

# GRAPEVINE

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**Grapevine is the newsletter of the Perth International Folk Dance Group. The Group meets Monday evenings at St Margarets Church Hall in Nedlands (Cnr Tyrell and Elizabeth). The evenings begin at 7:00pm with a 90 minute dance lesson, followed by general dancing until late. For further information please call John ((08) 9444 4736) or Martin (9445 2072)**

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In this issue you will find ....

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- **Paula Day's visit to Fiona in New Zealand**
- **André's workshops**
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- **Israeli Partner Workshops – 24 October**

OK, OK, I suppose you have noticed that our performance in terms of *Grapevines* has been pretty bad this year! After the flurry of issues last year we've been really slack! We're hoping to get one more, a pre-Xmas, issue out later in the year, and we've rushed (Oh Yeah!) this copy out in order to advertise the next party night which is scheduled for Monday, 6 September. The theme is 'Spring', so get out your 'Maypole' hats, your floral bouquets, your extra bounce vitamin pills, and whatever else you associate with spring and come along, dance and have fun!!

Since we were last in print, we have:

- φ Performed at the Entertainment Centre on Australia Day in front of over 9,000 people, scary!,
- φ Performed at Fairbridge Festival, 4 good sessions,
- φ Had new teachers, Larel de Vietri with dances from Provence, and Çahit Yesertener and Nuray with dances from Turkey,
- φ Held another successful beginner's course,
- φ Hosted André van der Plas for a weekend workshop, learned 13 new André dances and
- φ Done all the normal things like have Party Nights and dance a million miles!! Maybe it just feels like that!

In this issue of *Grapevine* you'll find reviews of André's workshops, tales from across the Tasman, a perspective on recent performances and news of forthcoming events .....

## Dancing Thoughtz and Thingz

The winter saw John Whaite doing some dance teaching with the Cahoots Cajun Band at the Fly-by-Night Club in Freo. To build on that success John is now teaching Cajun dancing. Sessions are Saturdays starting at 10am in Fremantle, contact John (9444 4736) for details.

It was great to see André back in Perth recently and I think some thanks are in order to all those who made it a successful week-end. Firstly to Norma Thompson one of our new Committee members who took on the job of finding a suitable hall. Norma did this with the minimum of fuss and the new hall was excellent. Thanks to Leone, Caroline, Peter and others who worked hard behind the scenes. Thanks also to all of you who attended to make the week-end a success. Numbers were in the mid-thirties, with more than forty dancers registering. We were happy with that.

Thanks André and well done, we thoroughly enjoyed your visit. André suggested that he might return to Australia next year so we hope to see him back in Perth in 2000. On page 2 Pam Massey and Palenque review the week-end workshops.

## One Year on!

This time last year we were just moving from our Wembley Hall, which was being condemned, to our new 'home' in Nedlands. It's interesting to reflect that the old hall is still there, untouched and looking just as it did when we left! There are those in the Group, and I am one of them, who preferred the old hall. It was larger and it had a much better feel to it. André's recent workshops were held very successfully in a church hall in Mosman Park and since then the Committee has received a proposal that we move our Monday night sessions to the Mosman Park hall on a permanent basis.

This has been considered very seriously particularly since we seem to spend an inordinate amount of time rolling up the heavy carpets and brushing the floor so that we can dance safely at Nedlands. If you would like your say in our next potential move please let us know.

## **André van der Plas Workshops** by Pam Massey

I've heard the cry go out for Grapevine articles – from across the globe even! Well Joy, don't hold your breath, 'cos this might be as good as it gets!

Our main event lately was André Van Der Plas' workshop. It was well attended, from baby Alia, right through the spectrum, to Peter's 'oldest' friend June. Alia appeared to enjoy the dancing, in what has become her regular stance, balanced along her dad's arm. June, a stalwart of P.I.F.D.G. kitchens, held her usual stance too, for which we are ever grateful.

André taught us 13 dances over the 2 days. They came from Israel, Hungary, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Romania and Denmark (maybe, music from the USA – ed). The Israeli ones had 'happy' music and were fun. The Hungarian dance was fairly slow and sedate, with not a rida in sight; no slapping of boots and contorting of feet . . . that is, unless you were watching our new member Marcel, the Flying Dutchman (one of André's old prodigies from way back); brilliant dancer, probably doing it at double, and not even a drop of sweat! The Bulgarian dances were very . . . Bulgarian, and the Macedonian dance was without doubt, judging by the number of people who had a tea break, our hardest dance of the weekend! The Romanian and Danish, well . . . I've temporarily forgotten . . .

Lunch times were a BYO affair, spent by many, squeezing into the sunny spot on the steps, eating, chatting, and recharging the batteries.

Saturday evening's party was pleasant, with its usual fine array of dishes. Some came who weren't at the workshop, and others didn't, who were. Over all, I think numbers were down on previous parties and we seem to go to bed earlier and earlier! . . .

Sunday 10am I was amazed to find the hall well filled with busy dancers!. It was like deja vu – hadn't you people gone home??! André taught us a few more dances, and revised them all. He as always, had a good selection, and a well-balanced programme.

It was a flying visit for André, almost here today, gone tomorrow. I hope he will have more time next time, and I hope we can have a residential workshop in the next year too. It gives people the opportunity to get to know each other better (metaphorically speaking), which is particularly beneficial to our

newer members. People relax and socialise instead of rushing home. It's a good bonding time, which is what makes our group so special.

### **A few additions to the spiel on André's workshop by Palenque:**

I was charged with 'entertaining' André while he was here as he stayed at my place – nice and conveniently close to the hall. He was essentially very good at entertaining himself, but I took him out to dinner on the Friday night and managed to talk through any number of subjects, but particularly dance, of course. His enthusiasm for folk dance is fantastic and he has a superb hold of the nature of the process of teaching. On the Sunday afternoon, we were all treated to a huge challenge, as he put the music on and watched us attempt each dance on our own, something we teachers don't often practice, but I'm sure it helps the learning process. He was vehement that come Monday, we would have to be able to dance his dances on our own. This also helps people not fall into the security of watching someone else's feet at all times, even when they know the dance, which makes the activity less technical and more social. Enough from me. Looking forward to seeing you all at the Spring Party Night on 6<sup>th</sup> September.

### **André's Dances**

<b>Traca Traca</b>	<b>Romania</b>
<b>Corlu</b>	<b>Romania</b>
<b>Sborinka</b>	<b>Bulgaria</b>
<b>Ne Nezz Ream</b>	<b>Hungary</b>
<b>Single Waltz</b>	<b>USA</b>
<b>Golf Mixer</b>	<b>Denmark</b>
<b>Hilula</b>	<b>Israel</b>
<b>Holech Uva</b>	<b>Israel</b>
<b>Alle Brider</b>	<b>Israel</b>
<b>Hahar Hayarok</b>	<b>Israel</b>
<b>Petricko Horo</b>	<b>Bulgaria</b>
<b>Bukite</b>	<b>Macedonia</b>
<b>Zensko Pirinsko</b>	<b>Bulgaria</b>

Copies of André's dance notes are available. Contact us you'd like a set.

### **Is it a Competition?! Is there a prize?!**

No there's no prize. The photo opposite is not a competition, it is Fiona and Paula in the snow on Mt Ruapehu with Mt Ngaurahoe behind ... please read on.

### **Cuppa with a Kiwi**

by Paula Day

A few weeks ago I decided to head east to "the land of the great white cloud" and share a pot of tea with our favourite Kiwi, Fiona Murdoch.

Fiona have-tent-will-travel Murdoch currently resides in a very comfortable little house in Hamilton. Although there was more moisture inside the window than outside, due to NZ's humidity levels, I can recommend the accommodation I even had my own en-suite bathroom!

While I was there Ms F, who loves any excuse to get out of Hamilton, very kindly took me to visit various attractions. For instance, we walked along a vast beach which was black because of the iron content in the sand, and then had lunch in the very appealing nearby town which has a name but which I'm afraid escapes me. Beyond the big cities, New Zealand always seems to me as though the clock stopped in the 1950's. A sensation I happen to enjoy very much! In that part of the country the landscape is so dippy and curvy I am always flabbergasted that the sheep and cows never tumble off their hillsides.

Another day we drove to Oraki Korako thermal area, near Taupo, where the toilets were called 'guysers' and 'galses'. Being thermal, this was a good spot to visit in winter as it was lovely and warm. That evening we stopped at a hot pool and spent an hour floating under the moon and stars, surrounded by local flora and feeling the warm water bubbling out of the natural earth. Getting out and dressed again wasn't much fun!!

Another day I borrowed Ms F's car and visited one of the Waitomo Caves. The most impressive part of the tour was sitting in a flat-bottomed boat which the tour guide moved along by following an overhead wire with his hands. Everyone had to remain absolutely silent in the darkness as we glided beneath a galaxy of glow-worms. Magical!!

Each Thursday night Ms F instructs her dance troupe called Dance Folkus. On my particular Thursday they were rehearsing for a get-together of dance clubs. For a while I took on the identity of a late arrival and then I took on the very important role of 'audience' to encourage everyone to look up and not at their feet! Although I believe I could count the female membership on two hands and the male



membership on one finger they were a very welcoming, friendly and dedicated little club.

On most other evenings Ms F and I acted our age and had quiet nights at home.

Towards the end of my week we and another friend, Gaynor, drove south to Mt Ruapehu, the North Island's highest mountain and largest volcano which had its most recent eruption in 1996. Normally, the slopes provide popular ski fields but this year (in June at least) there was only enough snow to have the beginner's slope open, and this was helped by the snow-making machine! Did this deter the Japanese tourists from hiring skis? Not on your nelly! They were just as keen to squeeze onto the slope as the hundreds of other skiers and snow-boarders and ski about 20 feet at about 3 mph. Ms F and G and I opted for the chairlift ride to the top. This was very cold but great fun. In the distance was the spectacular, classic shaped volcano Mt Ngaurahoe.

The following morning we went walking through a section of the Tongariro National Park, some of which was marked by boardwalks (my type of walking!) while other parts were frozen puddles and frosted earth. Ms F is significantly more experienced and intrepid than her international guest and thinks nothing of wading across very cold, wet streams. In spite of her chivalrous act of dragging a nearby log into the water so that I could daintily step/jump across I still managed to botch it up and get a very wet right foot. From then on I'm afraid my mood dropped to the same temperature as the water. Fortunately, the path eventually became a quagmire and we democratically decided to turn back.

After a few more pots of tea it was time for me to say farewell to our favourite Kiwi and to the “Land of the great white cloud”. Fiona, if you should read this may I take the opportunity to once again say ‘THANK YOU’! Take care! And I hope to see you again soon!

### **Birth Announcement**

Congratulations to Dinah Harrison and John Whaite who have a new baby daughter, **Alia**, born 9 May at 2pm, weight 4.2 kg (9lb 5oz), length 57cm, black hair. Her first words were ‘Aaaagh Aaaagh’, and that was before she saw John!

### **Performances**

**by Palenque**

This is a spur of the moment article on the subject of Folk Dance Performances in 1999. The performing group has had a considerably long break from performing this winter, with the last performance being at Fairbridge in April. I was cajoled into directing rehearsals and managed some new choreographies – most successfully of Azche Jerzanke – an Armenian dance taught to us by Fiona in 1998. With four performances over the weekend, I think most were sick of it by Sunday afternoon, but it was pulled off to reasonable crowds, although of course nothing compared to the Entertainment Centre in January! I think we will never see stage quality the same again. By comparison Fairbridge was slopy and rickety, but more fun dancing because we could see our audience. The performance group has recently been booked for two more performances – one for Multicultural week on 5<sup>th</sup> September, the following for the Turkish National Day being celebrated on 17<sup>th</sup> October. Rehearsals are Saturdays 4-6pm and all interested in performing are welcome to rehearsals. I’m taking rehearsals for both of these, willingly!!! Hope to see you there!

### **Next Performances**

Just in case you are one of the PIFDG Groupies you might like to make a note of the following performance venues:

**5 September** Multicultural Celebration

Parade from the Esplanade

Performance at about 4pm in Forrest Place

**17 October** Turkish National Day Celebrations  
Victoria Park

**24 October** Munjah Festival, Curtin (tbc)

### **Who’s teaching?**

The tentative teacher programme for the rest of the year is: **September- Palenque (supported by Eve);**

<b>October</b>	<b>Eve;</b>	<b>November</b>	<b>Sara;</b>
<b>December</b>	<b>John</b>		

### **No Time for Stage Fright!? Australia Day 1999**

It seems so long ago now, and a bit like a dream, although generally it was a good one! The last Grapevine described it nicely; the Bulgarian village, the local community in which we all had a part to play. John knew what he wanted and I think he got it. The arrival on stage with youngsters, Ben and Monique, then the group of teenagers, the grandmums, the ladies and lastly the men. It really did work; we got the PIFDG community on stage at the Entertainment Centre!!

Getting in was a bit of a trauma, walking around the outside of the building in 40 degree heat and waiting to make an entrance down the stairs with lighted candles. If only our costumes and hats had been air-conditioned! We were told that the candle-lit arrival in the dimly-lit auditorium looked spectacular!

Once inside we sat behind the stage throughout the performances so we had a great view, better than most of the 9,000 audience. But there was a price to pay, we had to leave our comfort zone and walk out on that stage and dance in front of that crowd! What a buzz! It is fair to say that we had had so many rehearsals that we could have done the dance in our sleep! I for one did exactly that for many nights before the event, and after it! Come to think of it perhaps it was all really a dream. Were we really there? After all we were only on stage for 3 minutes!

Reflections by Martin Williams

### **What’s coming up?**

Please look out for the following events and come and support the Group. Put the two enclosed flyers on your fridge, do it now! ☹️ 😊 😊 😊

#### **Spring Party Night**

**7pm, Monday 6 September: The theme is ‘Spring’**  
**St Margaret’s Hall, Nedlands**

#### **Partner Workshop with a focus on Israeli dances**

**10am to 1pm, Sunday 24 October**

**Subiaco Scout Hall                      \$7 per person**

#### **Red Faces Night**

**27<sup>th</sup> November, call Leone or listen out for details**

### **All the best to Will Blyth**

We understand that Will Blyth, one of our longstanding members, has been ill recently. So if you are reading this Will we hope you are feeling much better. If you can, please come and see us for the Party night, Red Faces or the Xmas party.