

WROUGHTON RANT

Wroughton Folk Dance Club's Newsletter



January 2018

Number 120



Chairman's Chat

Christmas is nearly upon us. Where has this year gone! Over the last couple of months our fortunes have been mixed. We started off with a superb Autumn Dance where the band, Mollie & Ali, and the caller, Barrie Bullimore, were all on form and gave us an excellent afternoon. It was just a shame that the number attending was relatively low. There were enough to make it a good dance but not a financial success. The numbers from our own club were unusually low which worries us. So much so that in the next week or so we will be handing out a questionnaire concerning our weekend dances. Please answer honestly so that we can judge how to proceed.

As far as our weekly meetings go, we had an excellent evening with Ivan Aitken which was well attended. Thank you. Our other evenings have all been good but the attendance has dropped. There are obviously all sorts of reasons for this including aging and physical injuries. The problem with low numbers is that it is then difficult for people who don't wish to do every dance. They feel obliged to do more than they want to and that isn't good. How do we get over this? We need to try and recruit more members and I think that is down to each and every one of us to encourage people we know, who might be interested, to come along and give us a try. We are a

friendly group and should be able to absorb new people without prejudicing the standard of dancing.

Just a note on future dances. The 6th December was due to be Dan calling but as he is now in the wilds of Latvia I will be doing that evening. Then we will be having our normal Christmas party dance on December 13th. Please bring some food to share and if you have a spot of a reading/song or... let me know. I hope it isn't too early to wish our members all the Season's Greetings.

Glenys

A Letter from Latvia

L abvakar! (Good evening)
Some of you will remember my last evening at the club back in September; that seems like a long time ago now! I can't wait to visit and see everyone again but I've not made plans for it yet.

My partner and I have found a place to live, a flat to ourselves. For me, it's so nice not having to share the kitchen and bathroom with housemates. It's in a good area of the city, in the suburbs.

I'm enjoying it here in Riga, living in a capital city is quite different to Wroughton, though it is fairly sedate as far as capital cities go - the population of the whole country is two million, the population of England is fifty three million! The public transport includes buses and trams and is about half the price of UK fares!

It's snowed twice already in November... I'm hoping for a white Christmas. Over half of the country is forest, one third of which is pine trees, so I try to go to the countryside and its fresh air a few times a month.

I got the opportunity to use a chainsaw in October, not for Hallowe'en, though that would've been a good costume prop, but to help clear a small area of trees to make firewood for local villages. Very stereotypical eastern European!

I've managed to do a bit of folk dancing too! I discovered a folk club called Ala, which has live musicians several times a month, a restaurant and a very large, well-stocked bar. The band I saw were a duo on accordion and fiddle, playing traditional and modern Latvian

tunes including waltzes and polka and things I didn't recognise. Next time I go I'll try to take a few photos and email them.

Things are going well here, especially since I've found a spot of regular dancing! I believe this will be part of the January newsletter so I hope you all had a great Christmas and new year!

Dan

Our trip to Kenya October 2017

Jonathan and I have recently returned from volunteering with 12 others for ten days in Kenya with Younique (a Swindon based charity) that helps schools for orphaned and destitute children. We had never visited Africa or done anything like this before, so it was an adventure!

We were greeted at our guesthouse in Nakuru (three hours from Nairobi airport) with a typical Kenyan lunch of rice, bean stew and kale. We then set off to visit one of the schools. The children were excited about our arrival and put on an amazing show of singing and dancing to welcome us.

The following day was Saturday. Many of the children choose to attend school on a Saturday as it is the only way they get fed! We organised sports and games for them. After lunch we were taken to the impressive Menengai Crater, the second largest caldera in the world.

On Sunday we got up early and went to Lake Nakuru National Park for a safari. We enjoyed seeing the wildlife which included giraffe, water buffalo, zebras, monkeys, pelicans and flamingos. In the afternoon we went to the Thompson Falls stopping at the equator on the way back for a photo and demonstration of the change in direction of water flowing down a plug hole in the north and southern hemisphere.

Monday saw us back in the first school to help in lessons. Jonathan and I particularly enjoyed helping in a maths lesson for 14-year olds. The students were doing exam questions in preparation for the all-important school certificate exam to be taken a few days later. We were really impressed as they were doing difficult

problems that would not have been out of place on our higher tier GCSE exams taken here at 16 with no calculators in sight. The classrooms were dark, as there was no electricity, classes had over 40 children and all the teachers were unqualified and volunteers.

Later in the week we went to a second school for younger children. Again, they had prepared songs and dances to welcome us. As well as helping in lessons I did some crafts with the children and they built and launched paper air rockets with Jonathan. They enjoyed learning how to leap frog from Jonathan too!

We took 14 suitcases of donations of second-hand clothes and shoes and stationary, so we spent an afternoon at each school giving each child one item of clothing or fitting shoes if their current shoes were too small or in holes. This brought smiles to many faces.

On our final day we enjoyed visits to an elephant sanctuary and a giraffe centre near Nairobi.

Kenya was a very interesting place. We met many lovely Kenyans and the children were very sweet and happy even though they had nothing at home. It was a very enjoyable, thought provoking and rewarding experience and one we may repeat in 2019.

Janette & Jonathan

Caller and Musicians for the Club's Spring Dance

The caller will be Colin Hume who is one of the most versatile callers and appears regularly at festivals and clubs around the UK and USA. He could be calling traditional English, Playford or American contras and squares and is equally happy with any of them, so we are sure to have a mixed programme from him.

His website www.colinhume.com contains the notation for dances he has written as well as other useful information you might expect from one of today's dancing masters.

His career as a computer programmer in several computer languages has progressed into teaching and web design. His wife is a garden designer and excellent dancer but sadly we don't see her at dancing events as we used to.

The musicians are Gareth Kiddier on keyboard and Linda Game on violin. Gareth started playing in Rock but has been playing on the folk dance scene for over 15 years. He plays with PolkaWorks, English Contra Dance Band (with Linda), The Watch, The Bismarks and other occasional line-ups. He is also the organiser of the Social Dance programme at Sidmouth Folk Festival. Linda studied music in education at the Welsh College of Music and Drama. She then found folk music, joining a local ceilidh band and also a North West clog side as a dancer. Since moving to Brighton in 1987 to teach, she has continued playing music from traditional tunes to jazz and rock with various bands.

We are looking forward to Sunday 25 February.

Pat & Rob

Notes on the Featured Dances Jan to March

Karen's Caprice

This dance was composed by Sharon Green for Karen Candlin, because of her delight in movement, silliness and English country dance, to a wonderful tune by Jonathan Jensen called 'Silly Jig'.

The dance is in longways improper formation. You can see it on YouTube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=twrz-7hNwMg

A Garland for Judi

Orly Krasner wrote this dance in 2007 when she was asked by John Huhn from upstate New York to write a dance using the tune "Judy's Jubilation", a waltz by Dave Wiesler, for a birthday dance in honour of another upstate dancer, Judi Fiore.

It is a 4-couple longways set and the moves include draw poussettes and a progressive chain.

You can watch this dance at:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=77rIBog-kQs

Bryon's Boutade (*or a B in the Bonnet*)

This 4-couple longways set was composed by Fried de Metz Herman to the syncopated, swaggering tune 'Hubbub' by her friend Bryon Bonnet.

When Fried taught it, she made a point that the final turn-single right leads into the opening move of the next round. She wanted the hands-4 to be well-formed, well-weighted ECD circles, she expected the couple making the arch and the top couple to move toward each other and not to have one wait while the other came to them, and she loved the change in texture as the 2s and 3s ducked under the arch and cast back to the top with a skipping step (not mentioned in the instructions but encouraged by Fried nonetheless).

But above all she wanted the dance to be fun. Nothing serious and not fast, so that dancers can take advantage of the tune's swagger and not be scurrying about to get to the next place in the dance.

You can watch this dance at:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=WExk-woE8H8

Dance Diary October to March 2018

January 2018

- 1 Wantage FDC, Tea Dance**, 2pm at Steventon Village Hall, The Green, Steventon, OX13 6RR. Ivan Aitken with 3D. Contact: Linda & David on 01235 831482.
- 6 Melksham Country Dancers, Tea Dance**, 3.00pm at The Riverside Club, Bath Road, Melksham, SN12 6LP. Jean Crook. Contact: Geoff Elwell on 01225 703650. Bring & share tea.
- 13 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.

- 13 St Andrew's Assembly ECD Club, Dance**, 2.30pm at Cumnor Village Hall, Leys Road, Cumnor, OX2 9QF. Peter Bridgman with Merry Andrews. Contact: Ken & Ruth Howard on 01235 831409.
- 20 Bath Ceilidh**, 7.30pm, St Gregory's Catholic College, Combe Hay Lane, Bath, BA2 8PA. Gordon Potts with Blackbeard's Tea Party. Contact: Richard & Jo on 01225 311634.
- 26 Bristol Contra Dance**, doors open 7.15pm, St Albans Church Hall, Redland, Bristol, BS6 7NU. Beginners' contra dance class from 7.30 to 8pm; dance from 8.00 to 11.00pm. Rhianwen Davies with Matt Norman. Contact: bristolcontra@gmail.com

February 2018

- 3 Melksham Country Dancers, Tea Dance**, 3.00pm at The Riverside Club, Bath Road, Melksham, SN12 6LP. Brian Lyons. Contact: Geoff Elwell on 01225 703650. Bring & share tea.
- 10 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.
- 10 St Andrew's Assembly ECD Club, Dance**, 2.30pm at Cumnor Village Hall, Leys Road, Cumnor, OX2 9QF. Howard Ballard with Merry Andrews. Contact: Ken & Ruth Howard on 01235 831409.
- 17 Westbury FDC, Valentine's Dance**, 7.30pm to 10.30pm at Westbury Leigh Community Hall, Westbury Leigh, Westbury, BA13 3SQ. Peter Bolton with recorded music. Contact: Anne Polden on 01225 776766.
- 18 Wantage FDC, Tea Dance**, 2pm at Steventon Village Hall, The Green, Steventon, OX13 6RR. Lynne Render with The Weston Country Dance Band. Contact: Linda & David on 01235 831482.
- 20 Bath Ceilidh**, 7.30pm, St Gregory's Catholic College, Combe Hay Lane, Bath, BA2 8PA. t.b.c. Contact: Richard & Jo on 01225 311634.
- 24 Wantage FDC, Barn Dance**, 7.30pm at Steventon Village Hall, The Green, Steventon, OX13 6RR. Ted Morse with Ted's Band. Contact: Linda & David on 01235 831482.

25 Wroughton FDC, Spring Dance, 2.00pm, Royal Wootton Bassett Memorial Hall, SN4 8EN. Colin Hume with Linda Game & Gareth Kiddier. Contact Clive & Wendy Harman on 01793 725825.

March 2018

- 3 Melksham Country Dancers, Tea Dance,** 3.00pm at The Riverside Club, Bath Road, Melksham, SN12 6LP. Ian Ludbrook. Contact: Geoff Elwell on 01225 703650. Bring & share tea.
- 10 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.
- 17 Bath Ceilidh,** 7.30pm, St Gregory's Catholic College, Combe Hay Lane, Bath, BA2 8PA. Baz Parkes with Pigeon Swing. Contact: Richard & Jo on 01225 311634.
- 17 Oxfordshire Folk Association,** Music Day and Dance at Stonesfield Village Hall, Field Close, Stonesfield, Oxon, OX29 8EF. Kathryn & David Wright with The Donkey House Band. Contact: Stewart Nicholls on 01295 730271
- 25 Stonesfield FDC, Ken Sheffield Tribute Day,** at Stonesfield Village Hall, Field Close, Stonesfield, Oxon, OX29 8EF. Evening caller: John Turner, music leader: Chris Dewhurst. Contact: John D on 01865 246458
- 30 Bristol Contra Dance,** doors open 7.15pm, Frenchay Village Hall, Bristol, BS16 1NU. Beginners' contra dance class from 7.30 to 8pm; dance from 8.00 to 11.00pm. Jake Wood with Contrasaurus. Contact: bristolcontra@gmail.com

**Contributions for the April 2018 edition of
Wroughton Rant should be with Rob Dawson by
Monday 12 March 2018 or earlier.
email: robdawson08@gmail.com**

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