



# Let's Talk Folk Dance

Membership network email update and musings on local folk, historical, traditional and community dance

**Folkdance.org.nz**



**Hi Everyone,**

We have a bit of a Southern flavour for you this month.....

As classes / groups wind up again after the 'summer' break hopefully you'll have lots of keen interest and newbies to share your dancing with. It pays to pay attention to beginner dancers so that they stay with you - teaching skills are important to support a new dancer amongst more experienced dancers. Planning the class, choosing the repertoire and understanding how to build up the required skills in a dance are important to encourage people to feel they are succeeding rather than having three left feet and giving up!

Do you do a bit of teaching? One of FDNZ's key objectives is to support folk dance teaching; so we are holding a discussion and problem-solving forum on teaching recreational dance - the challenges and opportunities - after Day One of the Greek Dance workshop 1 April - check out the FDNZ website for details - all welcome and it's FREE for FDNZ members.

Have you registered for the Kyriakos Moisisdis Greek Dance workshop in April yet? FDNZ sponsorship keeps the fee low <http://folkdance.nz/events/2017/kyriakos-flyer.pdf>

Regards Fiona

## MEMBERS ARE THINKING ABOUT... Katy Sinton of

**Farandol in Christchurch** has been thinking a lot in recent months about the part that folk dancing has played in her life over the last 32 years. "I stumbled upon international folk dancing - in particular the dances of the Balkans - more or less by accident when I was in my early 20s, living in Oxford in the UK. It was a lively time, with many young people in the groups I belonged to (there were 3 groups in Oxford!) and many exciting workshops on offer taught by well-trained tutors, often organised as residential weekends in scenic locations. Folk dancing has given me close friendships, confidence, joy, exercise, intellectual stimulation, and much more - not least my husband. I feel extremely lucky to have found early on an activity which has given me so much.

Those of you reading this know the riches that dancing offers, but also know that it is a minority pursuit. Why don't we reach more people? I have had the good fortune to have the opportunity to teach and perform dances for most of the last 32 years, and these have been obvious ways to help spread my passion for them. Leading Farandol Folkdancers in Christchurch for many years gave me the chance to try to put into practice what I saw as key components of a group people would want to belong to. I have stepped aside from the roles of teacher and leader for now, but I'm certainly still thinking about how I can encourage interest in folkdance" *[I'm sure you have a few good ideas Katy. Ed]*

## DANCING IN ...DUNEDIN PART I

**Kate Grace tells us what's happening in Dunedin...** If you happen to have a long weekend in Dunedin you will have a few options for dancing.

On Friday mornings, a sizable group of dancers meet under the benevolent guidance of Yvonne Reid. Ages range from 51 to 87. They are a lovely bunch that won't let you go before you have a cup of tea and a biscuit. The group does a selection of folk dances. Yvonne also runs the Square dance club with caller husband Stuart in South Dunedin.

A contradance group meets on Monday evening, led by Bernadette Berry. The group has a core of experienced dancers who know their way through a set. If you are not completely entangled with your neighbour, "gypsy-ed" by your partner and know where you have to go next, you will maybe be able to lift your focus and appreciate some of the nice tunes Bernadette has carefully chosen for the class.

For those of you into reels, jigs and strathspeys, the Scottish country dancers meet on Monday evening. I always say that I need to check these guys out, but it unfortunately clashes with "Les Belles Vilaines" practice time. If you are into Regency dancing, it would be quite interesting to do some Scottish dancing as they draw from the same pool of steps.

I [*Kate*] intermittently propose blocks of traditional French dancing classes on Tuesday evening. We explore regional and modern dances that are danced nowadays in France. On the second Sunday of each month, I also run a historical dance workshop. It is aimed at anybody interested in exploring European dances from days gone by. So depending on when it is you come down, you may well find yourself skipping in a Regency manner or regally pacing in a Renaissance practice hoop skirt. [*Ed: Kate has provided a useful contact list - attached - we'll put this on the website as well!*] But wait there's more - Part II next month

**Update from your committee:** Great to see committee members Ana Maria de Vos and Fiona Murdoch, plus other FDNZ members, leading dance workshops at the Auckland Folk Festival . At least 250 or so people would have participated in the various dance workshops over the weekend; and while there were some committed workshopers, there were many new dancers trying it out for the first time - they'll go home and look for opportunities to dance. Got great ideas for getting new dancers along? **Share them in the newsletter - send to [editor@folkdance.nz](mailto:editor@folkdance.nz)**

**EMAIL  
UPDATE  
2017 #2**

**Folk dancing for fun**

Friday 10am to 11:30am  
Baptist Church hall - 170 North Road  
Square dancing  
Wednesday 7:30pm to 9pm  
St Clair school hall - Albert Street  
[stureid1@yahoo.co.nz](mailto:stureid1@yahoo.co.nz)  
Yvonne REID - (03) 455 2406

**American Contradance**

Monday 7:30pm to 9pm  
50 Dundas Street  
[BBerry@xtra.co.nz](mailto:BBerry@xtra.co.nz)  
Bernadette BERRY (03) 477-1623

**Scottish dancing**

Monday 7pm - St John's Church Hall  
[ceilidh@dancescottish.org.nz](mailto:ceilidh@dancescottish.org.nz)  
Janet FAVEL - 021 050 1800

**French and historical dancing**

Tuesday 7pm to 8:30pm  
Second Sunday of each month 10am to 12noon  
North East Valley primary school hall - 248 North Road  
[www.frenhdancing.co.nz](http://www.frenhdancing.co.nz)  
[info@frenhdancing.co.nz](mailto:info@frenhdancing.co.nz)  
Kate GRACE - 027 263 993 9