

WROUGHTON RANT

Wroughton Folk Dance Club's Newsletter



April 2017

Number 117



Chairman's Chat

I was somewhat surprised and honoured to be asked to stand for your Chairman for the coming year. I will do my best but I know very little about the Folk Dancing Community. We will have to rely on the expert knowledge of your committee. I was disappointed in not being able to host the Spring Dance due to the dreaded virus that has been sweeping Swindon. I gather that it went very well although not greatly supported by our own members. Thank you to everyone who did attend and those of you who helped to make the event successful. Please do try to attend these functions if you can. It does spread the load on the people working on the day if members can give a hand even just helping clear up at the end of the event.

As I settle down to the role I have taken on I must say a huge thank you to Pat Crabb for doing an excellent job of holding the reins for the past year. I gather Pat has been on the committee for a long time, more than twenty years we believe, and her support to the dancing in our club is enormous. Pat has opted not to stay on the committee for the coming year and we will miss her advice and knowledge very much. We all appreciate all she does to enhance our dancing both in the type of dances we do and the way we execute them. Thank you Pat.

We have just had a very enjoyable evening with our guest caller Judith Inman. Being International Ladies Day Judith had based all her dances on a 'Ladies' theme and an excellent evening it was.

We have two dances coming up in the autumn. The first on September 30th is a special one for the Pat Shaw fans (details elsewhere in this issue). It is being widely advertised and the tickets are going fast. If you wish to go I would have a word with Clive as soon as possible as there is a limit to the number of tickets available so that people have room to dance. It should be an excellent event.

Glenys

The Wessex Weekend 2017

The beginning of February started on the right footing for me as I joined Elizabeth, Pat, Roma, Wendy, Clive, Ian and Rob for The Wessex Weekend, English Playford Style, at Street in Somerset. This event was created by Dick and Jean Shilton Pat Hicks and Jean Douglas in 2015.

The caller was Frances Oates and the musicians Chris and Julie Dewhurst, names familiar to many of us at Wroughton. Combining their individual talents, their professional expertise melded seamlessly, complementing each other quite delightfully. There was a full house of 68 dancers and in all 47 different dances were called, the final dance on the Sunday consisting of 9 requests chosen from across the weekend.

Friday evening and Sunday afternoon were billed as Welcome and Farewell dances. In between there were four workshops, separately identified as Modern English, A Right Royal Occasion, A Trip to... and The Americans are in Town. There were many familiar dances, which I found reassuring as this was the first such occasion for me and I admit to having had an initial dose of trepidation. No chance of complacency creeping in, however, as there were some very challenging dances, in which we were being encouraged to concentrate on the patterns that were being created by the moves, rather than simply concentrating on the calls.

Saturday afternoon was free, so plenty of opportunity to relax and indulge in some retail therapy at Clarks Village or to travel a bit further afield and visit such lofty places as Wells, Glastonbury or Cheddar and its magnificent Gorge.

Saturday evening was programmed as an 'Evening Ball – Costume or Evening Dress'. Seeing the gentlemen and ladies in their finery gave a real sense of occasion: the men wearing frock-coats or waistcoats, some elaborately figured, breeches, stocks, shoes with fancy buckles; the ladies dressed in an array of beautiful long dresses made from silk, lace, broderie anglaise, fine cottons etc. with fashionable complimentary accessories such as fans and delicate lace fingerless gloves. I was transported into a past century where the formulae of costume and etiquette went hand in hand, and all this in a room where, in the 1970's, boxing bouts were held.

Several times I was asked whether I was enjoying myself. A resounding “Yes” was the repeated reply, this due in no small part to the encouragement and camaraderie of my fellow companions.

Application forms for next year's dance were at the ready and, not surprisingly, there was a flurry of cheques and forms being completed. I understand the take up is almost complete (the caller being Colin Hume and musicians Knotted Chord.) Good news too, that the dance in 2019 is already in the planning stages. So, if all goes to plan, I know where I will be next February.

Hazel

‘Fall Special’

This year sees an extra dance added to our calendar on the evening of Saturday 30th September at Royal Wootton Bassett Memorial Hall from 7.30pm to 10.30pm. Almost everyone is aware that it's the centenary of the birth of Pat Shaw, arguably one of the greatest influences on English dancing after Cecil Sharp. There will be many events throughout the year (on our noticeboard) but they culminate in the last week of September. This means that people will be coming from all over the world to

join the celebrations. One such is the well know American caller Bruce Hamilton and we have secured his services to call for us at a 'Fall Special'.

Bruce has specialised in English and Scottish country dance for over 45 years. He is a former President of the CDSS (America's equivalent of EFDSS) and is a well known and respected teacher at home and abroad. He has a calm relaxed style with a smooth voice that just makes you want to get up and dance.

To accompany Bruce we have been lucky enough to secure Deo Volente who many of you will have seen at Chippenham Folk Festival. Victoria and Dave are a very accomplished flute and accordion duo. Normally we are a bit too far away for them to travel for an evening, but the chance to work with Bruce changed that, so we're very lucky.

Tickets are strictly limited in number because we want to ensure that everyone gets as much chance to dance as possible. They cost £10 (plus the usual plate of food) and will be allocated on a first come first served basis! If you don't want to miss this unique event you must specifically contact Clive or Wendy to reserve your ticket a.s.a.p.

Clive

Notes on the Dances of the Month by Pat

Morecambe Bay *(April)*

Composed by Pat Shaw for the Lancaster and Morecambe Club's annual ball in November 1972. It is in Sicilian Circle formation and features a move which will probably be new to most members of the club – a ladies' chain North Country style.

In a North Country Ladies Chain the woman follows the same path as a normal ladies chain, but the man collects her with his left hand, holds it above her head so she goes under his arm and then while he still faces in the same direction he transfers her hand from his left to his right behind his back so that they end standing side by side holding inside hands.

Round Pond *(May)*

Another Pat Shaw dance, this one is a circle for three couples. It has three figures, the first starts with circling, the second with siding (Pat Shaw specifies Cecil Sharp siding) and the third with arming. Couples take it in turns to lead the parts. The A music is the usual 8 bars of music danced twice but the B music is 20 bars long and is a “round” both musically and dance-wise.

Scooter *(June & July)*

Dan came across this dance called by the American Tom Hinds at Sidmouth Folk Festival last August and thought the club would enjoy it, so he emailed Tom for the notation. It is in longways Becket formation and contains the instruction “ladies’ chain while the men scoot”. It will be explained!

Dan's Dancing Diary

While many of you went to the WFDC Spring Dance, I – sadly – was unable to attend because I went to Cambridge for the weekend for Inter Varsity Folk Dance Festival; an event which happens every year and changes location depending on which university volunteers to host it.

Needless to say, it was very enjoyable! So good to see my dancing friends again, a town I’d not visited before and attend the wonderful and energetic dances in the evenings and nights.

There were plenty of workshops to go to in the morning so after breakfast in the hotel room (we splashed out, it was worth it) I went to the two callers workshops on Saturday run by Andrew Swaine & Daisy Black, the second by Rachel Sharpiro Wallace, and on Sunday I went to the Ceroc – a form of jive - workshop.

The highlight of the weekend for me was the display ceilidh on Saturday afternoon. Warwick University had decided to put on a display: a T-rex themed square dance which they asked me to call for them. So I found a good figure - Larry’s Square - and wrote some

breaks and patter calls, tailoring the calls to dinosaurs. It went down an absolute treat, the audience giving rounds of applause to my lines of “swing around like an old reptile, then promenade and do it with style,” and “To your partners bow and gnash your jaws, go to the crowd and roar because, that’s all there is, there ain’t no more, look out guys it’s a meteor!” At which point they fell to the ground ‘dead’. There is a video of it on Facebook which I’ve shared to WFDC’s page.

It was a real thrill to call to live music, on a stage, in front of many people and to then receive praise from the likes of Bob Morgan and Rhodri Davies!

The final event of the festival was the Surveilidh (Survivor’s ceilidh). Anyone who was still standing would come here and dance a wide variety of dances to a scratch band and a list of callers who had volunteered to call. I did a contra – Fairport Harbour - which everyone seemed to enjoy; the MC even taking a photograph of my dance card! Finally there were many goodbyes to friends and a long drive back to Swindon.

As a caller it gives me immense pleasure to be good at something and get praised for it, but more importantly to see happy faces on dancers. Dancing makes me extremely happy and it feels good to know I can pass that happiness on to others through calling.

You could say that I’ve found my calling in life!

Dan

Dance Diary April to June 2017

April 2017

- 1 Melksham Country Dancers, Tea Dance**, 3.00pm at The Riverside Club, Bath Road, Melksham, SN12 6LP. Robert Wright. Contact: Geoff Elwell on 01225 703650. Bring & share tea.
- 1 St Andrew’s Assembly ECD Club, Dance**, 2.30pm at Cumnor Village Hall, Leys Road, Cumnor, OX2 9QF. Val & Ian MacFarlane with Merry Andrew. Contact: Ken & Ruth on 01235 831409.

- 15 Melksham Country Dancers, Charity Tea Dance** (in aid of Dorothy House), 3.00pm at The Riverside Club, Bath Road, Melksham, SN12 6LP. Geoff Elwell. Contact: Geoff Elwell on 01225 703650. Bring & share tea.
- 21 Bristol Contra**, doors open 7.15pm, St Alban's Church Hall, Bayswater Avenue, Redland, Bristol, BS6 7NU. Beginners' contra dance class from 7.30 to 8pm; dance from 8.00 to 11.00pm. Lisa Heywood with Paul Hutchinson & Fiona Barrow. Info: www.lisaheywood.net/contra
- 22 Mendip FDC, Spring Ball**, Sherry Reception at 7.00pm followed by dancing from 7.30 to 11.00pm at Shipham Village Hall, Shipham, North Somerset, BS25 1SG. Sue Horsham with The Falconers. Contact: Pat Hicks on 01934 742853 or patrichicks@supanet.com Tickets must be purchased in advance. Bring your own picnic.
- 22 Mr Playford's Winchester Assembly**, 7.30pm, Winchester Guild Hall, The Broadway, Winchester, Hampshire, SO23 9GH . Nigel Close with Mrs Savage's Whim. Contact: Jenny Jarvis on 01962 866490 or steve_d_jarvis@hotmail.com Tickets must be purchased in advance.
- 22 Oxfordshire Folk Association, St George's Day** , workshops and dance at Steventon Village Hall, The Green, Steventon, Oxon OX13 6RR. Contact Julie on 01865 863074.

May 2017

- 6 Highnam Dance**, 2.00pm at Gambier Parry Room, Newent Road, Highnam, Gloucester, GL2 8DG. Robert & Hazel Moir, Bernie Culkin, Pat Hicks, Clive Harman and Brian Stanton. Cake and Refreshments included in £3 entry fee. Contact: Bernie Culkin on 07821 106052 or bculkin@hotmail.co.uk.
- 6 Melksham Country Dancers, Tea Dance**, 3.00pm at The Riverside Club, Bath Road, Melksham, SN12 6LP. Barry Gant. Contact: Geoff Elwell on 01225 703650. Bring & share tea.
- 13 Westbury FDC, Spring Dance**. 7.30pm to 10.30pm at Westbury Leigh Community Hall, Westbury Leigh, Westbury, BA13 3SQ. Carol Hewson with Pendragon. Contact: Anne Polden on 01225 776766

- 13 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 Howard on 01235 831409.
- 20 Wantage FDC, Celebrating Pat Shaw**, 4.30pm to 6.00pm - Afternoon Workshop, 7.30 to 10.30pm - Evening Dance at Steventon Village Hall, The Green, Steventon, Oxon OX13 6RR. Diana Triplow and Malcolm Bright with Four Shaw. Contact Linda & David on 01235 831482.
- 20 Bristol Contra**, doors open 7.15pm, Frenchay Village Hall, Beckspool Road, Frenchay, Bristol, BS16 1NU. Beginners' contra dance class from 7.30 to 8pm; dance from 8.00 to 11.00pm. Seth Tepfer with English Contra Dance Band. Info.: www.lisaheywood.net/contra

June 2017

- 3 Melksham Country Dancers, Tea Dance**, 3.00pm at The Riverside Club, Bath Road, Melksham, SN12 6LP. Peter Bolton. Contact: Geoff Elwell on 01225 703650. Bring & share tea.
- 9 Stonesfield FDC, Dance Weekend (to 11th)**, at Stonesfield Village Hall, Field Close, Stonesfield, Oxon, OX29 8EF. Madeleine Smith and Ted Morse with Keeping Thyme. Info.: www.stonesfieldfolkdance.danceorg.ok
- 10 Salisbury FDC, Summer Dance**. 7.30pm at St Martin's School, Salisbury, SP1 2RG. Frances Oates with Pete & Sue Hall. Contact: Dave Tullis on 01980 863024
- 24 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 Howard on 01235 831409.

**Contributions for the July 2017 edition of
Wroughton Rant should be with Rob Dawson by
Monday 5 June 2017 or earlier.
email: robdawson08@gmail.com**

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