

GRAPEVINE

Volume 24 Number 1

December 2012

Grapevine is the newsletter of the Perth International Dancers. The Group meets at St Margaret's Church Hall in Nedlands (Cnr Tyrell & Elizabeth) on Monday evenings and Saturday mornings. 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. There is also a Friday session at 9.30am at Mundaring Scout Hall. For more information please call John (9427 4258 (wk)) or **Palenque (0423 834 439)**.

President's Report 2012 AGM

The PID year started with a performance for the Serbian Community Children's Award night, which was very warmly received. As 'Guests of Honour' we sat centre stage and were entertained by children's dance groups and short poetry readings in Serbian.

We saw 2011 close with the usual Christmas parties. The Last 5 Coins (all 8 of them) filled the stage to overflowing at the Monday night party where Palenque presented Martin with a well-deserved Life Membership.

In April this year, four teachers, Palenque, John, Jenny and I joined The Last Five Coins at Fairbridge Folk Festival for a workshop titled "The Games People Dance". We had a lot of fun offering a different format than our usual performance/workshops, which was well attended and enjoyed by all.

Earlier this month, we performed at the Macedonian Community Centre in North Perth to celebrate the christening of Nicole Airay's son. Nicole performed one of the dances with us and then the guests joined us for a few easy dances.

We had planned for two major workshops this year. The first with Julian Stanev in May was cancelled due to his difficulty in obtaining a visa.

Hora Shalom organised a May workshop with Ira Wiesburd who was, fortunately, available for short international dance workshops on the 19th and 21st of May. Ira had an easy to follow teaching style and the workshop was well attended.

Jenny Currell and I were awarded a grant by Mundaring Shire to attend a Tineke Van Geel, Yves Moreau workshop in Bali at the end of July. There were 7 from Perth including 3 teachers, in all, 52 people from 12 different countries. As part of the acquittal process Jenny and I conducted a one-day workshop in the Hills in August. It was a lovely spring day and teachers from local dance schools and circle dancers joined with PID members to learn a good mix of easy and challenging dances.

Our second major event was a Yorgo Kaporis workshop in October. Yorgo brought some interesting dances. Unfortunately numbers were much lower than we hoped for. The Nanga Music Festival was the same weekend and it is felt that our advertising could have been better. Jenny and John Bardill hosted the Saturday night party. Yorgo is keen to visit WA again and has offered some good suggestions to make the next workshop more successful.

I spent an interesting 4 weeks in August and October teaching year 8 dance students at St. Brigid's College in Lesmurdie. Their teacher has programmed a series of classes for an earlier time next year so the girls can include International Dance in their yearly recital. I am also trialing a Children's Class for 6-8 year olds in Parkerville. As well as creative dance, mime and a lot of yelling in a hall that echoes well, the children have learnt 5 International dances. They finish each lesson dancing either Epimenos or Tsakonikos with their mums and dads.



This year's parties included a Turkish themed party on 30th July with dances taught by Palenque and Eve, a 'high tea' at lunchtime to celebrate the Saturday groups 11th anniversary and of course Red Faces on 15th September which this year was at Pat Charltons. The Hills group elected to have a spring party this year instead of a Christmas party with visitors including Sara who made the long trek by train and bus to join us.

While our membership has dropped a little further this year and class numbers are slightly lower we have seen a larger than usual number of members departing for holidays or attending workshops or festivals here and abroad.

Please consider how you as members can help PID to continue as a vibrant community group. As committee members or assisting the committee in one or more areas, by making use of the suggestion box or bringing a friend, bringing your special skills to the group can make a difference.

The committee organises events but they would not run as smoothly as they do without the quiet achievers. Thanks to Debra, Caroline and other 'kitchen elves' for morning teas and cleaning up after us, decorating, selling T-shirts and much more. Leone who organises Red Faces, Pat for hosting Red Faces, Jenny and John for hosting all the committee meetings and the party for Yorgos workshop and taking on many other tasks.

I will be stepping down from the committee this year and for myself and on behalf of the membership I would like to thank all committee members for their efforts over the year.

Jennifer Eyre, President 2011-2012

Monday Christmas Party

Join us for another great Party Night, bring a plate and drink to share and dress Christmas-y

17th December, 7pm start for 8pm live music

with The Last Five Coins

St Margaret's Hall, Cnr Tyrell&Elizabeth

Pre-sale \$8 (\$10 for non members)

Members \$10 at the door (\$12 for non-members)

**Saturday Christmas Party
Saturday - 22nd December
10am, St Margaret's Church Hall,
Nedlands**

Hora Shalom end of year party, Saturday 15th December, Mt Hawthorn Community Centre

Yorgo Workshop - October 2012

Yorgo was last in Perth to teach dancing in October 2010. We invited him back to teach us some more Balkan dances in October 2012. We had three workshops: two on Saturday and one on Sunday that were a great success. Unfortunately the weekend clashed with a small folk festival that drew some of our regular dancers away from the dance weekend, so numbers were down. However, Yorgo brought an amazing energy and some beautiful and interesting dances to the group. The 2012 workshop brought us some much more complex dance choreographies than Yorgo had brought in 2010, which was welcome but provided a real challenge, even to the more experienced dancers in the group. The ultimate challenge of the three workshops was the "million"-part dance (actually 7-9 parts depending how you count it) Vodarki. Vodark,i the Water Carrier's Dance is actually a combination of five dances, with a very fast last movement of Ratevka. There were also some lovely gentle dances in the mix such as Shano Dusho and Kasapsko, and some intermediate challenges as well such as Stamat and Bajrache.

Yorgo's dance list in order of teaching:

Narodno Oro	Macedonia
Chobankat revised	Albania
Egejsko Paidushko	Aegean Macedonia
from Yorgo's mother's village	
	Macedonia
womens style dance	
Bajrache/Beranche	Aegian Macedonia
Flag Bearers couple dance	
Vodarki/Vojdaki	Bulgaria
Water Carriers dance (5 dances combined)	
Stamat	Bulgaria
learned from Alexander Zankin	
Malishevsko	Pirin, Macedonia
Kasapsko	Macedonia
Butcher's dance	
Ratevka	Macedonia
The 5 th dance of Vodarki	
Chesta Krivitsa	North Bulgaria

Yorgo – cont'd

On the Saturday night some of the workshop attendees joined Yorgo at Jenny and John Bardill's house for a lovely sociable pot luck dinner. 10 month old Felix was exceptionally well-behaved the whole day including happily sitting in his high chair for the whole dinner party! WOW!

Palenque Blair

Yorgo's Workshop Attendees - Sunday 'Stayers'



It's All in the Words

We continue our series, begun in June 2006 with a translation of the words of Muhtarın Oglu Ali, on the words behind some of our dances.

In this issue we've included the words from Vodarki - The water bearers, taught by Yorgo Kaporis in October.

Momi za voda odea
So tija stomni shareni
Momi za voda odea
So tija stomni shareni
Im da gi vecher za teche
Stomni im koren fanaja
Im da gi vecher za teche
Stomni im koren fanaja

The young women have gone to collect water
With their colourful water jugs
The young women have gone to collect water
With their colourful water jugs
And if during the night they leak
The water jugs will sprout roots
And if during the night they leak
The water jugs will sprout roots

So just be very careful where you put your water jugs down!

Our thanks to Yorgo for his translation.

Other pictures below from 2012 events:

Ira with some of his May Workshop attendees:



Saturday 11th Anniversary Party:



We've included a collage of photos taken in 2012 with this copy of *Grapevine*.

RedFaces - 2012

Well Folkies - once again we had a great night for our Red Faces Show in September. You all came out and strutted your stuff - some items well rehearsed - others dreamed up just in time for the show. And it was all good - very creative and entertaining and I loved it. I want to thank all those who took part and those who came along to support. Also a big thank you to Martin for taking and producing all those [wonderful pix](#), and a big thank you to John for spending all that time behind the camera and then the added time spent putting it all together to create the finished product for us. I know it takes a lot of your time John and we do appreciate it. And a very big thank you to Pat for welcoming us into her home for the big event. Well now there is plenty of time between now and - say - September next year to start planning your next item - your big chance to Shine on the Stage! Till We Meet Again

Leone Pitman

Where have all the Dancers Gone?

As Jennifer says in her President's Report the number of members has dropped again this year. Two years ago we had 47 members, last year 41 and now only 34.

The Group is suffering from falling attendance on both Monday and Saturday. For the first time ever we lost money on both Monday and Saturday sessions over the year.

Travellers?

This year we have had some people travelling:

Louise and Laurie have flown off with Air Asia for a holiday in India. Their key destinations include Arunachal Pradesh - check it out on the map – China to the north, Bhutan to West and Burma to east, with Bangladesh some way to the south. See more details later in *Grapevine*.

Gisela has gone off to Germany and will be back in February.

Martin and Pam were away in Europe for 3-months last winter, heading off to Scandinavia by camper-van and spending 5-weeks in Norway and a week in Sweden before driving south to meet some French friends in Strasbourg.

Tony went to France and Turkey

But, the Group has always had travellers and we can't help feeling that there's a bit more to it.

So where is everyone?

Early in 1999 a UK dance group published an article on the Internet entitled 'Is International Folk Dance Dead'. This article, which is no longer available on-line, reviewed comments and considerations from a number of international folk dance groups. Most of the contributors agreed that International Folk Dance (IFD) is in serious decline. That was over a decade ago and things do not appear to have improved.

The article considered a number of issues and causes, and considered some possible actions taken; and their effectiveness.

Some of the points raised in the article include:

Is the driver 'dance' or 'socialising'?

Do people really come along to dance or is it just to socialise?

What's the level of dancing? and what's the mix of capabilities?

Are dancers put off by dances that are too easy or too difficult for them?

Who chooses the mix of dances?

Do people get to choose their own dances?

Are there too many new dances taught?

Are dancers bombarded with too many dances? Do they have a chance to 'peg' them?

Why **International** Folk Dance?

Why not do just Israeli or Hungarian?

They also made some recommendations – most of which we seem to have tried over the years.

1. Meet consistently in time and place
2. Don't teach all evening, do occasional teasers that whet the appetites of newcomers
3. Teach living dances, not choreographies, that can be done to a variety of recordings.
4. Use good sound equipment.
5. Follow and promote good dance etiquette.

So where does all this leave us?

Well for a start we have many newcomers, and we don't have beginners. It would be good if we could attract some new dancers – ones who are younger and fit – but our situation is such that short term we really need to retain the members that we have.

Our issues – as I see them

Lots of our dancers have injuries

Few people lead dances – or are capable of leading dances – there's too much reliance on a very small number of experienced dancers.

There is too much teaching - we do learn too many dances – some of which we rarely if ever dance after a few weeks.

Many ex-Monday dancers have migrated to Saturday, which now has more regular dancers than Monday night.

Sessions are not cheap – it's noticeable that many of the dancers that voted for an increase in fees at the 2011 AGM do not now attend; certainly not on a Monday. Few people dance at both Monday and Saturday sessions.

People stop coming to sessions and we do not chase them up and encourage them to return.

Without a critical mass of dancers the level of enthusiasm drops along with interest. Dancers just vote with their feet and stop coming.

So what should we do?

There was some discussion at the recent AGM and members were asked to give the new Committee some feedback and ideas. So use the suggestion box or discuss the issue in a proactive way with the Committee.

Perhaps a workshop or a questionnaire would be useful.

Martin Williams

Memberships 2013

As we approach the end of the year it's time to think about renewing your membership for 2013. **Forms available at dance sessions**

Macedonian Christening Pictures

The following were taken, one at the Macedonian Christening performance and one at the rehearsals:



Details of Louise & Laurie's Trip to NE India

We landed in a pretty warm and very sticky Kolkata, where we had a manic but interesting day of sight seeing. Our favourite? The Queen Victoria memorial! We then flew to Guahati, the capital of Assam, on the mighty Brahmaputra river.

Our travel agent and guide met us; they seem very nice folk. We were in an upmarket hotel enjoying some final luxury.

Soon heading off into the mountains and looking forward to escaping the crowded city world.

Few opportunities for email; lack of network and being on the move constantly. It's not easy getting around Arunachal Pradesh even when you have your own car and an excellent and careful driver, Jogin. He needs to be careful too given the state of the roads. Some stretches of continuous road construction. There's a road linking just about all of the major villages. Incredible that they have made the effort to do so. It's a huge job; very expensive even with cheap labour and requiring mammoth effort on the part of the Indian Government. A BRO (Border Road Authority) sign post we passed summed it up "BRO can build roads to anywhere except the sky".

The visit to Tawang to visit the 400 year old Urging Monastery was excellent. Strange mixture of Buddhist monks and the military. A strong military presence here to ensure that India prevents losing again to China as they did in the major conflict they had in 1962, This stage included 3 days trekking and camping which was good. Features of the people show their link to Tibet and Myanmar. Good to be among Buddhists, peaceful calm atmosphere, very friendly people with everyone very happy to share time, thoughts and be photographed, many fun exchanges. Different to the frenzy we're now experiencing having entered the lowlands, a frenzy that one experiences in much of India.

Stunning scenery in Arunachal Pradesh, thick forested mountain slopes, snow peaks visible behind from higher elevations. Many forests in Tawang district and western districts, virgin forest as we moved east, more regrowth and clearing from the shift and burn agriculture that still prevails among the Galang, Apatani and other tribal groups. Currently sustainable but for how long? Another major feature is the stunning rivers and steep river valleys and

gorges. We passed many waterfalls along the way, cascading down to the major river below. Interesting vegetation, some flowers still about but most plants in final stages of autumn.

While in Aloo/Along (Aloo original name and one now re adopted) we got an opportunity to see and participate in a cultural dance and singing performance. It had been arranged for a larger group of German tourists, not possible to organise for only 2 people but Kardu our guide arranged for us to go along. Really enjoyed the dance, women's dances which they accompany with song, call and response following a leader. Simple steps easy to pick up; likewise with the songs, apart from some syncopation which required concentration. I was up first to join them and the women appreciated it. The performance was followed by an invitation for Rice wine and a meat snack, Laurie's opportunity to participate! A fun afternoon.

Being with a guide has meant we've seen an enormous amount, many photo opportunities of the people and culture that we might not have had if we'd been independent, but we're keen to slow down now and are looking forward to some quiet time in Namdapha National park, home of the tiger, hope we get to see one and other wildlife sanctuaries before more culture at the famous Hornbill festival introduction to the people of Naga Land. We've taken heaps of photos and will send a few soon, not set up to do so now.

Well I've gone on enough now. I didn't intend this to be a newsletter but it has developed into one. Please pass on our news to the dancers and choir, thanks.

Louise Scott

Do you have the correct shoes for dancing?

Yes, we all have our comfortable shoes for dancing, but check these models out! A friend of Gisela has sent her some suggested dance footwear. Customised you could say.

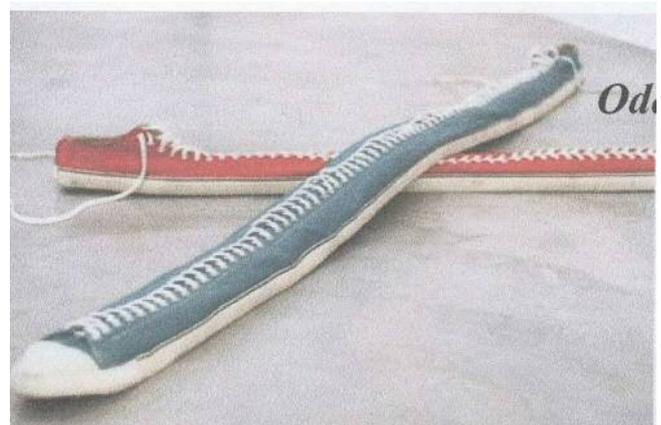
How about these for dancing into Cicerellos?



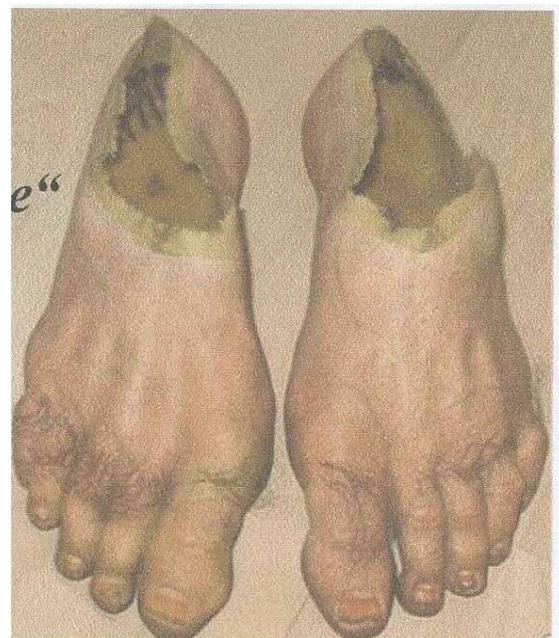
Or maybe this next pair for dancing off the end of the pier in case you meet a shark. Maybe they are for self defence? If you have a dog perhaps these could keep your pet dog away from your shoes!



We've heard of stretched limos, but how about this pair for those dances that just seem to go on and on for ever!



And the last pair – multi-purpose – both for dance and for leisure.



My thanks to Gisela for lending me her letter.

Martin