

# GRAPEVINE

Volume 17 Number 2

October 2005



Grapevine is the newsletter of the Perth International Dancers. The Group meets Monday evenings at St Margaret's Church Hall in Nedlands (Cnr Tyrell & Elizabeth) and Saturday mornings at the John Leckie Music Hall in College Park off Melvista Ave. The evenings begin at 7pm with a 75 minute dance lesson, followed by general dancing until late. Saturdays begin at 10am with 1 hour dance lesson before morning tea and general dancing. For further information please call John (9427 4258 (wk) or Martin (9326 6077 (wk)).

## Committee Comments

Some good things coming up before Christmas – we've included them here and put them on a flyer included with *Grapevine* – so stick it on yer fridge now! And don't forget to come dancing next week!!

### Spring Party Night

**7pm Monday 31 October**

**Following the very successful event on 30 May  
this will also be a**

**Bring a Friend night**

**Also a Party Night – so bring a plate to share**

**Normal fees apply**

So, what's the Committee been focused on recently? Read about a few of the points that have kept us talking this year.

## Dance Fees

At the start of this year the cost of St. Margaret's Hall was increased. This, coupled with the gradual decline in attendance has meant that some Monday nights have run at a loss. Whilst we are not a profit-making organisation there is a limit to how long we can sustain the current situation. We have a number of options and these include charging more, reducing the teaching hours, reducing the length of time that we hire the hall for, having more non-teaching nights, finding a cheaper hall and continuing to run at a loss. The recent Committee meeting voted not to increase Monday night fees, but to maintain the current fee structure and review the situation on an ongoing basis. So what's sustaining us? The Group actually has significant funds in the bank which had built up to some \$7,000 over the last 5-years. So for the moment we are subsidising Monday night dancers from its reserves. This makes some sense as the funds actually represent the money that the regulars have put into the Group over the last few years.

What we also need to do is have a responsible Financial Plan for the Group to allocate funds to key

areas of music, visiting teachers, local teachers, costumes and equipment. All this while retaining sufficient funding in reserve for emergencies.

If you feel strongly about the above please contact one of the Committee or put a suggestion in the red box on Monday night.

## The Floor at St Margaret's Hall

The floor at St Margaret's Hall is showing signs of wear and the Church Committee has advised us that they intend to improve it. Recognising that we are a key user of the floor the Church have asked for our comments, so we are contacting other halls, flooring companies and dance groups for their advice. This is an important issue for us; the last thing we want is a slippery floor. If you have any comments or contacts in the trade please let us know.

The other angle on this is that we must do our bit to keep the floor in a good state of repair. Please wipe up any drink or food spilled on the floor.

## Questionnaire

This dance group is a group for its members. In view of the increasing costs and the long-term issue of an aging group of dancers (see article at the end of this issue of *Grapevine*) the Committee is keen to get your feedback on the events we run.

The focus is two fold – to attract more dancers but above all to retain you the dancers that we still have.

With this in mind the Committee intends to survey you after key events and at the end of each month's teaching. The questions will focus on the type and range of dances, difficulty of dances and areas for improvement. The intention is to use the results in selecting visiting teachers and to improve the teaching program. Look out for the surveys in 2006.

## New Lesson Length

One thing that we might elicit in our surveys is feedback on the new times and process for lessons. Following a suggestion we have trialed a shorter lesson, starting at 7 and finishing at 8:15, followed by announcements and then by reviewing and doing dances taught in the preceding month. The idea is to

try to 'peg' some of the dances and not lose them quite so quickly. Perhaps you hadn't noticed, in which case look out for it! Generally the feedback has been good. Let us know what you think!

### Coming Up Soon

#### Annual General Meeting

**28 November 2005, starting at 8pm**

.....please be there .....and .. ..

Get your nominations in now please

Yes, Nibbles will be provided, and

Yes it really does start at 8pm – there will be a short lesson

#### Christmas Party

**Monday 19 December**

**An evening of European dance with live music from 'The Last Five Coins'**

**St Margaret's Hall; 7pm on**

**\$4 for Members; Non-members \$6**

**No first-night free entry**

**The Saturday Christmas Party is on 17 December at John Leckie Hall 10am.**

And don't forget ---

#### Teaching Programme

The schedule of dance teaching for the rest of the year and early 2006 is:

Month	Monday	Saturday
October	John	Laurel
November	Eve	John
December	John	Palenque
January	John	Palenque

#### Nice one André by Martin

The first week-end of July saw a healthy number of dancers at St Marg's Hall for what has become an annual pilgrimage for us and for André van de Plas! This was his tenth visit to teach in Perth and his 21<sup>st</sup> visit to teach in Australia. The photo shows André cutting the birthday cake with our teachers looking on.

André taught us the following 16 dances with a good range of styles from some of our favourite countries. The 3<sup>rd</sup> column is the score that attendees gave the dances at the end of the four-sessions. These agree pretty well with the rankings given by dancers at André's workshops in the Eastern States later in July, as reported in *Footnotes*.

Some of these dances have stood the test of time – and after almost 4-months we are still dancing the first two regularly – and a few of the others!

It was a good week-end with lots of energy and enthusiasm, and a chance to catch up with André and to challenge ourselves.

Dance	Country	
Cumajle	Macedonia/Gypsy	14
Lugowonjka	Russia	10
Soran Bushi	Japan	10
El Ha'or	Israel	9
Harmandan	Turkey	8
Bordeiasul	Romania	7
Yashika Odori	Japan	7
Sarba Polilor	Romania	6
Tot Pe Loc	Romania	6
Yam Prachim	Israel	5
Sibyl's Roundabout	England	4
Crazy Daisy	USA	3
Osmarsko Oro	Bulgaria	3
Msho Gorani	Armenia	3
Kostilata Thessalias	Greece	



#### Hawaiian Travels

Here I am (in Perth), sitting in bed with .. .. my early morning cuppa, the morning-after-the-night-

#### From Pam Massey

before PIFDG committee meeting, where, as usual, 'articles needed for grapevine' came up. So to fill up some of those blank pages in the mag, I'll give you chapter 2 of my travel-log that I never wrote, after arriving in Hawaii 4 months ago!!

Hawaii, Vancouver, Vancouver Island, Seattle, Chilliwack, Vancouver, England, France, England, Singapore, & here I am! I'M BACK!!!

That's the Readers Digest version.

A bit more detail perhaps?....

Eight days on the 'garden island' of Kauai, where South Pacific was filmed (I saw Bali Hai). The weirdest green fluted mountainous coastline, where Jurassic Park was filmed (I didn't see any dinosaurs). An island that claims to be the wettest place on earth (that's the mountain in the middle, that you can only reach by air, & no, I didn't). Yet it's an island that has the perfect climate, never too hot & never too cold, where you can always find blue sky somewhere, though it's often warm-raining in the beautiful lush north.

You can't drive all the way round. The Jurassic park N/W has only hiking tracks & Pacific Ocean (I did the ocean). Driving along the east coast N-S can take 2.5-3 hrs, depending on traffic. Jo, who I was staying with, lives in the south, where there is blue sky, sugar cane & coffee plantations, monk seals on the beach, & enormous turtles surfing the waves (like Hawaii 5-0, only different)! There's a 'Grand Canyon of the Pacific', which also reminded me of the Bungles - a very vast & spectacular area.

Half way up the east coast we kayak'd on a river; We passed a tourist re-enactment of a Hawaiian village, & tourist boats passed us, with Hawaiian bands on board serenading the tourists. It was very peaceful in between! (Hawaiians only make up 25% of the population these days).

Driving further north, passed Bali Hai, through 'Puff the Magic Dragon' town of Hanele, to the end of the road where I bumped into a woman from Perth in the toilet block (as you do)! The north reminded me of N.Q., & the beaches were more beautiful than in the south.....but it was raining.

Back in the south I saw some dancing that happens every Sunday morning outside a hotel beside the beach. This was the real thing (grab a coke) :Real Hawaiians dancing, real Hawaiians playing live music, & really in Hawaii!!.....but oh! So boring!! The "Queen" performed. She danced with her knees bent in a semi-squat, & her backside stuck out as far

as she could stick it, wiggling it & waddling from side to side as her hands did their Hawaiian thing. This movement carried on for several dances - Most uncomfortable looking! - & then the rest of the mob stood up straight & did pretty much the same thing for another 100 dances. I've got 10 km of it on video if anyone's interested!

8 days later, I took my Hawaiian tan the 40 min inter-island flight back to Honolulu. I had several hours to kill till my onward flight to Vancouver, so checked in my baggage & caught the bus to Waikiki Beach, the 'Gold Coast of the Pacific' I call it! About an hour from the airport & not exactly the 'scenic route'! The beach front was glitzy, with shops open till late at night, hotels, palm trees along the beach front etc. I caught the last bus back at midnight, & my delayed flight finally taxied down the runway at 4.15 am. I had booked a window seat, but our original plane was so delayed that we were no longer on it, & all seat allocations sort of 'went out the window'. I finished up in the very back isle seat beside the loo-queue. The plane was full of Aussies (at least I could understand what they were saying)! who should have flown direct from Sydney to Vancouver, & to their surprise found themselves in Honolulu airport, bemused, but mostly not disgruntled.

I would love to have sat with my nose pressed against the window pane as we flew into Vancouver, over the mountains, snow, lakes & city, but in my armchair travel in the isle seat where I could see bugger-all, come fly with me & imagine!

## Red Faces

## Leone

A small note to thank all of our folkies for their great contribution to this event - it was just great and I appreciate the time and effort you all put into your little items. Also a big thank you to Eve for hosting the event - it's such a lovely home and Eve made us all so welcome. THANK YOU EVE!

And big thanks to the Saturday Group and Jenny's Hills Group for their contribution - it was lovely and great to have us all together doing our thing. And Nina's grandson Steven came all the way from Busselton to perform for us - how's that for a loyal trooper!

Next year I am hoping to hold Red Faces closer to July (which it was originally supposed to be but other things got in the way). Also we need to do a

bit of streamlining to avoid long delays between items, and it has been suggested that those who wear costumes could perhaps already be in their costumes (or part thereof) and wear a covering robe prior to performing. Just a thought - what do you think? Also it has been suggested that we have our dinners at home beforehand, which would also save quite a lot of time. Some say yes and some say no, because the dinner is part of the socialising etc. What do you think?

Whatever happens we will try and tidy things up a bit - start putting ideas together for next year. I love it when you all perform. Thank you again everyone. Leone.

### **Hills Update**

### **Jenny Currell**

The Hills Group held a wonderful dance morning tea on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October with the weather providing a perfect spring day. We had up to 16 adult dancers plus a few small girls and ran through around 30 dances. From small beginnings just over a year ago the hills group now has 7 regular members and attracted another 4 new potential members this week. We also attract visits from other Perth International dancers from time to time. Thanks so much to those who made the trek up for the morning tea. It was lovely to have your support and great to have a larger group to dance with. Thanks also to the hills people who supplied the actual morning tea.

The hills group also had its first performance recently at the local Yallambee nursing home which was enjoyed by both performers, audience and 'groupies'. We managed to get a photo and article in the local paper and have already been requested for another performance at Christmas time.

Please feel free to visit any Friday morning 9:30am at the Mundaring Scout Hall.

### **Have you been to Dancing Recently?**

If not then we're looking forward to seeing you soon!! The number of Group members has been quite steady over the years but the number of Monday dancers has been dropping again recently. The Xenos night was a welcome reminder that there is enthusiasm. Please come along and say hello at our 'bring a friend' night on 31<sup>st</sup> October, and remember that dancing is great exercise for the mind and for the body. Get in shape for summer!

We were missing quite a few regulars this winter. As you know Pam Massey has now returned from the UK via Hawaii and Canada. Tony Hoar was away on LSL, came back briefly and has now gone off to Japan and France (although his recent Japanese postcard was posted in Helsinki!!) he's back in November. Joy was in the UK - or was it Greece and Sara was in Israel. So we need you!!

Come and help us to make sure that our Group doesn't go the way of the dancer from the Balkans in the photo below!!

We need new members, but above all we need to make sure that we don't lose members - that's you. So we will be seeking your input. Following workshops and at the end of each month's teaching we will be asking for your feedback.



**Your Feedback ... .. please**

### **The Saturday group 4<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

The Saturday held its fourth anniversary party on 17<sup>th</sup> September. Jenny Currell taught a lesson followed by request dancing and some lovely food brought by all. Fun was had by all and Peter and Palenque added to the atmosphere with some fancy costumes - as seen in the photo below!





### Tania re recent trip to India with Paula Day

I have a few moments here in the office at New Hope in Visakhapatnam, India and am thinking of you.

We went to one of the many New Hope communities yesterday, which is about 1 hour away from town here. There are about 165 children there at the school and probably more not yet at school - the most delightful little kids you can imagine, sitting on the concrete floors in school, doing exams, and calling out to us "Good morning Madam" and holding up their hands for us to shake and hold.

Most of the children are either children found on train platforms, disabled or whose mothers have either died or are dying of AIDS and who themselves may be HIV positive (though this doesn't show up conclusively for some years with the little ones) and may not live beyond about 12 themselves. The medication costs around \$30 for one month's supply, but it only masks the sickness - not remove it. We looked at the charts showing the cell counts before and after treatment and the testing kits: 3 dots for very serious, 2 dots for HIV positive, 1 dot for clear of AIDS at this stage.

This may sound grim and it was terribly moving, but the joy of the kids and the fun we also had was immense. We sat in the school room and read the English and Telugu writing and wrote our names on the blackboard for them, as the kids chanted each letter in English. To see our travelling companion Les, first up at the blackboard, with all the little lads around him as he explained that his name is Leslie, but he calls himself Les (as Leslie is a girl's name and he's not a girl) and that his nickname is Ginger because of his ginger hair - and the kids not getting a word of this, of course, but his eyes sparkled and they were delighted nonetheless.

There are two Homes for Girls with about 40 and 50 in each, though these were buildings with only a few

rooms (they must unroll mats and sleep on the floors many to a room) - with their own shower blocks and toilet recesses. Similarly, Homes for Boys and a Mother and Child Home for Mothers with AIDS and their children (who may or may not have AIDS). A little Hospice, with two sections for more severe cases and people are transferred from there when their conditions get too serious.

A great big thatched roof long hall, which is the Dining Room and kids sit down for three meals a day (rice and a curry-based dish with potatoes in it - you should see the mound of rice the little ones eat - about  $\frac{3}{4}$  a mid size bowl - we couldn't get through it). Two sessions: one for the younger kids, one for the older kids. All seated on the floor, with a dish each and eating by creating little balls of rice, with the curry mixed in and eaten with the right hand.

New Hope also has an Old People's Home too, which has 5 old women and one old man staying there - plus, I believe the Director's Mother, who had leprosy and no longer has the fingers on one hand. She was delightful and when two of the little ones and I were walking around the premises, they took me to her place and she invited me to sit down and I greeted her with "namaste" and my hands together as if praying. You could tell the little ones enjoyed seeing her and that she is a grandmother to many - to those who are orphans included. You can imagine my reflections on how precious it is for these older people who have no-one to look after them or provide for them, being given an environment of peace and being looked after on a daily basis. The old man apparently won't sit still and has to go out wandering around, so he has three bullocks that he drives around the site, which look pretty miserable with their legs tied together (I assume so they can't run off too fast) belting them with a bamboo stick. One of the women said "he's an angry man"...

Paula stayed overnight last night at the Project/Community - there is a little Guest Room with Western toilet (I haven't had to experience the drop ones yet - even on the train overnight, I managed to find a Western one - chicken that I am) - which has a foam mattress on a concrete floor. I can't wait to catch up with her in a little while back at the Project. She would have gone to assembly with the children and gone through much of their daily routine. Bet she's been dancing with them too, as she has learned many international dances and would love to teach and learn from them.

Bernard was with us briefly yesterday outside Vizag and was astounded at how much had developed since he was last at the Community. Funding has come from many different sources, but primarily there's one woman, an American called Mary Ellen Gerber, who decided when the big Cyclone came through to come over and then sponsored about 26 orphaned girls and now has

sponsored at least 160. Japanese sponsors donated a Home and the Meditation/Prayer/Meeting areas, Germans sponsored another Home. A recent program on BBC called Sports Aid had Posh Spice and two others come to Peru to the Children living on a Garbage Dump, another celebrity to Platform Kids here (linked with New Hope) with a little lad who had lived on the trains for two years and to Zaire, where an 11 year old orphan whose parents had both died of AIDS was bringing up 4 siblings - the show raised 5 million pounds I gather.

So far, it has been a trip of extraordinary contrasts. Unless you've experienced it, you can't imagine what its like to be driven for hours with constant horn beeping. We've been in fits at the sights we've seen on the road, all trucks with "Horn Please" emblazoned across the back and "Lights Dipping Please at Night". I thought I was the only one stressing out (as Paula and Bernard have travelled like this before), but Les let me know last night that he's just been pretending to be a tough Aussie male - and has been scared at times too. We've had bullock drays on the road with us, damn, bullocks and Brahmin bulls wandering through lanes of traffic, which all slows down around them, bicycles with 40 chairs balanced around the cyclist, camel trains with huge Hessian bags on top (like lorry loads) carrying some form of grass, tractors, millions of motorbikes, buses, 4WD etc - along the side of the roads: geese, pigs, chicken, goats, dogs - had an odd cultural moment when I saw some roadkill and thought it was a roo (then remembered where I was - actually, relief it wasn't a person). The beeping, the interminable beeping. Once one of us asked the others to beep - so that we could all have our own beep sound - it was hilarious the noises that came out.

I have loads of photos. The Taj Mahal was just beautiful and we had a wonderful guide, who described to us the notion of an environment created to be "heaven on earth" with four sections of the garden. In one section, originally (before the British got to it) the garden was around 12 feet lower than the current walkway, so that you could walk at the level of the fruit and birds on the trees. The visual balance of colours, with the strong green of the gardens, water, translucent marble that reflects the intensity of the daylight and the blue sky was gorgeous. Mind you, it took us about 5 hours of insane traffic and horn blaring and beeping to get there. We also went to the Agra Fort - learned quite a lot about the Mughal reign - I now can't wait to come back and get the documentary series about all this, that I saw a part of a little while ago.

When we went on to Hyderabad in the State of Andhra Pradesh I understood a little better about the Moslem influence - indeed India was subject to Persian rule for a great deal of time. It's intriguing to see how truly pluralist it is here, with so many different religious cultures in the one place. It's particularly striking to see

Muslim women in purdah (all covered black with one inch slit across the eyes bare) contrasting with the extraordinary colour of saris and kurta. If only I could find a way to describe the contrasts of the muddy streets and dusty huts alongside the teeming streets and the colours, oh the colours of the women's clothing. Oh, and you should see the children too, ready for school (some three on a motorbike with Dad in the middle) with beautiful white school clothes on and hair all combed and tied back. How they can have white in this environment is astounding.

I frequently forget I'm a white Western woman, until I notice the men staring. Paula and I are both wearing a kurta, short-sleeved with a long over shirt and pajama underneath - with a long scarf either across the neck and thrown over the shoulders to the back or hanging down over one side. We bought these in Singapore in Little India and haven't got to a second store yet to get another - so we laughed like hell yesterday about how they would stand up on their own, if we took them off. I'm wearing a t-shirt underneath, which at least I've been able to change. I actually bought a second pair of pants/pyjama at a Dept Store in Hyderabad and two young Indian women we spoke with at the cash register quietly asked whether I had bought a top too - think they were worried I'd only have the pyjama bit!

We've been eating really well and nope, so far, so good, no crook belly. Could have to do with the fact we're very carefully drinking only bottled water, eating vegetarian and I'm taking acidophilous tablets, plus eating curd and drinking up to 3 lassi at breakfast - yum, yum. More likely to have put on weight here, than lost any so far! Currently 3 meals a day are Indian - though I gave in and had some cornflakes for breaky, plus an Indian omelette, without the green chilli today.

One of the things New Hope appreciates is for donations of gold rings and precious stones, which they then sell and set up either trusts for some of the orphaned children for their education or when they get older, or to buy property for the future needs. We'll get a better sense of what their needs are and I suspect donations which they can put to what they most need at a particular time are most helpful. At least you know here that the money is going to the children. At New Hope they say that they know with every glass of milk, that the cream gets taken off the top in this country...that is not an issue. What is not acceptable is if the milk underneath gets watered down and the child does not get the milk. Apparently Bill Gates recently made a huge donation to the Indian Govt (which will now buy his software etc), but the local hospital still doesn't have funds to buy medicines. Seems grass roots stuff is the way to go.