

# GRAPEVINE

Volume 19 Number 1

June 2007



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. Monday evenings begin at 7pm with a 75 minute dance lesson, followed by general dancing until late. Saturdays begin at 10am with a 1 hour dance lesson before morning tea and general dancing. For more information please call John (9427 4258 (wk)) or Martin (9326 6077 (wk)).

## President Palenque's Patter

Well, what a year. We've performed once at the National Folk Festival, and had a second performance cancelled on us at short notice. There are lots of events planned for the rest of the year. See the next section. Your committee is working hard to make sure these events run smoothly.

### Upcoming Events at St Margaret's Church Hall

#### André van de Plas– July 21<sup>st</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>

André is the source of many of the group's favourite dances. This is the Group's major workshop event for 2007 and it is highly recommended for dancers of all levels. 10 am to 5 pm Sat & 10:30 am to 1:30 pm Sunday

*Application forms available now*

**Party Night – Monday July 30<sup>th</sup> 7 pm** Bring a friend to join us for a variety of André dances revisited – theme likely to be André or Dutch!

**Red Faces – August 11<sup>th</sup>** Saturday 7pm start getting your skit, act or performance together now!

**Party Night – 29<sup>th</sup> October** Monday 7pm - Romanian theme

### Where are they?

**Sara** is currently visiting Europe and should be back in June.

**Palenque** will be working in Albany from 30<sup>th</sup> May to 3<sup>rd</sup> August, available on email and she'll be in Perth for André's workshop. She'll then be overseas from 15<sup>th</sup> August until end of September.

### Upcoming Events at other locations

**Fête de la Musique Bal Folk with Souleiado and Last Five Coins – Thurs 21<sup>st</sup> June**, Cottesloe Tennis Club 7pm. Booking essential from Alliance Française 9386 7921

**September– Saturday Group 5<sup>th</sup> birthday party!** Bring a plate and dress up for a Saturday morning celebration 10-12.30 Saturday 1st Sept John Leckie Music Pavilion, College Park, off Melvista Ave, Nedlands

#### Point Peron – November 3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup>

The feedback after the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations at Point Peron last year was so positive and enthusiastic that we've decided to repeat the dose in November this year with an exciting new programme! Point Peron Camp School 10 am Saturday to 2 pm Sunday

### Revised Teaching Schedule for the rest of 2007

	Mondays	Saturdays
June	Laurel	Laurel
July	Jenny	Laurel
August	Eve	Jenny
September	Laurel	John
October	Sara	Jenny
November	Palenque	Palenque
December	John	Jenny

Subject to change

*It's All in the Words*



In this Section we continue with our series that looks at the words of some of our regular dances. In the last 2 issues we featured Muhtarin Oğlu Ali, from Turkey and Smogyi Karikazo, from Hungary. In this issue we tackle Garoon, a dance from Armenia that we danced in Canberra at the National Folk Festival. It's also one that we dance occasionally with the Last Five Coins and their singer Laura Bernay performs it with style. Check the Coins out at Kulcha in Freo. on Friday 12 June.

*Garoon [Armenia]*

*My love believed all the false promises and her  
black eyes filled with tears  
This world is filled with misfortune  
I want to leave it and forget about it!*

*Chorus*

*It's springtime; it's a sweet time  
Your beautiful black eyes cheer me up*

*This love lost is causing me to wander and I can't  
sleep all night  
I'm tortured and I cry all night from this torture  
Please my love don't leave me  
People can tell that I am lovelorn*

Source:

<http://www.phantomranch.net/folkdanc/songs/armenia.htm>

The translation came from Tom Bozigian, who created the dance shortly after the song was written in 1961. He advises me that it's since been translated into Greek, Turkish, Arabic and 'Yugoslavian'. Check out his website for additional information on Armenian song and dance.

<http://www.bozigian.com/index.html>

## Past Events

### Canberra – National Folk Festival Easter 2007

Perth International Folk Dancers finally get to the National in Canberra!

On hearing that the National Folk Festival was to have a WA theme in 2007, it seemed the right time to apply to perform and see what the rave reviews were about. Sadly our plan to perform with live music from Last Five Coins fell through – maybe another time?! After months of organisation and rehearsal and costume making (a

bit much of it too close to departure date!), finally nine performers from the Perth International Folk Dance Group (and quite a few friends, and colleagues in the Souleiado French Dance group) headed over from Perth to Canberra. Our festival experience began shortly before the first Thursday night concert with a rehearsal on the Piazza stage at dusk using a borrowed portable CD deck that made its way all the way from Perth as hand-luggage (thanks Laurel and Jan!). Although some dancers had just stepped off the plane, this rehearsal proved invaluable. With multiple costume changes and tight timing we needed to feel the space and how we worked in it, and the sloping stage!

Friday morning was a struggle to get up, and I only managed to catch a fraction of Folk Dance Canberra's workshop set. This was followed by a successful workshop of our own at the Oasis – an open-air venue with a flat floor! I led some easy Turkish and other European dances.

A bit of madness, racing around to pick up costumes from the lock-up etc, and our main performance was upon us. We danced two sets in 30 minutes – the first a European 'tour', from Holland to Israel, the second Armenian and Turkish. The performance required four costumes. Thanks to the effort of Jenny Currell who put in many hours on the sewing machine, we had dedicated Armenian costumes. Jenny had bought a costume for herself on her visit to Armenia in 2006 and others were created to match this. The dance set seemed to be received well, particularly the Armenian and Turkish set. ☺



Check out the Group's new web page  
[internationalfolkdance.googlepages.com](http://internationalfolkdance.googlepages.com) – no www



Looking back at my highlighted program from the festival, I see so many highlighted events that I missed. The place is so big (although having been to the festival once before, at least I knew where the venues were!), the options so many, it was quite impossible to do everything that I wanted to, and exhausting just trying to keep track of where I wanted to be when! Like why on earth didn't I make it to Yalla's Arabic Dance? Ahhh – I remember, I was busy meeting a friend up from Melbourne and setting up a tent! Dinner probably got in the way too! So, the camping experience – was great, except I underestimated the noise that could filter out of the session bar, and the number of kids we'd be camped next to who would get up early for an Easter egg hunt, and the cold! None the less, it was very handy not having to find transport back to the billet after midnight. [Many thanks for being a great host are due to John who billeted Pam, Martin and I]. It was also handy being on site when we had a 9am early morning workshop at the Piazza on Sunday. We had a decent turnout for all our workshops, particularly given the clashes with some really interesting sounding alternatives such as the Gypsy Dance! I attempted to present varied cultural responses to water in my "Dances of Water" workshop that was in a huge pavilion with a lovely big dance floor:



Despite much web research on Rain Dances, I didn't teach any as they are more ritual than dance and we didn't bring on the rain. The dances taught included Mayim Mayim "Water Water" from Israel, an Ice Waltz from Holland, a Japanese fishing dance (Soran Bushi), an Armenian fishing dance (Vana Tsgnors) and an old Bulgarian Horo from Gradesnisko danced to a ballad that tells of finding love at the well.

Despite feeling that I didn't get to see nearly everything that I wanted to, the festival had lots of highlights. I enjoyed some Greek dancing to Apodimi Compania on the rather crowded Oasis stage on Saturday morning, but sadly my sleep-in on Monday morning meant that I missed the Scandinavian Hombo workshop. I had great fun at the Just Fiddling Bush Dance with fellow West Aussie youngsters providing very impressive dance music. I helped John Whaite out with his Waltz and Mazurka workshops and Soulieado were impressive in their newly made exquisitely embroidered Breton costumes. I experienced the surreal Session Bar – with multiple Celtic sessions juxtaposed upon one another, not interrupting or drowning each other out, just providing a superbly alive atmosphere. I discovered local WA singer songwriter Jonathon Brain – who with a beautiful voice is worth seeing if you get the chance. I had a go at tango and at Colonial Dancing at the Colonial Ball – period costumes to take your breath away! Then there was the music of Sirroco and the Mammals to get the toes tapping.

I caught up with Michaela who I had hardly seen for years, and little Louisa, which was fun. My best memories will be of dancing with the Transylvaniacs, and the impossibly named Macedonian group from NSW. Thanks to Antal and Alex respectively for great teaching and lots of fun at their workshops. Hopefully John and/or I can bring some of Alex's dances to the group, once I finally get them off my video recorder. The memory that will stay with me though was a dreamy moment sitting in the Egyptian tent at sunset with Yalla jamming alongside. Wow what a festival!

Thanks to Jenny, Jennifer, John, Martin, Peter, Pam, Nina, Joyce for putting in a great effort in Canberra. Thanks to Jenny's efforts at grant application from ArtsWA some of the cost of each performers airfares will be re-paid.

Palenque



Some of our dancers at Canberra – after the event!

### Albany Workshop – February 2007

On Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> February we ran a workshop in Albany. This was planned, organised and co-ordinated by Sara, assisted by Nina, Peter and Leone. The teachers were Sara, John, Palenque and Jenny. It was an extremely successful event, with 34 locals attending and enjoying every minute of it – their smiles and enthusiasm throughout the dances were proof that they were having a great time. The dances taught were beginner type, with some a little more challenging, but no-one was daunted – they all put their best foot forward and met the challenge, amid lots of laughter. During the break Jenny, Palenque and Jennifer performed (in costume) two Armenian dances which Jenny brought back from her Armenian Workshop. It was a beautiful performance and a surprise bonus for us all. Many of the locals were very keen to continue with – hopefully – a follow up workshop in the months to come. This we hope to do, as it is a good sign that we can “get them dancing” in Albany, and who knows where next?

Leone

### Hora Camp – Ballarat, Victoria – March 2007

The theme was Ahava or Looove and it was great fun. This was the second Hora camp I have attended and both times choreographers and dancers extraordinaire Gadi Biton and Yaron Ben Simchon were the workshop leaders. These guys work well together and are fantastic to watch dancing. They taught a range of both their own and other choreographers’ dances to some 120 Israeli dance devotees, and yes this time we got DVDs as well as CDs of the music.

There was also plenty of other dancing into the wee small hours on both Friday and Saturday

evenings, a lovely Shabbat dinner on Friday with singing and entertainment and an amazingly decorated hall for the Saturday evening meal. Everyone was asked to wear black pants and were given the camp t-Shirt during the day so the effect was terrific – and there was some very imaginative t-shirt design modifications on display.

I had a very nice Melbourne lady as my roommate and a lovely couple from Sydney in the adjoining room which shared our kitchen and lounge (not that there was much time for lounging!). I soon became ‘Jenny from Perth’ after some initial confusion over which particular Jenny from Perth I was – or wasn’t!

This trip I managed to stay on to attend the Hora class on Monday night and Richelle’s class on Tuesday morning both of which I thoroughly enjoyed as well as catching up with some Melbourne friends who I hadn’t seen for 10 years. Anyone care to join me next year?

*Shalom*

Jenny (Currell)

### Hills Update

The Hills Friday morning class has been running with five to six regulars so far this year (an improvement on last year) with the odd extra visitor or two from time to time. After getting an article and photo of Jenny and Jennifer in Armenian costume in the local paper we have attracted a couple of newbies and are now starting at 9am with a new beginners half hour. Recently we performed once again for some old folk at the local retirement village. Our numbers were boosted on the day by John B, Nina, Leone and Jenny S and we enjoyed a lovely pot luck lunch at Jenny’s house afterwards. Thanks to all for their participation – it’s so nice to now be able to enjoy dancing closer to home!

Jenny



## Where Have They Been?

### *Paula Day - in Africa! an excerpt from an email:*

Hi all again. When was the last time I did something for the first time?

Last Saturday night when I danced solo in front of a room full of African nuns! The Sisters and I were staying at another convent to celebrate the Kenya Good Shepherd Sisters' 26th anniversary. I was, for the most part, avoiding praying, going to mass etc in spite of the very kind invitations to go and so felt the strong need to earn some 'street cred' which I thought I could do by participating in their Entertainment Night. With my Indogypsy CD in my nervous, shaking hand and the convent CD player I performed The Peacock Dance to much trilling, loud clapping and cheering. At the end of the planned items they wanted to do the dance with me, which they did with wonderful, individual African styles. They wanted more, so then we did a Bollywood dance and still they wanted more. So then we did the foursome dance (which fellow-Indogypsy-bellywobblers will know from the Mandurah Festival). The atmosphere was wonderful, so much energy. We also did dancing from Sudan, very vigorous, and Senegal, very subtle and rhythmic, as shown to us by Sister Lucia from Sudan (she lives at my convent, or rather I live at hers) and a novice from Senegal. These Catholic girls sure know how to cut loose when the music is playing! While staying at that convent in Meru I had a wonderfully unexpected hour and a half singing and dancing with the children who live there. These girls, aged between about 7 and 15, are either orphaned, abandoned or rescued from early marriage. They were so beautiful and delightful and confident. I hope I am privileged to spend some time with them again. Back at Kangeta on Sunday I spent a couple of hours in the huge chapel, crammed in with several hundred locals who were there for a special celebration to officially open the local maize mill and dental clinic. The singing was superb as these people seem to have a natural ability with harmony. I couldn't sing in their language (Kimeru) but I could sway and clap. At "my own" convent the Sisters and two candidates are so lovely to me. It's a real challenge for me to live with other people, let alone another culture plus a religious order. At times I've felt very out of my element. Participating on Saturday night has helped a lot, and I'm sure that once the children return to school and I'm very busy will also make a big difference. Until next time (if the hippos don't get me).  
love Miss p

### *Miranda was in India – excerpt from an email:*

I'm living on a wheat farm in the panjab. We're approaching the big harvest festival, Vaisakhi, which is on April 13... but it seems all the dancing & feasting traditionally associated with the festival has been

dropped... these days it's all Combines & cell phones, not hand-reaping & folk-singing!! I do love the panjab, though.... I've been trying to get people to teach me giddah, the women's traditional dance, done at weddings, births, etc. It's essentially circle dancing that involves a lot of rhythmic clapping. + cheeky acting out of lyrics of songs (e.g. "I have a peacock on my finger", "I wear my mother in law's shoes and she beats me" etc)... I have heard that giddah and bhangra are ancestrally related to gypsy dancing (rajasthan -> panjab -> egypt -> east europe -> etc .... a la Latcho Drom) ... which tingles with recognition for me. Everyone is quite shy about teaching me giddah though... i think it's largely dropped from the repertoire + there is reservation about being exhibitionistic in public here (the trick is to get the women to go inside and shut the doors and then they let their hair down and start bouncing all over the place! the reason i'm attracted to giddah is that it also involves a lot of JUMPING AROUND. I love jumping around.) Giddah is the female counterpart to bhangra but these days girls here want to learn bhangra 'cause it's got "cool" status ('cause of its revival in diaspora population a la Sikhs in England etc etc.) I only have 13 or so days left on the farm so I'm trying very hard to soak up as much folky culture as possible. **Miranda**

### *And from Gisela – also in Africa!*

#### Climbing Mount Kilimanjaro

The guidebooks include wonderfully contradictory statements such as '*Any reasonably fit person who enjoys walking can reach the summit of Kilimanjaro*' and '*This will test your limits, it is not for the faint hearted*'. The bottom line is that Mount Kilimanjaro is Africa's highest mountain and the highest 'free standing' mountain in the world. At 5895 metres and close to the equator the main problems are altitude sickness, really strong sun and a lack of oxygen (BYO bottle! if you are seriously concerned).

This year with a significant birthday as a driver I decided that "it's now or never". Consulting the brochures told me that there are different routes, different distances and different prices. Apparently 20% of the Tanzanian national income is derived through Kilimanjaro. Diving into Lonely Planet and persisting led me to Castro in Tanzania who responded to my emails and seemed professional, helpful and able to offer me a package at a competitive price. This included pick up at Nairobi Airport, accommodation there, transfer to Moshi in Tanzania, accommodation pre and post-climbing, the climb itself and transfer back to Nairobi – delivered right to the airport.

I stayed 3 days in Nairobi, which helped with the acclimatization - cultural and altitude! Nairobi has a reputation for high crime and poverty but I saw no begging or harassment of any kind in the central district where my small hotel was. I came away from

the central market with a beautiful wooden giraffe and a good bargain.

I travelled by shuttle bus to Moshi via Arusha, and through the border crossing from Kenya into Tanzania where I was met and briefed by Castro. The other climbers in our party had deferred or cancelled – which meant that I was going to be a single person party with my own guide and 3 porters!! This was fine and in fact I preferred it that way, as it allowed us to set our very own pace and made for a more personal journey with the local guide Mathias. He was the ‘strong and silent type’, a very likeable mature man who was simply there all the time and felt like a ‘rock’ throughout the climb.

One brochure states that the best times of the year are January/February/March, and again June/July. I set off on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December and found it perfect timing ‘weather wise’ as well as ‘tourist wise’. It was not yet so busy and on a couple of occasions I had a 4-bunk hut to myself, which was great.

Climbing starts at the ‘Gate’ at about 1700 metres where the registration book is signed. The climber ascends about 1000 metres per day and normally reaches the top on the 4<sup>th</sup> day. There are huts at 3 levels in between and normally once the peak is reached one returns to the middle level – to minimize the effects of the altitude – and most return to the gate the following day.

The toilet facilities were very basic as one would expect, but I was surprised to find a ‘proper’ toilet bowl and a (rusty, heavy) cistern flushing mechanism half way up at the 3700-metre level. Facilities above were simple drop holes and there is no water supply beyond about 4100 metres. Water for cooking only is carried to the top-level hut at 4700 metres.

Passing through the different climatic and vegetation zones made the walk very versatile and interesting – from the rainforest at the lower level to the barren gravel and rocks and ice and snow towards the top. In between were alpine meadowland with fresh creeks tumbling under bridges and rich vegetation including banksias and lobelia. One’s clothing requirements change accordingly. I was fine with ordinary runners for the first 2 days and changed to hiking boots from there on. Temperatures vary greatly according to altitude and weather patterns and I started with a light T Shirt but used 3 layers of clothing with gloves and beanie on the top. It is worth having a warmer sleeping bag for the upper levels – and its vital to keep it in a waterproof bag, as all bushwalkers know anyway. Other useful items in the travel kit are a torch, toilet paper, candle. The less valuables are carried up the mountain the better. I left documents and money with Castro in Moshi and was very glad I did. During the 5 days on the mountain I heard of 3 incidences of theft, one a very brazen one. My little camera was kept in my bum/tummy bag and went wherever I went, day

and night. I had no concerns with my guide and porters at all and any locals who are found to be stealing would be severely punished and blacklisted. However the temptation is great and the culprit often is not identified. I was glad not to have to worry about it. Payments are made in advance and all is provided so there is no need to carry money, or passports if they can be left with a trusted person or office in town.

The first section through the rainforest was a bit steep in places, the second and third section mainly long winding serpentines. The last segment is the most challenging one as not only is it the steepest but also needs to be done on less oxygen. It is the convention to rise at midnight at the last hut to ascend to the peak for sunrise and most parties follow this pattern. We agreed to let me rest for the whole night at the last hut and start the final ascent in the morning, as I wanted to take more rest and preferred to walk by daylight rather than in the dark. A good decision! It is a slow process to go up Kili, ‘Pole pole’ – the locals remind you, meaning ‘slowly, slowly’ and one really has little choice. The higher I went the more meditative the walking became. Weight to the right, slowly raise your left foot, slide it forward let it rest. Weight shift to the left, do the same with right foot. Look only 1 metre ahead and take one step at a time. It’s so true - a long and/or difficult journey can only be done with one step at a time. It’s also so true that you never really achieve anything truly on your own.

Without the huts, porters and my guide I would not have been able to get up there – and yes ‘up there’ I got in the end on my own feet, without being pushed or carried.. On the 4<sup>th</sup> of December at 11.30 I reached that much photographed wooden sign to tell me that this particular goal was now achieved. Some people become quite excited and ecstatic up there – a group of French/Canadians did anyway. I just sat and stood there and let it sink in. It was a clear day above the clouds and I felt deeply satisfied with my efforts and grateful to the person who had accompanied me.

Back at the ‘Gate’ I was issued with my certificate to document the date, time and my age !! when I made it to the peak.



Gisela and her guide Mathias on the roof of Africa

