

WROUGHTON RANT

Wroughton Folk Dance Club's Newsletter



September 2015

Number 111



Chairman's Jottings

We were saddened to learn of the passing of Doreen Barclay who along with her husband Gordon was one of the early members of the club. In those days we boasted a Display Team and both Doreen and Gordon were members of that team, giving displays at Chippenham and other public functions, demonstrating the fine art of English Country Dancing. Our thoughts are with Gordon and his three sons.

As I write these notes we have just enjoyed a really good evening with our guest caller, Jean Crook. All of our guest callers, with their different styles give us memorable evenings. Our own callers, however, remain the lifeline of the club and we need to appreciate the time and effort that it takes to put together an evening, looking for new dances and music, as well as reviving dances that we may be familiar with. The praise that we get from guest callers, reflects partly on what our own callers encourage us to do. So well done to all.

At the end of October we welcome Rosemary Hunt and Orion's Ring to our Autumn Dance at Royal Wootton Bassett. They are a well tried family combination who have given us excellent dances when we have booked them in the past. Keep the date - Sunday 25th October - free.

STOP PRESS

A brief window has appeared before the newsletter is printed, so it gives me the opportunity to add a little bit more.

The weather favoured our 4 Garden Dances, all of them went ahead. Unfortunately none of them were particularly well attended. Nevertheless, those who did come, had enjoyable social evenings. The dance in Brian Cassidy's garden when we were raising funds for the Prospect Hospice, yielded £160, which was a very good effort.

Congratulations go to Rosie and Tony, who celebrate their Golden Wedding Anniversary on September 17th.

Although our Annual General Meeting is not until February, this seems a good time to say that I definitely will not be seeking re-election as chairman at the meeting. You have good time to consider who your next chairman should be.

Enjoy your club evenings

Francis

Dan's Dancing Diary for April 2015

| t's no surprise to anyone that for this edition I'll be raving avidly about Chippenham folk festival! I also managed to get away to Bristol for a French Bal and London for the barn dance, on the same weekend!

I really want to focus on writing about the friends I've made in my year and a half of folk dancing. Chippenham this year was amazing as always, but made even more special because of all the people who waved and grinned at me in the street, who shared beer and dances with me and who invited me to perform in strange mystic rituals such as Morris. And singing at two in the morning.

It was at Chippenham where I learned the Fantasy Contra, which some had the privilege of dancing a few weeks ago; a dance in which you swing with whoever you like, and end up back into place!

It was also at this festival that I picked up our latest recruit, who's first time dancing was the Friday night ceilidh. What an amazing way to discover folk dancing right? By blindingly lucky coincidence we live in the same town, and kept in contact outside of Chippenham. Like me, she enjoyed it so much that she decided to come along to our club and enjoy it every week. It's great to dance at festivals and a local club so thank you for making her (and me nineteen months ago) feel so welcome.

Also, the beer on Monday night was free, so after the last ceilidh, my

mind gets a little fuzzy.

On Friday 12th of June, I got the train to Bristol where some of my friends had organised a Bal with music by the Rheingans Sisters. It was really nice to see the French dancing crowd and practice my circular bourée, mazurka and other fascinating routines.

The very next day I got a train home, repacked my bag and set off for London. I met Antonia in Camden and we were some of the first to arrive, so I had plenty of time to have my hair braided for the occasion, to go with my colourful folkly trousers! Geoff Cubitt was calling with Skylark; their last gig, but it was a good one. The London barn dances are well worth going to. Cecil Sharp house is an amazing building and the music and dancing are both excellent.

I'm already looking forward to the next one!

Dan

My Chippenham Folk Festival Highlight

In the January newsletter, I explained that the committee had made a donation to the National Folklore Troupe of England (NYFTE) because of the work that Dave Leverton, their leader and inspiration for 25 years, had been awarded the English Folk Song and Dance Society's gold award. When I went to the main arena marquee at Chippenham on the Sunday of the Festival to watch NYFTE displaying their music, singing and dancing skills, I hadn't realised what an event it would turn out to be and Dave may well have been surprised too as he is a modest man.

The event had been chosen for the presentation of Dave's gold award and Rhodri Davies had written the citation which he read with humour, intending to have fun at Dave's expense; a report with photos is due to appear in the next EDS magazine, according to Rhodri. The award itself was presented by Sherry Neyhus, a member of board of directors of EFDSS who had been a NYFTE parent.

Dave and his wife Heather live in the Bristol area and attend local dance events, particularly those organised by Mendip club held at Shipham village hall. As you can imagine Dave is a good dancer and I enjoyed a dance with him at the Playford Ball in April. They also go to dances at Pucklechurch Community Centre, a lovely big hall for dances about a 45-minute drive from Swindon.

Rhodri will be the caller at our autumn dance at Wootton Bassett next year.

Pat

Chippenham and Lichfield Festivals 2015

This year we again had season tickets for both festivals.

At Chippenham we went to the office to obtain our season tickets and the people issuing them were dancers from Run o' the Mill Club at Holloway. We had been to their Spring dance at Flo's place (the Florence Nightingale hall) a couple of weeks previous where Rhodri Davis called. His dances were very varied and we enjoyed his calling. After the dance several of us including this couple went for a beer at the 'Mucky Duck' in Crich.

At Chippenham we met quite a few dancers, callers and band members we knew including more Derbyshire dancers.

We particularly enjoyed Andrew Swain with his fresh interpretations of some old dances including Playford. In several dances some parts of a set were still doing the first figure whilst the 1s and 2s were progressively doing the next figure. This was quite challenging. Some of his Dutch dances were also very challenging but amusing. We also enjoyed Frances Richardson and found some of her dances and calling very different but very enjoyable. She used some ballet terminology which we thought appropriate for Napoleonic dances but some found difficult. We also enjoyed the Hendys one evening, which was not particularly well attended giving us lots of room for dancing, many people preferring Playford.

At Lichfield we stayed at a converted farm a few minutes away from the venue. The rooms are very nice and spacious and the breakfasts excellent. It is in a very quiet spot.

The highlight for us at Lichfield was Gary Roodman. Several people have said that his dances are excellent but his calling is not very good. We found his calling slightly different but after a short while we got into the swing of it and really enjoyed both his calling and enthusiasm. He wrote a special dance for the 40th Lichfield festival which he called. At one dance David and Kathryn Wright called some of Gary's dances with Gary sat beside them. It was very obvious that they are good friends.

We also enjoyed Hilary Herbert's calling and her sense of humour. Her humour is like Marmite and we love it.

After Lichfield we had a night at home then went to Halsway for June Japes run by Chris Turner and the Hunt family. We enjoyed several days of dancing and jollity. Chris and Rosemary did most of the calling. One afternoon we visited Cothay Manor a little north of Halsway.

Unfortunately Halsway had double booked a party of children in for an

afternoon dance so laid this visit on as an alternative. They had some difficulty finding a bus company prepared to negotiate the long narrow lane bounded by high hedges which leads to Cothay Manor. The hedges frequently brushed both sides of our bus. This is an excellent place to visit and has been used as a location for several historical films.

There are so many different styles of calling and interpretation of dances , including regional variations that make country dancing so enjoyable. We can only speculate why we changed from leading with the left foot. Some forms country dancing seem to be highly regulated to the point of sterility. Our dancing has evolved over years and we must allow it to continue. One of my pet hates is when someone says we don't say 'do-si-do', it's American. I say we still use many French dance terms such as poussette (pushchair) so why not a mispronunciation of dos a dos (back to back). If you disagree why not put pen to paper as debate is healthy.

Ian Wigley

Thank You from Antonia

When my English host family asked me if I wanted to come along to the Chippenham Folk Festival I said "Yes" without a second thought. But little did I know what would await me there. The word folk was mainly connected with folk music in my head, but not with dancing.

On Friday night we went to the evening Ceilidh. I didn't expect that I would dance to be honest, because most of my ball room dancing skills that I learned in a 2 months course in Year 8 has already disappeared to a very distant part of my brain - basically, I had forgotten everything except the Foxtrot. I was therefore pleasantly surprised that I didn't actually have to know anything.

Each dance was different and the callers were brilliant at explaining the steps - even to a folk-illiterate like me!

It was on Friday where I first danced with Daniel - who would've known that I would not only discover a new passion for folk dancing in Chippenham, but also find a new friend.

After Friday night I was really looking forward to more dancing! So on the following days I went to every Ceilidh and also to a few dance workshops.

Although I was still very bad at swinging and still hadn't figured out what some of the mysterious names for the steps - like "Strip the Willow" - meant, every evening was a blast!

By Sunday I had danced with Daniel often enough, so we exchanged

contact details - just to find out later that we just lived 5 minutes away from each other! How small the world is.

I am so thankful that I had the chance to dance every Wednesday for two months before I'm going back to Germany.

It was lovely to dance with you all, every single time! You welcomed me so warmly and everyone was so nice that I didn't have the chance to start feeling uncomfortable. Also I learned tons of new things and now I think that I'm not that bad at dancing after all. Thank you, Wroughton Folk Dance Club! You won't be forgotten and I will definitely come back for more dancing!

From *Antonia* (19, Germany)

Notes on the Dances of the Month by Pat

Dances with a Double Figure of Eight (*September*)

It is important to listen to the instructions about which couple crosses and which couple casts to start the move. If the ones cross down, the twos cast up into their place before they cross down, and the ones then cast up and so on until everyone gets back to where they started, having followed the same track. If it is only half a double figure of eight, you finish where your partner started.

An Enchanted Place (*October*)

A 4-couple dance in square formation by Antony Heyward referring to Christopher Robin's enchanted place for Winnie the Pooh characters. The music is in waltz time. Couples take it in turns to lead the dance and all dancers are moving most of the time. If you Google dance an enchanted place and click on AN ENCHANTED PLACE ENGELSE STIJL YouTube you will find an excellent demonstration. Do notice the positions of their arms for the circles and right, left and two-hand turns. Can we copy them?

Slof Galliard (*November*)

This dance by Pat Shaw to an old Dutch tune was published in New Wine in Old Bottles in 1971. Slof is the Dutch word for slipper and Galliards were dances popular in the seventeenth century. It is for four-couples in longways formation and flows very well. Most of the moves are halves, you are always opposite your partner and on the same side of the set as other people of your sex.

Sea Caves (December)

A longways set for five couples written by Jeff Green, danced to a Scottish tune. The active people are the ones and threes so it is important to realise your position in the set at the beginning of each time through. The dance involves the active couples in reels across the set in groups of three or four and in a chase half way round the outside of the set.

Dance Diary October to December 2015

October 2015

- 3 Melksham Country Dancers, Tea Dance**, 3.00pm at The Riverside Club, Bath Road, Melksham, SN12 6LP. Stan Vice. Contact: Geoff Elwell on 01225 703650.
- 3 Salisbury FDC Autumn Dance**, 7.30pm, St Martin's School, Shady Bower, Salisbury, SP1 2RG . Ray Goodswen with Portland Drive. Contact: 01980 863024.
- 17 Melksham CDG, Dance**, 7.00pm at Southwick VH, Trowbridge, BA14 9QN . Frances Oates with Weston Country Dance Band. Contact: Geoff Elwell on 01225 703650.
- 17 Bath Ceilidh**, 7.30pm, St Gregory's Catholic College, Combe Hay Lane. Bath, BA2 8PA . Emma Wooders with Diatonics. Contact: Richard & Jo on 01225 311634.
- 17 Oxfordshire FDA, Playford Ball**, 7.30pm at Steventon VH, The Green, OX13 6RR. Frances Richardson with Jovial Crew. Contact: Ted Morse on 01491 851509.
- 21 Wells FDC, Dance**, 7.30pm, Dinder VH, Shady Wells, BA5 3PF. Mary Devlin (USA) with Weston Country Dance Band. Contact: Pat or Charlie on 01749 674920. Note this is a Wednesday evening.
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- 25 Wroughton FDC, Autumn Dance**, 2.00pm, Royal Wootton Bassett Memorial Hall, SN4 8EN. Rosemary Hunt with Orion's Ring. Contact Francis Hobbs on 01793 812282.
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- 24 Weston-super Mare FDC, Dance**, 7.30pm, Shipham VH, BS25 1SG. Geoff Cubitt with The Weston Country Dance Band. Contact: Roy Sadler 01934 514226 .

- 31 Westbury FDC, Autumn Dance**, 7.30pm, Westbury Leigh Church Hall, Westbury, BA13 3SQ. Chris Turner with Pete & Sue Hall. Contact: Ann Polden on 01225 776766.

November 2015

- 7 Melksham Country Dancers, Tea Dance**, 3.00pm at The Riverside Club, Bath Road, Melksham, SN12 6LP. Colin Moore. Contact: Geoff Elwell on 01225 703650.
- 14 Frenchay FDC, Dance**, 7.30pm at Pucklechurch Community Centre, Bristol, BS16 9RH. Geoff Cubitt with Jovial Crew. Contact: John & Lynne Griffin on 0117 9508.
- 17 Salisbury FDC, Dance**, 7.30pm, St Martin's School, Shady Bower, Salisbury, SP1 2RG. John Turner with Pete & Sue Hall. Contact: 01980 863024. Note this is a Tuesday evening.
- 21 Bristol 50th Playford Ball**, 7.00pm for 7.30pm, The Village Hall, Emerson's Green, BS16 7AP. Sue Horsham with Dampiers Round. Contact Roger Holbrook on 0117 9508533.
- 21 Bath Ceilidh**, 7.30pm, St Gregory's Catholic College, Combe Hay Lane. Bath, BA2 8PA. Gordon Potts with Tickled Pink. Contact: Richard & Jo on 01225 311634.
- 28 Mendip FDC, Christmas Dance**, 7.30pm, Wrington Memorial Hall, BS40 5QE. Frances Oates with Pendragon. Contact: Pat Hicks on 01934 742853.

December 2015

- 5 Melksham Country Dancers, Tea Dance**, 3.00pm at The Riverside Club, Bath Road, Melksham, SN12 6LP. Brian Lyons. Contact: Geoff Elwell on 01225 703650.
- 12 Pucklechurch FDC Christmas Dance**, 7.30pm, at Pucklechurch Community Centre, Bristol, BS16 9RH. Sue Horsham and with Pete & Sue Hall. Contact: Von Holder on 0117 937 2818.
- 12 Bristol Christmas Ceilidh**, 7.30pm, The Lantern, Colston Hall, Bristol. BA2 8PA. Jethro Anderson with Molecatchers. Contact: Colston Hall box office 0844 887 1500.

**Contributions for the January 2016 edition of
Wroughton Rant should be with Rob Dawson by
Wednesday 9 December 2015 or earlier.**