

WROUGHTON RANT

Wroughton Folk Dance Club's Newsletter



April 2018

Number 121



Chairman's Chat

By the time you read this 2018 will be well and truly in. Just to reflect back over the last few months. We had a very enjoyable Christmas meeting with several individual amusing breaks between the dances picked by you. With the food and chatter, it was an excellent evening. The AGM was brief and to the point without being controversial. We welcome Alan Mitchell as a new member of the committee taking the place vacated by Dan as there were no other applicants. Our Spring Dance was another great afternoon and to our treasurer's delight, made a profit. Thank you to everyone who contributed to its success.

This year our membership seems to have taken a plummet. We have a lot of illness or injury amongst our members making it unfeasible for some people to renew. It does mean that our numbers are down on a regular basis. However compared to other clubs around we are doing very well. We just need to tempt more people to come and join us. So if you know anyone who would enjoy a fun evening of dance please encourage them to come and give us a go.

We had one evening recently when the fog came down and some of our members battled through to our meeting and home again. Quite worrying when they came from Bath, Calne and Marlborough. It was very much appreciated that they made the effort and we were glad they got home safely.

The day of the snow was a bit of a disaster. We had considered

cancelling but as the snow was scheduled for the next day, we decided to proceed. I rather gather there were just 3 people there! Please can you let either Shirley (by phone or the previous week) or Clive (by email) know if you won't be attending. With lower numbers this is important as callers need to arrange their dances for the number of expected attendees. A bit difficult with three though!

In the next quarter we have 2 guest callers and I hope you will support them well. Judith Inman will be calling at the end of March and Ivan Aitken at the beginning of May. Both of these are among our favourite guest callers and usually give us excellent evenings.

At the time of writing this, we are going to continue with the arrangement in the room facing the stage as it seems to be a permanent fixture. We are still getting used to the change but it does give us more space when we need it. So unless there is any violent opposition that's what is happening.

So in the words of Strictly let's 'Keep Dancing'.

Glenys

Our Trip to New York, January 2018

Our daughter lives in Brooklyn, New York and we arranged to visit her for Christmas and the New Year. We left on the 21st to avoid the highly inflated Christmas fares and arrived in similar weather to that which we'd left in the UK. As Rachel only has a one bedroom flat, we generally get an Airbnb booking nearby. In this case the people renting the downstairs flat in their building, who sometimes let their flat to Airbnb, were going to be away so we rented that off them for the period instead. We were so glad we were in the same building! The occupant of the third flat was also away so we had the whole place to ourselves.

Saturday was spent getting stocked up for Christmas, decorating the flat and cooking as you do anywhere in the world. The Sunday we took a break and visited the Museum of New York which was excellent showing the full history of the area with many short videos and recordings. The Museum is located on the edge of Central Park so we went for a short stroll through the myriad of paths that criss-cross the area. It was then we became aware of the real drop in temperature. According to phones etc. the temperature was -2 but the wind chill made it feel much lower.

From then on it just got colder and colder. Apart from going shopping we barely left our flats which didn't matter as we'd come to see family not

the environs. One evening we ventured out in the car to see the Dyker Heights where most of the houses were decorated with extreme lights. It was amazing however as we were walking around, the cold won and we only saw about half of them. On New Year's eve we went to a local restaurant and it was -12 degrees with wind chill. You felt as though your eyeballs were freezing. Not pleasant at all. We had intended to go to a nearby park later to see the Brooklyn fireworks but standing around in that temperature was too much so we gave it a miss.

We left on the Wednesday evening in relatively mild weather after a sunny day. The next day they had 8 inches of snow. The airport had closed for a short while and everything stopped. In America when it really snows all but essential traffic stays off the roads; people work from home and everything stops until the storm passes. Then everything starts back again. The roads are ploughed and people clear their paths piling the snow up alongside. Life goes on.

Glenys and Tony

Janus

The Roman God is usually associated with the start of the year but it does no harm at any time to reflect on what we've done and look forward to what is to come.

At the start of February six club members attended the Wessex Dance Weekend in Street, a whole weekend spent in the company of like-minded people in a reasonable hotel with nothing to worry about. Colin Hume was our caller with music from Knotted Chord. In the end the timing proved ideal as it prompted many of the dancers from Street to come to our Spring Dance three weeks later with Colin calling! As well as three full 'Dances' we were treated to four workshops on 'Genuine' Playford, the Maggot Pie creative era, Pat Shaw's Dances and finally Colin's own dances. Great fun all round.

This last weekend 16/17 March, has seen four of us at Lindors, a country house hotel dance weekend deep in the heart of the Forest of Dean - and I do mean deep; the snow over Saturday night was about 5"!! But it was great fun and fully enjoyed by all 38 of us. Robert Moir was the chief caller accompanied by a superb pianist, Janet. Again a couple of main evening dances, with a selection of five workshops. Once again Saturday afternoon was 'free' time and Wendy and I managed to make it to Hereford Cathedral to see the 'Weeping Window' of Poppies in commemoration of WWI. If you get a chance do go before 28 April and see them for yourselves.

Looking forward, there are lots of dance events to tempt. If you've been thinking about one, have a word with one of us who go to them, they are great fun and a relatively inexpensive way to extend your dancing.

In July there's a weekend in Churchdown near Gloucester which is good because it's near enough to travel if you don't want to be away from home for a first time. At least eight of us are already booked to go. The callers are Robert Moir and Sue Horsham, both well known Playford style dance leaders and the band is the superb Triple Time from Holland.

Looking further ahead to the end of September, if you've wondered about going to Halsway Manor then the Harvest Weekend could be for you. The organiser is Judith Inman, one of our favourite guest callers, the musicians are Lisa and Graham who come with Ted Morse each summer and other callers from local clubs in Oxfordshire. At least six of us are going and many of those going are people who regularly come to our dances, so it'll be a real homely atmosphere.

Why not give one a try?

Clive

Dancing in the Snow!

I wonder what pictures in the mind that conjures up for you? Sliding poussettes, snowdrift heys. Well you did have chance early in March but most sensible people stayed at home. However there were those that needed to work. Nurses and the like. So how did they get on in the snow?

Enter the cavalry or more accurately Wessex 4x4 Response of which I am a member. It is a voluntary organisation of people with 4x4 vehicles who are prepared to use them in times of need. They have agreements with most of the NHS to help when required.

So did I get chance to dance in the snow, well play seriously would be more accurate. I was tasked with driving to Devizes in the falling snow, pick up a nurse and take her to Savernake Hospital. Also to pick up another nurse at Fyfield on the way. Interesting journey but with no real problems until we got to Marlborough. The wind was blowing snow across the roads in beautiful swirling patterns in places where there were no hedges.

Marlborough! Passing the road to Swindon I noticed that it was closed already. Slight alarm bells. On the London Road up towards Savernake several lorries were unable to get up the hill but police allowed me up. Hence able to drop off two nurses ok. Picked up two more to drop at home in Marlborough.

Having dropped them off I have no more tasks so now for home. But the main road to Swindon is closed on the steep hill coming out of

Marlborough. Shall I go back to Beckhampton and go the Avebury to Wroughton route or will that be closed now as well? Most probably.

Remembered there is a little back road off the east end of the High Street that might be worth a try. Started up ok but there was a two wheel drive fairly well up the hill slipping and sliding all over the place. Eventually he gave up and I sailed up the hill ok. Good, now head for home. Road not too bad, a bit bumpy at times and there was still traffic coming from the Swindon direction so all should be ok. Wrong!

Came over the hill about 1 mile north of the Golf Course to see the road in front of me littered with cars on both sides. The snow here was 8 to 9 inches deep and drifting. Managed to get down to the vehicles and tried with others to get them moving but to no avail. Most of the 2wd stuff couldn't move. I called the police to advise them about the snowbound cars. I was now wondering where I was going to spend the night and recalled the nurses at Savernake said to go back there if stuck. But can I get back and should I leave all these people stuck in cars. Then a couple of tow trucks appeared and I (mistakenly) assumed now all would be ok. So, head back to Marlborough. But then a sudden brainwave! There is a back road from Ogbourne thru' Draycott to Chiseldon. That can't be open surely. But it was and not difficult to drive although I did rescue a couple in a 2wd on the way. Got home ok but found next morning that the folk I had left snow bound hadn't been rescued by the tow trucks and were stuck there until late Friday morning.

Had a couple of other relatively easy jobs taking nurses/carers around but that was it for me in the snow. No dancing but still having (serious) fun!

Tony B

Notes on the Featured Dances April to June by Pat

Queen of Sheba

I think this four-couple dance has become popular with us because of Handel's driving music, but this wasn't the original music for the dance. Luckily somebody realised that Handel's "Arrival of the Queen of Sheba" could be adapted to fit the moves. Colin Hume called it at an impromptu workshop at Lichfield Festival last year and I was surprised at the number of people who were not familiar with the dance.

You spend as much time dancing with your neighbour as with your partner - all the gypsies are with your neighbour. If you are in the centre of the set, it is important to make the stars 'hands across' in order to flow easily from a right star into a left star and then return to a right star.

Familiar music should help dancers to judge the speed and arrive in time for the next move.

Shoreham Star

This dance for five couples in a circle was the winner of a competition in 1987 set by the Sussex District of EFDSS. The dancing is led by the man in head position so you need to ensure that the men take turns in being in that head position. The ladies change partners but should end with their original partner if all goes well.

Buy One Get One Free

Another more recent dance written by a Wiltshire dancer and caller, Brian Clark, who does not like it being called BOGOF. Steve Hunt of Orion's Ring composed the music.

The main feature of this four couple dance is its unusual formation - an L shape - the caller will explain! The moves include half reels on a diagonal and along a side. Ladies need to know a petronella turn and a flutterwheel. Everyone needs to be aware of their position in the set at all times - no daydreaming - but it is satisfying to get it right.

Dance Diary April to June 2018

April 2018

- 8 NYFTE, End of Training Week Concert**, 2.30pm to 5.00pm at Tockington Manor School, Tockington, Bristol, BS32 4NY. Free, but donations are welcome. Tea and cake available to purchase in the interval.
- 14 St Andrew's Assembly ECD Club, Dance**, 2.30pm at Cumnor Village Hall, Leys Road, Cumnor, OX2 9QF. Val & Ian MacFarlane with Merry Andrews. Contact: Ken & Ruth Howard on 01235 831409.

- 21 Mr Playford's Winchester Assembly**, 7.30pm, All Saints Church, Petersfield Road, Winchester, Hampshire, SO23 0HR. Rosemary Hunt with Pete & Sue Hall. Contact: Jenny Jarvis on 01962 866490 or steve_d_jarvis@hotmail.com Tickets must be purchased in advance.
- 27 Bristol Contra Dance**, doors open 7.15pm, St Alban's Church Hall, Redland, Bristol, BS6 7NU. Beginners' contra dance class from 7.30 to 8pm; dance from 8.00 to 11.00pm. Charlotte Rich with Ali Messer. Contact: bristolcontra@gmail.com
- 28 Highnam Dance**, 2.00pm at Gambier Parry Room, Newent Road, Highnam, Gloucester, GL2 8DG. Robert Moir, Bernie Culkin, Pat Hicks, Hazel Moir, Clive Harman and Brian Stanton. Cake and Refreshments included in £3 entry fee. Contact: Bernie Culkin on 07821 106052 or bculkin@hotmail.co.uk.
- 28 Mendip FDC, Spring Ball**, Sherry Reception at 7.00pm followed by dancing from 7.30 to 11.00pm at Shiphэм Village Hall, Shiphэм, North Somerset, BS25 1SG. Roy Garrington with Keeping Thyme. Contact: Pat Hicks on 01934 742853 or patriciahicks@supanet.com Tickets must be purchased in advance. American supper.

May 2018

- 5 Melksham Country Dancers, Tea Dance**, 3.00pm at The Riverside Club, Bath Road, Melksham, SN12 6LP. Barry Reeves. Contact: Geoff Elwell on 01225 703650. Bring & share tea.
- 11 St Andrew's Assembly ECD Club, Dance**, 2.30pm at Cumnor Village Hall, Leys Road, Cumnor, OX2 9QF. Diana Triplow with Merry Andrews. Contact: Ken & Ruth Howard on 01235 831409.
- 12 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.
- 19 Westbury FDC, Annual Dance**, 7.30pm at Westbury Leigh Community Hall, Westbury Leigh, Westbury, BA13 3SQ. Frances Oates with Dampier's Round. Contact: Anne Polden on 01225 776766.
- 27 Chippenham Folk Festival**, until 30th. Information on the festival website: www.chippfolk.co.uk/

June 2018

- 1 Bristol Contra Dance**, 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. Lisa Heywood with Matt Norman & Friends. Contact: bristolcontra@gmail.com
- 2 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.
- 8 Stonesfield FDC, Dance Weekend**, to 10th at Stonesfield Village Hall, Field Close, Stonesfield, Oxon, OX29 8EF. NYFTE@Stonesfield 2018. Contact: Stewart on 01925 730271 / 236270
- 9 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.
- 16 Lichfield Folk Festival**, until 18th at King Edward VI School, Kings Hill Road, Lichfield, WS14 9DE. Contact: www.lichfieldfolkfestival.co.uk or 01543 424292.
- 23 St Andrew's Assembly ECD Club, Dance**, 2.30pm at Cumnor Village Hall, Leys Road, Cumnor, OX2 9QF. Barbara Kinsman with Merry Andrews. Contact: Ken & Ruth Howard on 01235 831409.
- 23 Pucklechurch FDC, Dance**, 7.30pm at Pucklechurch Community Centre, Abson Road, Pucklechurch, Bristol, BS16 9RH. Ray Goodswen with The Weston Country Dance Band. Contact: Von Holder on 0117 937 2818.

**Contributions for the July 2018 edition of Wroughton Rant should be with Rob Dawson by Monday 11 June 2018 or earlier.
email: rob.dawson08@gmail.com**

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