Nina, Trish - OBE – Over Bloody Eighty!
2018 - Tuna and ... - Turkey-Lake
2019 - Pat, Leigh, Carolyn, Nina - Down to the River
2019 - Paula Day - Charlie Chaplin – revisited

The can-can introduction became a regular starter for 'Red Faces'. Originally started at early events it became somewhat of an art form when led by Leigh Richards – the most classic performance was probably in 2017.

Most of the above, and many more are available on the PID Website – accessed via the Photo and Video Record page.

12. PID's Progeny!

Intro re past numbers, falling attendance. Monday nights in winter.

Different ways to attract and keep newcomers

Drivers and drivers

Expand

+ve or -ve – some say it divides our group and that we sacrifice dancers in one group to feed another.

12.1 The Saturday Group

One of the issues for PIFDG as a mature group of regular members is attracting new dancers. For new people it was just too daunting when faced with hundreds of new dances and dancers with decades of folk dance experience. Where do you start? Several beginner's and starter courses were run but the challenge remained!

The answer came from Joy Hill, who initiated a new group, 'The Saturday Group', in 2001.

Following a six week beginners' refresher course, the first Saturday class was held on 8 September in the John Leckie Pavillion, Melvista Avenue, in Nedlands and they have never looked back. They moved to St Margaret's Hall in October 2008 with the tradition of holding birthday parties, celebrating their 21st birthday on 23rd September 2022.

Steered with energy and enthusiasm by John and Jenny Bardill the Saturday has matured and now has the same teachers, doing most of the same dances with more regular dancers than the original Monday night session.

Tales

Anecdotes etc

12.2 The Hills Group

Started in 2004 by JC with three people
later run by JE and then re-shared

Mundaring Scout Hall, Jacoby St-Munraring

Hall moves

mid-2016 moved to Parkerville Hall, Seabourne St, Parkerville

Glen Forrest move – whenever

Darlington Hall. How long did that refurbishment take!!

etc.

Spring in the Hills events started in .. 2012??

Number of dancers - at 16 in mid-2016

Performances and costumes

Support for local high schools

Kalamunda HS, Italian .. Tarantella etc

Choir and music

Impact of Covid

Facebook??

Number, protocols

Anecdotes

etc

etc

12.3 Fremantle 'River' Group

12.4 Albany

12.5 Sunday – South Perth

After a trial six months in Midland on Tuesday evening ..

12.6 Mandurah

12.7 The Grand Bal of Perth

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Photoset 3 covering 'chapters' 12 through 13

12. PID's Peripheral Progeny!

12.1 The Saturday Group

12.2 The Hills Group

12.3 Fremantle 'River' Group

12.4 Albany

12.5 Sunday – South Perth

12.6 Mandurah ...

12.7 Grand Bal???

13. Conclusion

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/W34MmaCZ9QCHgkyN8>

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13. Conclusion

As the world has changed over the last fifty years so has the dance group. It has grown at times and it has shrunk at times, it has collected money and it has spent money, it has aged and it has matured together with our dancers. Do we still have that extra bounce?

We have always pitched ourselves as a recreational dance group and not a 'social' dance group. After fifty years maybe we are slowly drifting more towards the 'social' end of the spectrum!

Over the years there have been many articles on-line that mourned the death of International Folk Dance with suggestions that it 'aged without maturing', that it 'favoured quantity over quality' and 'placed regurgitation ahead of improvisation'. We believe that we have avoided most of the pitfalls and perhaps for Perth International Dance we can borrow from Mark Twain and say that 'reports of its death are greatly exaggerated'.

We are still alive, still going and from humble beginnings with a small number of dances we now have in our repertoire more than 950 dances from over fifty countries, we are truly International and we believe that we have fulfilled the objectives that have remained unchanged since they were written half a century ago.

Perhaps we could have been more diverse, after all almost one third of our dances came from one source, André van de Plas, whose visits and mentoring we have sorely missed since 2018.

We have our favourites, favourite styles, favourite rhythms and favourite dances. With age we have slowed down and become more discerning.

We are still dancing so thanks to everyone who joined in along the way and made it happen. Join us in our next steps

Material to think about and possibly work in somewhere!

My favourites

Quote(s)?

'Look to me', 'One more time'

If you forget the steps just do a grapevine .. or a cherkessiya ..

Residential workshops were eagerly anticipated, with many people exhausted by the Sunday afternoon session with Eve pressing for dance number 20 to be taught.

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Acknowledgements

There so many people to acknowledge but firstly I would like to thank Pam Gunn, both as one of the original dancers with PIFDG but also for her suggestion to compile this history of the dance group.

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Appendices

The Objectives of the Group

The objectives have remained unchanged from the original Constitution created in September 1987. They are mirrored in the Rules of Association (ROA), created in 2019 and endorsed by the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety on behalf of the Government of Western Australia on 1st April 2019.

Note that officially and in the ROA these are termed 'Objects'.

- To promote, teach and encourage the art of folk dancing in Western Australia;
- To collect and record folk dances from diverse ethnic groups and cultures;
- To collect and record folk dance music;
- To perform folk dances and maintain folk dance as a part of the Western Australian culture.

References

The original Constitution

http://www.perthinternationaldance.org.au/PIFDG_Constitution.pdf

Rules of Association – registered 30 April 2019

http://www.perthinternationaldance.org.au/PIFDG_Rules_Of_Association.pdf

Timeline of events

<http://www.perthinternationaldance.org.au/Event-Archive-Timeline.pdf>

Grapevines – PIFDG/PID Newletters -

<http://www.perthinternationaldance.org.au/grapevine.html>

Perth International Dance - Photo and Video Record -

<http://www.perthinternationaldance.org.au/PID%20A%20Photo%20Record.html>

Tribute to Frances and Roger Young by Fiona Murdoch January 2010

https://www.perthinternationaldance.org.au/Fiona's_memorial%20Frances&Roger-ex-Fiona.pdf

Is International Folk Dance Dead? Extract from Berkeley Folk Dancers—America's largest folk dance club; e-bulletin 07-07 Vol 65 No. 7 July 2007.

https://www.perthinternationaldance.org.au/Grapevines/Is_International_Folk_Dance_Dead.pdf

Folk Dance Decline and Resurrection; The Society of Folk Dance Historians - 2019

https://sfdh.us/encyclopedia/folk_dance_decline_and_resurrection_oakes.html

Presidents / Chairpersons over the years - why?

List of Life members

Member	Date
Eve Blair	4 th May 1996
John Whaite	4 th May 1996
Peter Fallon	4 th May 1996
Martin Williams	21 st November 2011
Palenque Blair	1 st January 2019
John Bardill	20 th November 2020
Jenny Bardill	20 th November 2020
Jenny Currell	25 th November 2023

Workshops and Seminars Attended

When	Who	Where & Which Events
1978	Eve Blair	Bulgaria
1979	Eve Blair	Macedonia
1992	John Whaite and Fiona Murdoch	Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey and Azerbaijan. Belcho Stanev Summer camp; Dance lessons with Romanian, Turkish and Greek teachers.
1995	John Whaite	Sabor, Koprivshitsa, Bulgaria, Tchan Bulgarian seminar with Hristo and Kaya Ivanovi.
1996	John Whaite	St Chatier; Gennetines and others
1996	Palenque Blair	Paris sabatical & Gennetines
1997	Eight PID members	Koprivshitsa, Lozen, Karlovo, Bulgaria
1996	Laurel de Vietri	Fete de St Jean, Mougins, Mougins Fleuri, Provence
1997	John Whaite	Including Traditionarius Catalan dance seminar; St Chartier, Gennetines; Pirin Pee festival
1998	Peter Fallon	USA Southern States
1998	John Whaite	Major Festivals in Catalonia; Traditionarius at Pobla de Segur; Accordionists Festival at Arseguel d'Urgell and Festa Mayor in Esterri d'Aneu
1998	Laurel de Vietri	Fete des Vendanges, Vallauris, Provence; Fete des Vendanges, St Tropez, Provence; Festival des Violettes, Tourettes- sur-Loup, Provence

1999	Laurel de Vietri	The 10th Grand Bal de L'Europe, Gennetines, Auvergne; Recontre Internationales de Luthiers et Maitre Sonneurs, Indre
2000	Laurel de Vietri	Le Grand Bal de L'Europe, Gennetines, Auvergne; Recontre Internationales de Luthiers et Maitre Sonneurs, Indre; Les Volcaniques, St Bonnet, Auvergne
2000	Pam Gunn	Sabor, Koprivshitsa, Bulgaria
2000	Joy Hill	Machol Europa, Bedford, UK
2001	Palenque Blair	Varna, Belco Stanev, Irena Staneva & Julian Stanev workshop, Bulgaria
2001	Palenque Blair	Poiana Stampei, Silviu Ciuciumis Workshop, Romania
2xxx	Palenque Blair	Koprivshitsa Festival: Bulgarian and Serbian workshop
2001	Laurel de Vietri, Yves Paliern, Tony Hoar	Gennetines; St Chartier; Berry
2001	Laurel de Vietri	Les Volcaniques, St Bonnet, Auvergne; Rencontre International de Luthiers et Maitre Sonneurs, St Chartier, Indre.
2001	Laurel de Vietri, Palenque Blair, Joy Hill	Yves Moreau workshop; Canberra
2002	Laurel de Vietri	Le Grand Bal de L'Europe, Gennetines, Auvergne; Recontre Internationales de Luthiers et Maitre Sonneurs, Indre;

		Les Volcaniques, St Bonnet, Auvergne
2003	Martin & Pam Williams	Belcho Stanev Workshop, Munich
2005	John Whaite	Le Grand Bal de L'Europe, Gennetines; Koprivshtitsa, Sabor
2006	Jenny Currell	Tineke van Geel tour of Armenia
2006	Laurel de Vietri	Festival Interceltiques, Lorient, Year of Australia, Brittany
2007	Jenny Currell	Ballarat & Shlomo Maman – Israeli Dance Camp New Zealand
2010	Pam Massey, Martin and Pam Williams	Gennetines
2010	John Whaite	St Chartier; Gennetines; Koprivshtitsa Sabor, Tchan Bulgarian dance seminar
2010	John & Jenny Bardill, Jenny Currell, Jennifer Eyre, Mary Woodward, John Whaite, Michaela Hill, Brigita Ferencek	Yyes Moreau, Bali
2011	Martin and Pam Williams	Iliana Bozhanover & Todor Yankov, Munich
2012	John & Jenny Bardill, Maria Jenkins, Michaela Hill, Jenny Currell, Jennifer Eyre?	Yves Moreau and Tineke workshop, Bali
2012	Laurel de Vietri	Le Grand Bal de L'Europe, Gennetines, Auvergne; Recontre International de Luthiers et Maitre Sonneurs, Chateau d'Ars, Indre;

		Carnavale de Limoux, Aude, France
2014	Martin & Pam Williams, Palenque & Damon, Pat Charton	Le Grand Bal de L'Europe, Gennetines, Auvergne,
2014	Laurel de Vietri	Le Grand Bal de l'Europe, Gennetines, Auvergne; Fetes des Chavannes, Embraud, Bourbonnais; Festival de Cornouailles, Brittany.
2014	John Whaite	Le Son Continu; Gennetines; Gucha Festival (Serbia gypsy)
2014	Laurel de Vietri	Le Grand Bal de l'Europe, Gennetines, Auvergne; Fete de Thon, St Jean sur Mer, Pays Basque.
2015	John Whaite	Le Son Continu; Gennetines; Zornitsa Bulgarian/Serbian workshop
2017	John Whaite	Yves Moreau Albania; Kyriakos Greek Seminar; Le Son Continu; Le Grand Bal, Gennetines
2017	Laurel de Vietri	Festival de Cornouailles, Quimper. Brittany
2018	John Whaite	Le Son Continu; Le Grand Bal de l'Europe; Andanças in Portugal
2019	Laurel de Vietri	Le Grand Bal de L'Europe, Gennetines, Auvergne
2019	John Whaite	Gennetines, Le Grand Bal; Lygkistes Seminar Greek/Macedonia/Albania
2025	Laurel de Vietri	Le Grand Bal de L'Europe, Gennetines, Auvergne,

(workshops by default)

Gennetines – Alliers, France ‘ Le Grand Bal de l’Europe’

Draft and Unendorsed

List of Dance Group Members – 2024-2025

?? add names of people referred to in this document??

?? possibly do via dance session(s) attendeds

Anne Griffiths
Anne Mills
Berni Maginn
Chloe
Clare Williams
Cyndie Innes
David Gholami
Diane Bailey
Eve Blair
Georgina Wright
Gisela Gmeinder
Glynda Ward
Hilary Silbert
Jennie Carter
Jennifer Eyre
Jenny Bardill
Jenny Currell
Jenny Shah
John Bardill
John Whaite
Kaye Andrew
Kerri Pedrotti
Leigh Richmond
Linda Hatton
Louise Scott
Louise Thorpe
Lyn Burriss
Maeve Ansell
Maree Kovalds
Margaret Lang
Maria Jenkins
Marie Wapnah
Martin Williams
Martine Donoghue
Mary Woodward
Maureen Humpage
Michaela Hill
Monica Male
Nicole Harvey
Nina Thompson
Nursen Guresin
Palenque Blair
Pam Gunn
Pam Massey
Pam Williams
Pat Charlton
Paula Day
Paula Schneider
Peter Fallon
Roni Oma
Sandy Challis
Sandy Jakckiewicz
Sara Friedman
Sharon Gordon
Shirley Ward
Sue Booth
Tania Stadler
Tony Hoar
Trish Eyre
Tuna Dincer-Odabas
Yvonne Kitchener

A Selection of Performance Dances

Ajshino Oro

Berovka

Jiana De La Tilisca

Jove Male Mome

Muhtarin Oglu Ali

Rov Brachot

Rustemul

Salamati

Sitno Zhensko

Somogyi Karikazo

Tarantella

Tsakonikos

Vlinder

W Moim Ogradesku

Zvarniara

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