

WROUGHTON RANT

Wroughton Folk Dance Club's Newsletter



April 2016

Number 113



Chairman's Chat

I had considered writing under the heading Francis used, *Chairman's Jottings*, but decided that a new chairman could have a new heading and I have chosen *Chairman's Chat* - it rhymes with Pat!

Members made a collection to express thanks to Francis for the wisdom, patience and tact he had used in being our chairman for thirteen years, years in which our club had grown while other clubs were diminishing. On his thank-you card, Francis expressed his appreciation of our generosity for the completely unexpected gift. I hope he has enjoyed drinking the wine and spending the vouchers.

Discussion at the AGM about the use of Facebook resulted in most members approving of the club having Facebook and only a handful of members not wishing to appear. They need to make themselves known to Elizabeth who manages our Facebook page for us.

At the first meeting of the new committee we welcomed Glenys to her first meeting, the only new face on the committee. We discussed the list of responsibilities and Elizabeth became deputy chairman,

Shirley continuing as membership secretary. I am grateful to Francis for agreeing to continue to write our contributions to Wroughton Monthly even though he didn't wish to remain on the committee.

The Spring Dance was held on Sunday 28 February at Royal Wootton Bassett with Ted Morse calling to the music of Chris and Julie Dewhurst which we enjoy so much that it was their fourth visit to the hall. Lots of members, not just the committee, helped and made the afternoon a happy and successful occasion, operating with the efficiency we were used to during Francis's reign. It was a financial success too.

On the following afternoon, nine of us attended the funeral of Luke Mitchell who had been a member some years ago and used to sing folk songs with Jean (Batten) at our Christmas parties.

For those interested in the wider world of English Country Dance, the bi-monthly magazine *Set & Turn Single*, started by Chris Turner, will produce its 100th edition in July when it will cease to be printed and will continue on-line only at www.setandturnsingle.org.uk I hope that dancers all over the country will continue to send informative or controversial articles and letters just as they have in the past so that we can keep up-to-date with news and views!

The Chippenham Folk Festival takes place during the May Bank Holiday weekend and I suspect several of us have already bought a season ticket to give us entry to the workshops, dances and concerts as long as we get to the doors early enough. Just wandering round the town and coming across Morris dancers and folk singers in pubs and sheltered corners is a fascinating experience. Information about this relatively local event can be found at www.chippfolk.co.uk

Clive has shown that he has the skills to create and maintain our club's website www.wroughtonfdc.btck.co.uk which is a way of showing people what our club gets up to in both words and pictures. Thank you, Clive. Now that membership has fallen slightly, it may help us to attract new members.

Pat

Dan's Dancing Diary

On the 26th-28th of February I went to the Inter-Varsity Folk Dance Festival in Coventry, this year hosted by Warwick University. My partner, Anna, was secretary on the IVFDF committee and contributed a lot to its successful organisation. I've been to this festival twice now, last year being in Exeter, and it is one of my favourites, simply because of the huge amount of things going on.

While I was visiting friends in Coventry a few weeks beforehand I had the chance to sit in on one of their committee meetings. Most people would find this incredibly dull, and they did try to dissuade me but I thought it would be intriguing to see how a bunch of students organised an internationally recognised festival.

I volunteered to steward so I could get a cheap ticket, use stewards indoor camping area and a get a bright orange T-shirt! For a few hours on Saturday I was on the front desk answering enquiries and on Sunday I spent a few hours setting up the sports hall for the surveilidh, the final dance.

So on Friday, I arrived at about eight o'clock just a little bit late for the evening contra which was held in Coventry cathedral. This is an immense building, the ceiling was twenty or thirty metres high, the acoustics were great, the floor was packed with dancers and Rhodri Davies was calling with The Night Before, both very talented artists. During the interval some of us rushed across to the ceilidh with Jake Wood, who was also IVFDF chairman, and Steamchicken. This band and caller really make you get up and want to dance energetically, which we did!

On Saturday I woke up early for my stewarding shift then went to Colin Hume's American Squares workshop. That was also full to bursting and we did some quite complicated but fun dances. In the afternoon I wandered round the town watching the Morris tour and some of the displaylidh and some of the reps meeting where they decided where next year's IVFDF was going to be and the appointment of new committee members. That evening was one of the highlights of my festival, the Bal with Les Zéoles! A band from France who had the most incredible music to dance to. I bought

two of their CDs and I really hope I get to dance to them again sometime. I stayed in the same venue for the late night pyjama Playford, which was exactly that: dancing traditional Playford in your pyjamas! Called by Andrew Swaine and Daisy Black, the best dance we did was Black Nag with everyone in my set dancing in their sleeping bags!

Sunday was another early stewarding shift, followed by a Lindy hop workshop! This was a lot of fun, very different to folk but still a great social dance. I helped set up for the surveilidh, in which I called a dance! My first calling-at-a-festival experience, it went quite successfully which I'm very pleased about. There were a lot of great dances that afternoon, one of the most memorable being Rhï Davies calling Chekassia Kfula, a traditional Israeli dance which, because of the resonating steps, nearly brought the whole building crashing down! That evening I was invited to a meal with the committee and went home very happy, with that dancing glow.

Two weeks later I went up to Manchester for the Dancing England Rapper Tournament. Anna was competing as part of Warwick Rapper and I toured around with them watching some spectacular dancing. We stayed at Anna's brother's student accommodation, sleeping on the kitchen floor, which had a motion sensitive light. People kept walking in and out of the kitchen all night but in contrast we had a free hotel room on Saturday night! You lose some, you win some...

DETR consisted of roughly thirty rapper sides going around the pubs of central Manchester dancing for the public and the judges. I took a lot of photos and videos and it was great to see some familiar folkie friends and make new ones! I had a disappointingly few number of drinks that day despite spending over twelve hours in pubs and clubs. In the evening after dinner, all the dancers and spectators made their way to the Ritz for the final showcases. Here I got to see a lot of the sides I didn't see during the pub crawl. Some of them had some crazy routines! Multiple backflips, fast stepping, strange and wonderful lock formations and even front flips! One side, Red Mum, had fourteen dancers on stage all dressed in a Danish flag onesie, and they still managed to make a fourteen sword lock!

I am delighted to say that Warwick came third in the Open competition, their Tommy and musician coming first in their own categories. A remarkable achievement given the high level of dancing that weekend. I had another happy, dancey glow after that!

Dan

Folk Camps and the Frenchay Torquay Dance Weekend

Although we have unfortunately not made it to many club nights since Christmas we have enjoyed a couple of dancing trips away.

In February we set off to the Paddocks Hotel in Symonds Yat for our 4th Folk Camp Craft week, which takes place every year at February half term, from Monday to Friday. Mornings were spent either playing with the band or doing crafts, of which there were 17 to choose from. From 4 pm onwards there was an ocarina workshop followed by hand bell change ringing with Pete Hendy. We really enjoyed the latter. After dinner there was dancing and singing. In the mornings I was busy with patchwork, making a Suffolk Puff Xmas tree, painting a fan and making butterfly cards. Jonathan made a patio tub and some shortbread. Other people made jewellery, a bug box, a spice rack as well as other things. Each afternoon we went on organised walks. It was a very enjoyable week, with good food, company and activities.

In March we enjoyed a weekend in Torquay, organised by the Frenchay Folk Dance club at the Victoria hotel. The caller was Joe Hodgson and his program was excellent, with just the right mix of dances. We did 2 workshops on New England contras and squares over the ages and another on dances from a 19th century ball, as well as lots of general dancing. There was an unexpected last minute change of band due to illness. Fortunately Orion's Ring was able to step in and the music was very good.

We have known Joe and his wife Margaret for 30 years. At that time we belonged to the Guildford Folk Dance Club and whenever the club booked Joe for their Halsway Manor holidays we used to go too as his younger children are the same age as our children. The children all had a great time together and I am sure have happy memories of the Manor.

Our next dancing trip away will be the Folk Camp dancers' weekend 3-5th June at Blockley Village hall, near Moreton in Marsh. This is also a very pleasant event with a different caller each year and 30-40 dancers. This year it is Colin Hume and Bob Morgan with Dampier's Round providing the music. It is not necessary to camp for this event. Last time the event was in this village a number of people enjoyed a night or two in the village B&B. The event includes a bring and share dinner on Saturday night and a cream tea at the end of the weekend. If anyone is interested in this event then do ask us more about it or see <http://www.folkcamps.co.uk/>.

We have only been going to folk camp events for the last 5 or 6 years. We are very impressed by this organization. Summer camps are fully catered and are suitable for anyone from tiny babies to those in their 80s. Many campers have been going for years and several generations camp together but newcomers are made very welcome. We regret not going years before, when our children were young, but hope one day we may have some grandchildren who will want to come with us.

Janette and Jonathan

Completing my D of E Gold award

After being asked, encouraged and mildly bullied into writing something for the newsletter I finally decided to cease with my rovinings, sit down and write. As was pointed out last week, with much reddening of the face, I have been quite busy over the last few weeks, chiefly with completing the final section of my gold Duke of Edinburgh award, Inter Varsity Folk Dance Festival and Dancing English rapper Tournament.

So for the residential section of the D of E gold award I decided to do it big and attend a cooking and hosting course in France! Chalet Pomet, where we stayed, is about an hour's drive away from Geneva and is a ski resort during the winter season, offers the 'Season It' course, teaching anyone who wants to learn how to cook and host parties, organises skiing lessons and sessions on the mountain and is a very luxurious building to stay in.

On the first night I arrived the three leaders had cooked us a welcome meal of tartiflette and everyone met everyone else on the course. The majority of the rest of the week consisted of classes about knife skills, allergies, kitchen health and safety, portion sizing, life in the Alps as a chalet host, customer service and several hours of meal preparation for breakfast, lunch and dinner. We had to be awake and ready to start by seven thirty and after breakfast was done we spent an hour making a cake for afternoon tea.

Five hours each on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday were spent on the slopes of the Grand Massif; I think I've found a new sport to take up! Skiing was incredible fun, especially with such lovely mountainous scenery. Although on the last two days the clouds had come in and you could barely see anything! It certainly was fun and scary hurtling down a slope you can't see.

After each day's activities and just before dinner was the ideal time to spend in the outdoor hot tub. Sometimes with the other guests where we could chat about the day, and sometimes alone to enjoy the quiet, peaceful surroundings.

Some of the things I prepared included: saffron chicken with a hazelnut and honey crust, rice and courgette ribbons; pork with hasselback potatoes and garlic red cabbage; goats cheese bruschetta and one of my favourites, crushed-up cornflake coated chicken nugget wraps!

I had a really wonderful time there. My first time in France, I met some wonderful people and experienced some spectacular things. I was sad to leave but I'll definitely be taking up skiing and possibly going back there for a few months as a Chalet host myself! Now I need to organise an audience with Prince Phillip so he can present me my award! =

Dan

Cheltenham Playford Ball 2016

Roma, Elizabeth and I jaunted out fully “dressed” for the Cheltenham Playford Ball which is held on the Saturday night at the end of the Cheltenham festival.



Chateau Impney



WFDC members at Chateau Impney (plus Ian MacFarlane)

The Ball is held at the Pittville Pump Room built between 1825 and 1830. Restored after the WW2 and reopened in 1960.

Though there were only 3 members of our club attending we met up with several friends we have acquired during our visits to other dances, balls and festivals.

The callers were David and Katherine Wright who preside over a mixture of Playford and Playford style modern dances and we were duly entertained by trumpets, piano and other instruments performed by the ever talented 3D.

The ball started at 8pm and lasted till 11.30. The three of us had a delightful evening and are planning to do the same again next year.

We have already booked for next year as we thoroughly enjoyed both styles of dancing and we will have the services of a top Scottish teacher and excellent Playford caller under the guidance of course leader Wendy Mumford.

Ian

We had a Ball at Chateau Impney

...and we didn't have to travel to France for it, just to Droitwich Spa in Worcestershire, near J5 of the M5. Originally built for John Corbett, the 'salt king', in 1875 it is now a hotel set in 150 acres of parkland.

This is one of the weekends arising from the demise of the weekends at the medieval Dartington Hall after 30 years and the replica chateau makes a suitably impressive alternative.

The musicians were Chris and Julia Dewhurst who often play for us at Wootton Bassett dances, and the callers Robert Moir (he did my birthday dance) and Hilary Herbert who not only teaches us but keeps us entertained with her quick wit.

Dancing took place in the ballroom which was also used as a dining room so staff had to work hard clearing tables away while we had coffee after dinner.

Robert and Hilary shared the calling on Friday evening and Sunday afternoon as well as for the costume ball on Saturday evening. Seven

of us from WFDC were there giving our costumes another outing.

Workshops in the mornings were all for Playford or Playford-style dances and had been given the titles *Dancing to the Classics*, *Dances from the Bray Collection*, *American Confection* (dances by American choreographers and not a swing or ladies' chain in sight) and *Hilary's Humours*, the titles of her books.

Pat

Notes on the Dances of the Month by Pat

Emma's Waltz (*April*)

A 4-couple dance written by Colin Hume for a woman who always provided live music when Colin called at The Round in Cambridge; published in 2009. The moves box the gnat and swat the flea are followed by stars which partners join in. After all eight dancers circle in single file, the first long corner dancers do some zig-zag moves, then their partners do so. The music is by Brian Stone, a talented violinist.

The Fandango (*May*)

This was one of the dances of the month in 2009 so is a revision for some people. There is no known connection with the Spanish dance of the same name. The dance we shall be doing was interpreted by W S Porter in 1931 from Thomson's *Twenty four Country Dances for the Year 1774*. It is a three-couple longways dance with each couple taking a turn at being the active couple.

Prince William (*June*)

The Prince William of the title is likely to be the son of George II as the dance was first published in 1731. This 3-couple dance is quite brisk and each time through is 64 bars of music. We shall be learning the interpretation by Pat Shaw published in 1960. It starts with crossed Grimstock heys and later has contra-corners turns.

Dance Diary April to June 2016

April 2016

- 9 St Andrew's Assembly ECD Club, Dance**, 2.30pm at Cumnor Village Hall, Leys Road, Cumnor, OX2 9QF. John Hale with Merry Andrew. Contact: Ken & Ruth on 01235 831409.
- 9 Radstock FDC, Dance**, 7.30pm at The Somer Centre, Gullock Tynning, Midsomer Norton, Radstock, BA3 2UH. Ray Goodswen with Kit & Boodle. Contact: Dick Shilton on 01458 841400.
- 17 North Oxford FDC, Dance**, 2.30pm at Wolvercote Village Hall, Wolvercote Green Wolvercote OXFORD OX2 8BD, Mike Courthold and his Band. Contact: Ann on 01865 552715 or Colin on 01865 779417.
- 23 Mendip FDC, Spring Ball**, 7.00pm at Shipham Village Hall, Shipham, Winscombe, BA25 1SG. Rosemary Hunt with Orion's Ring. Contact: Pat Hicks on 01934 742853.
- 23 Bridport Ceilidh**, 7.30pm, St Mary's Church House Hall, South Street, Bridport, DT6 3NW. Dick Carlyon with Teasing the Cat. Contact: Monty Crook on 01308 423442.
- 29 Eastbourne International Folkdance Festival**, until 2 May. Contact: eiff.org.uk or 01823 401271.

May 2016

- 7 Highnam Dance**, 2.00pm at Highnam Community Centre, Newent Road, Highnam, Gloucester, GL2 8DG. Robert Moir, Bernie Culkin, Pat Hicks and Linda Selwood. Cake and Refreshments included in entry fee. Contact: Bernie Culkin on 07821 106052.
- 7 Westbury FDC, Spring Dance**, 7.30pm at Westbury Leigh Church Hall, Westbury, BA13 3SQ. Ivan Aitken with Orion's Ring. Contact: Ann Polden on 01225 776766.

14 St Andrew's Assembly ECD Club, Dance, 2.30pm at Cumnor Village Hall, Leys Road, Cumnor, OX2 9QF. Barbara Kinsman with Merry Andrew. Contact: Ken & Ruth on 01235 831409.

27 Chippenhams Folk Festival, until 30th. Information on the festival website: www.chippfolk.co.uk/

June 2016

10 Stonesfield FDC, Dance Weekend, until 12th at Stonesfield Village Hall, Field Close, Witney OX29 8HA. Kathryn & David Wright with Purcell's Polyphonic Party. Contact: www.stonesfieldfolkdance.danceorg.uk

17 Lichfield Folk Festival, until 19th at King Edward VI School, Kings Hill Road, Lichfield, WS14 9DE. Contact: www.lichfieldfolkfestival.co.uk or 01543 424292.

25 St Andrew's Assembly ECD Club, Dance, 2.30pm at Cumnor Village Hall, Leys Road, Cumnor, OX2 9QF. Val & Ian McFarlane with Merry Andrew. Contact: Ken & Ruth on 01235 831409.

25 Wedding Dance, 2.00pm at Steventon Village Hall, The Green, Steventon, Oxon OX13 6RR. Robert Moir with Chris & Julie Dewhurst. Come and celebrate the marriage of Malcolm Sturges and Carol Long. No presents please. If you think you may be attending please let Malcolm know so that we have an idea of the possible numbers attending. Contact: Malcolm at malcolm@oxonfolk.co.uk

Club website: [www.http://wroughtonfdc.btck.co.uk/](http://wroughtonfdc.btck.co.uk/)

Contributions for the July 2016 edition of Wroughton Rant should be with Rob Dawson by Wednesday 9 June 2016 or earlier.
email: robdawson21@talktalk.net