

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 Joy (9386 7438)

In this issue you will find

- Message from the President
- Feedback on Fiona's workshops in September
- News of the Christmas party (21st December)
- News from John Whaite on the Oz Concert

The Year in Summary – the President's address

From Martin Williams, as delivered at the AGM.

Another AGM, and another year gone by! For me as President, 1998 has been a good year and an interesting and very enjoyable year. I was going to say that it has been a very standard year, but after contemplating events it has in fact been a year of consolidation, a year of change and a year of progress. In '96 we had our 20th year celebrations and last year we had the Group trip to Bulgaria. We were invited back to Bulgaria to attend the Sabor this year, but that event has now been deferred until 2000. This year the focus has been closer to home.

In April we voted on a proposal for a change of name. 'PIFDG' always has been a mouthful as an acronym. After considered a number of new names the special General Meeting very narrowly voted to keep the old name. The voting was 73% in favour of a name change; our Constitution requires a majority of 75%, so the proposal was defeated. 1998 has been a year where Monday night attendance has picked up well. Key issues in '97 seemed to revolve around finances and membership. One of the major initiatives in 1998 has been running two courses, the beginner's course and 'the next step'. These were both very successful, with the beginner's course attracting almost thirty dancers, providing useful funds and more importantly giving us an influx of enthusiastic new dancers. This was also a useful exercise in promotion, and was a great team effort. Thanks particularly go to John and Eve as the main teachers, to Sara for making sure that we did not lose sight of the objective, and also to Joy for her efforts in promoting and spruiking.

Another key event of the year was establishing a PIFDG presence on the Web, an interesting innovation in a traditional area such as international

folk dance. Thanks to Jenny Currell for her very valuable support with this new venture.

The Cambridge Council's condemnation and closure of the Wembley Scout Hall, our Monday night home for the last 8 years, caused a flurry of activity mid-year and after much effort and a few false leads we moved to our new hall in Nedlands. The 'wake' to farewell the old hall was just one memorable event of the year!!

After hosting European teachers in recent years, our focus was certainly closer to home this year, with Fiona Murdoch providing excellent week-end workshops in September. The variety of dances, the great music, and the range of skill levels made this a highly enjoyable event. It was also financially successful. Many of our recent workshops have run at a loss, so we experimented with a profit sharing arrangement, which reduced the risk to the Group while covering Fiona's expenses; a good win-win situation.

During the year we have had five Committee meetings and I would like to thank all of the Committee members for their support in what has been quite a difficult year. My thanks too to the members of the performance group who have again given freely of their time during the year. The feedback that I have received has all been very positive. One key event for us to focus on in 1999 is the Oz Concert, **the** ethnic event of the year, held on Australian Day. John is choreographing a Bulgarian brew to challenge us, so be in it and support the Group!! (*see page 4*)

In closing I would like to express my thanks to our teachers without whom our dancing life would be pretty boring. This year our four teachers have introduced or reintroduced over eighty dances, a great effort. Anyone who needs proof can check their dance lists! Sincere thanks to all of you; Eve, John, Palenque, and Sara.

So thanks to everyone for their support in 1998, enjoy your dancing with the Group and good luck to the incoming Committee.



Masochism takes many forms. My favourite is that of grinding your way up steep hills crouched over handle bars in a lather of sweat and aching legs only to go screaming down the ensuing slope eyes riveted to the road avoiding pot holes and gumnuts lest wheels be exchanged for wings.

Peter Fallon's Cycle Touring Association (CTA) held their 10th annual bike tour, this time of the South West, in mid October. Three PIFDG members Peter, Gisela Gmeinder and Tony Hoar joined 112 other like-minded cyclists to ride from Margaret River to Armadale over an eight day period. This was Peter's 6th tour and Gisela and my 2nd.

Saturday morning found us standing in the Armadale railway station car park, blinking into the early dawn while waiting to be bussed down to Margaret River with our bikes, one bag and a tent each. Peter, never one for the soft option, cycled down earlier.

By Saturday afternoon tents were up, old acquaintances renewed and new ones made. After the nightly three-course meal we settled down to a night of refreshing showers and bracing breezes off the Southern Ocean.

The first day's ride of 86km took us to Busselton through vineyards (and wineries), cheeseries and other interesting local enterprises; all worth a visit and some sampling. The day's pace was relaxed, the country was flat and beautiful and the company friendly and interesting. People rode solo or in groups of two or more and at whatever speed they wished. The only objective was to reach the destination in time to put up ones tent, have a shower and share a drink or two with some new found friends. We pushed on from Busselton to Donnybrook (71km) moving up into the hills and leaving behind the coastal flats (along with the most incredible patch of mosquitoes I've ever seen).

And so the days unfolded. With the weather warm and sunny, the muscles strengthening day by day we struck out for Collie and then Darkan where we had a well-earned day off. Gisela spent her day off water skiing and swimming! Peter veged out, and I managed a short game of lawn bowls and tea and cake at the CWA!

The next day was the much talked about 100km ride from Darkan to Boddington up what looked like a couple of cliffs on the cross-sectional route map. One very pleasant surprise en route was the old oak-beamed Quindanning Pub. It will be 100 years old next year and has a wonderful feel to it as well as Guinness on tap. A welcome afternoon tea stop was a farm along the way owned by the brother of one of the tour group. A nice break and some good country hospitality. The 100km ride was a first for some (Gisela and myself) and for others like Peter an interesting warm-up!

The ride from Boddington to Dwellingup was a mere 54km and most arrived by lunchtime. Dwellingup was to be the location of one of the most enthusiastic folk dance performances I've ever been involved in.

The last night of each tour always involves a concert of contributed talent from the assembled cyclists. We were treated to some poetry from various sources most very funny, a Didjeridoo player who played a PVC pipe and then a vacuum cleaner and some jokes that couldn't be printed here. Forewarned, Peter organised some costumes and a tape of; Girl's Night Out, Utrecht Hornpipe, the Cajun Dance, Kreuz König, La Bastrange and (to cool down!) Tarantella. We were courageously joined by one time member Annelies Vogel. The audience was extremely enthusiastic and clapped along with the music giving us thunderous applause at the end. We all received many compliments and interested inquiries. The final act was one devised by Gisela featuring a memorable event from each of the preceding tours and that year's souvenir shirt, along with some spectacular cartwheels from Gisela and some witty ditties from one of the cycling bards.

The last ride was from Dwellingup to Armadale via the backroads. A fairly easy 86km which afforded great views of the coastal plain coming down the scarp.

In retrospect we are all left with memories of different things.

For my part there are memories of watching newly shorn sheep dotted on green fields while leaning on the tally yard rails; of a touching encounter sharing

thoughts with an old man in his eighties who had recently lost his wife; of the orange and black butterfly that overtook and passed me while I was labouring up a hill; of inspiring views (well earned) from the tops of hills; lots of fresh air, sunshine and healthy exercise; and of some great characters and shared humour with a happy bunch of people.

We're all definites for next year.

Tony Hoar

Fiona's Workshops by Cyndie Innes

September was a special month for PIFDG, for it offered another boost of the "Fiona vaccination" which hopefully will continue to be biennial if not annual.

Her usual ebullient self, colourfully clad as always, Fiona led us through a smorgasbord of dances.

Fiona was keen for us to fine-tune our dances, to look at our general posture with special attention to arm movements, so she chose a variety of dances that allowed this. Despite quiet mutterings from some guys learning Azche Jerazanke (a women's dance from Armenia), they were deftly making either circles or some sort of geometrical shape with their wrists and hands.

The Star of the Sea Church hall was large which enabled our efforts to practise the challenging turns in Yaldati with only a few collisions.

There was the cheerful Russian Walenki (red boots) which at times was an exercise in avoiding being choked or mastectomised. Then a chirpy partner dance from Norway with the wonderful name of Jegg Gikk Meg Ut I Lunden Grønn (I went out into the green grove), a Quadrille from Finland, a Greek/Macedonian dance and many more.. The farewell dance (Mom Bar from Armenia) with candles, has become a popular finishing dance with lights out, looking very effective; (hot candle grease running down the forearms is a bit of a hindrance to maintaining the quality of that gentle syncopated rhythm!!)

Our lunch hours were spent picnicking and sunning ourselves on the church lawn, some of us comparing our Tai Chi skills.

Any excuse for a party and despite the lack of ovens at the hall our food, as always, materialised into a banquet, essential after that loss of energy blowing up mountains of odd shaped balloons provided by

Joy. Fiona and Peter gave a partner dance demo. It all ended in the wee hours, with me staggering in late for the Sunday workshop with Fiona still bright eyed ... how does she do it?

A few of us continued on to noisy Cicerello's followed by a Bernard Carney concert in an obscure Vic Park venue. It turned into a treasure hunt. Enough said.

The Party night at St. Mag's brought back memories of Fiona's last visit and a collapsing table. This time seemed almost as crowded, however furniture intact as well as imaginary. There was one dance where we had to divide the hall into two rooms and promenade through one door into the other. There seemed to be a mathematical problem with lost partners all over the place!!

But all good things come to an end so we farewelled Fiona at a gathering at Pam and Martin's before she caught the 'Red eye' home.

Till next time..... Cyndie

Fiona's Dances

Walenki	Russia
Russakaji Tanets	Russia
Jegg Gikk Meg Ut I Lunden Grønn	Norway
Azche Jerazanke	Armenia
Tagadi	Israel
Yaldati	Israel
Tsopanopoula	Greece
Mom Bar	Armenia
Ruotsinkatrilli	Finland
Dóntia Pikna	Greece
Grüezi Wohl Frau Stirnime	Switzerland

**The
Committee
like to wish you all a
Merry
and a Happy New
Year**

**PIFDG
would
Christmas
New**

The Oz Concert - Dancing on New Ground

We walked into the audition room with more than the usual trepidation. A dozen of us from the Performance Group had been hurriedly called together to show what we could do for the Oz Concert, with such short notice that we hadn't rehearsed anything. But when the music started we knew what to do, and the organisers were impressed and enthusiastic. They wanted Bulgarian dance, but we would only have 3 minutes.

What a challenge. Usually we dance for about 15 minutes, and try to create variety by changing countries, changing costumes, mixing fast and slow and men's and women's dances. Not with this time limit. We have to get on stage, make an impression, and get off. On a huge stage in front of thousands of people. What an adventure!

I knew what I wanted. I've seen many groups that are kids, or they're all 16-20 years old, but I wanted what I've seen in Europe - music and the whole community joining in. We've had young Ben and Monique dancing in performances, but now we needed to involve everyone. And everyone dances with different movements. I wanted the PIFDG community.

Picture a village square. A few grandmum's walk in chatting, a couple of energetic grandkids in tow. The music is playing and one of the kids starts dancing, the other looks to say "What are you doing?", and the grandmum's notice and smile. Then they all join in, and the next thing you know the whole village dances in. After a few fancy steps to celebrate our coming together, the first dance finishes. The first dance is based on Belcho Stanev's choreography of Gigensko Horo.

Next comes a rachenitsa, a fast 7/8 popular throughout Bulgaria. Everyone takes turns to show their style with their companions - the grandma's with grace and gentle precision, the women with nimble energy, the men with bravado and force, Monique with playfulness and Ben with precocious independence. Suddenly the groups fall apart and everyone pairs up, and the dance finishes as a couples dance that everyone knows.

Well that's the vision. It's a big challenge for all of us ... only three minutes but we all have to work together seamlessly. I'd really like to thank all the performers for their patience at the rehearsals, because it has several parts and while one group learns their part the rest have to wait. And if you're not one of the performers, do come and see us at the big event.

John the dancing fool!

The Incoming Committee

We are pleased to welcome two new Committee members, who were nominated at the recent AGM:

Carolyn Cox, who has been a member of the PIFDG and of the Performance Group for a number of years, and

Norma Thompson, who has recently rejoined PIFDG, renewing her enthusiasm for folk dance since Fiona's workshops in September.

Christmas Party

The Group's Christmas party will be held on 21 December at the St Margaret's Church Hall in Nedlands. Start time 7pm. Please be there to help us to celebrate Christmas.

The Year's Dances

In recent *Grapevines* we have summarised the dances that have been taught on Monday nights. In this edition we have enclosed a composite list of dances taught for the year. Yes it is long, yes it does run to two pages, yes that does add up to a lot of teaching and yes it probably explains why you cannot remember them all!!

Au Revoir to Louise and Laurie

Louise and Laurie are off travelling again, this time to Pakistan for two years. Their new address is:

C/o Naunehal Health and Welfare Org.

Mr Laurie Scott, General Manager

Jaffabad,

Nagar-2

Gilgit

Northern Areas, Pakistan

Their e-mail address in the capital (which they will visit from time to time) is:

laurencescott@hotmail.com

