

Wellington Region Weekend School April 2003

from Carol Smith, Weekend School Convener

The School held over Anzac Weekend (25-27 April 2003) was very successful in terms of numbers, learning, socializing and financially. With Anzac Day making a long weekend it is an ideal time for a school giving that little extra time for people to travel, and travel in they did. It was just great to see friendly faces from as far south as Dunedin, through many places to Auckland in the north.

With a good number registered the classes were of a reasonable size for the teachers. The only exception to this was the Elementary/Intermediate class where the numbers were low but the committee decided to go with it, and although Philippa had some concerns it would appear we ended up making the right decision. The dancers benefited from that concentrated tuition. There were a few minor hiccups, but with some consultation with the teachers concerned these were resolved reasonably quickly. From the comments made during the school the dancers seem to be enjoying their classes and were gaining knowledge and experience from their teachers. I would like to thank the teachers for their support both before and during the school. Also thank you to all the class helpers who made sure the teachers and musicians were looked after.

Perhaps one point that needs to be brought to the clubs' attention, - they have a responsibility to get the dancers to understand for a school like this they must register, and cannot just turn up on the second day of the school and expect to be accommodated in a class and be given lunch as well!

For the first time the Region held a musician's class, concentrating on fiddlers. Cathy Fraser was brought over from Australia to take this class and although the numbers were perhaps a little lower than we would have liked, Cathy was happy to have a small class and was pleased with the progress the musicians had made. On talking to Cathy after the classes it would appear it was worthwhile and she was certainly encouraging that the Region considers doing it again for other musicians.

The Wellington Region is very fortunate in having so many resident musicians to play for the dancers, and bringing Jennifer Foong from Sydney to play as well meant the classes had musicians most of the time. I thank the musicians for their playing and supporting the teachers as they did.

The committee experienced some problems with Onslow College because of the alterations being done to the main hall. We firstly had concerns when the college would not for some time confirm all the facilities we needed, and without Eileen South's

persistence we may have had to change venues. Having got over that, at no time were we advised that the renovations would not be completed by April. To my disappointment at our last meeting ten days prior to the commencement of the school, John Gregory presented a list of all the things that needed to be done to make the hall usable. John went to the college the day before the school and spent all day building a platform, fixing up the kitchen and making sure all the other facilities were going to be adequate. I cannot thank John enough for what he did because without him we would have had some major problems.

Ian Tayforth as Treasurer, did a lot of work in applying for sponsorships around the Wellington area and it proved to be very successful with receiving grants from the various councils. All we had to do in return was advertise their logos which wasn't hard to do. Thank you Ian for all the work you did with this because it certainly gave the committee a buffer to work with financially, and we were able to do some little extras for the dancers that otherwise may not have been there.

Food at a weekend school can be a problem in trying to find something reasonably substantial, as well as quick and easy to serve without costing the earth. Shirley Kalogeropoulos, with help from Eileen and the other committee members came up with a great menu and everyone certainly seemed to be satisfied with what they received. To Shirley, Eileen and our other helpers, thank you for a wonderful effort. I must also say thank you to Cathie Cruickshank who came down from Tokoroa and helped in the kitchen all weekend.

The decorations were John's main job and what a superb job he did. Making the hall look so good after what it was, takes a very special talent. Knowing we would be restricted for time John still made the time to add extras for the Ball and make the hall look extra special. With support from Judy Hart and Eileen with the flowers it made a grand sight. Thank you to all of you for your efforts.

The two evening functions were great nights. The Friday social with Dorothy Wilson as MC was a good fun night and everyone seem to join in with the spirit and have a lot of laughs. With three items, The Junior dancers, Jennifer Foong and Cathy Fraser, mixed in with the programme, just gave the dancers a little rest when needed.

Saturday, the Anniversary Ball, celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Wellington-Hawkes Bay Association, was a superb night and it was a wonderful sight to see 24 sets on the floor with so little room between sets. Perhaps a little tight for dancing, but it gave a great atmosphere. From the Grand March to the last dance the hall seem to be buzzing and although a formal night was also great

fun. It was nice to be able to welcome The NZ Branch President, Jenny Kuttel, The Region President, Chris Kelly, along with many other Branch and Region executive members and make a special welcome to Bruce and Mary Fordyce. Bruce being the only member of the original Wellington-Hawkes Bay committee still dancing. The floor show prepared by Ian Simmonds, was great entertainment and it was a delight to see a set of dancers enjoying themselves so much. Thank you Ian and the team for a great effort. Peter Elmes, Lynne Scott and John Smith, provided great music and it just seemed that the dancers and the band sparked off each other, responding to each others enthusiasm. Janice Henson provided a lovely cake celebrating the 50th Anniversary and the cutting of this was shared by Peg Hutchison, Bruce Fordyce and Gary Morris. All in all a great night.

To the shop keepers, Dorothy Wilson, Marjorie Crawford and Bernice Kelly, thank you for making the Branch shops available and hope that you all made plenty of money.

Because of more pressures on people these days it is harder to get the dancers to commit themselves to functions for many reasons. However, the registration forms for this school started to come earlier than for the last two schools which showed there was enthusiasm in the Region. Through visiting clubs and a lot of advertising the school was promoted at every opportunity and this paid off in the end.

Thank you to all the dancers from within and outside the Wellington Region, who supported the school and thank you to the many other people who helped out with various other jobs, too many to mention individually. This support is what makes a school successful.

To my committee, Eileen, Shirley, Ian and John, saying thank you isn't enough and certainly doesn't seem adequate or do you justice but it is all I can say. You all worked so hard to make this school special and I think we achieved that. I believe this has been the most successful school seen in the Region for sometime and hopefully it has restored some enthusiasm and will encourage others for the next one in two years time.

SCOTTISH HISTORY - Did you know?

- The steamer Duke of Sutherland struck the pier at Aberdeen, killing 17 people. (1853)
- King James VI – preparing to take the English throne on death of Elizabeth I - attends St Giles for Sunday service and

promises to defend the faith and visit Scotland every three weeks. (1603)

- James I, who spent much of his childhood in English captivity, became King of Scots at the age of 11, upon the death of his father Robert III. (1406)
- Glasgow Presbytery deplored the decision of the city magistrates to allow Sunday opening of cinemas on a commercial basis. (1948)
- Forty men and boys were thrown into the River Clyde at the Linthouse ferry in Glasgow when a gangway collapsed during a rush of workmen; all were rescued. (1896)
- Former German prisoner-of-war who stayed on in Ayrshire caused a stir when he applied for a job locally as a science teacher. (1948)
- Staff of the Post Office Savings Bank in London were vehemently opposing the plan to move the bank to Glasgow as part of government jobs dispersal claiming it was blatantly political decision. (1964)

WAIKANA E WORKSHOP – SHAPES

from Bronwyn Maysmor

Often our first introduction to real shapes in dancing is through "Introduction to Scottish Country Dancing" or "Won't You Join The Dance". The diagrams show squares and circles representing people but which shape were the men and which the women? I remembered by saying the women are squares but the men were round and fat!

For beginners, shapes on the dance floor are non-existent. Beginners' vision sees bodies darting from one position to another with ease and grace yet when they are put in first position to dance the formations themselves, these movements take on the frenzied image created on paper by an impatient person endeavouring to get the ink flowing through a ballpoint pen as they dart hither and thither at the direction of helpful supporters calling: down here, round me, this way, cross, reel - no on the sides, do this, do that. Shapes don't come into what the beginner sees. It is not until they see a dance demonstration and learn that six hands round and back actually can look like a circle and that a triangle set can retain that shape through the course of the dance. Of course there are always exceptions - if a beginner is immediately an expert at reels you can be sure he/she is a mathematician or a scientist.

The Waikanae Workshop was a wonderful opportunity to explore new shapes that the more