

Stepp'n Out 'n' About

Published by R & L Edwards (LREDANCE) lredance1@gmail.com

September 2021



JOHN & ANDREA

G'day Les 'n' Russ

Mooching around passing time between book reading, jigsaws and Netflix as you do whilst in lock down. I came upon a book long forgotten sitting in the bookcase. It was under the heading of 'GAMES AND RECREATION SERIES' its was BALLROOM DANCING, ALEX MOORE. For the want of something better to do I sat and started to read. There was a lot in the book which grab my attention and if I may, I would like to share a few lines from the book with you.

Quoted from the book in the introduction: - Primarily, Ballroom Dancing is a mental and physical recreation and as such it can scarcely be said to have an equal. Taken seriously, it can give the young person as much physical exercise as desired; to the middle aged dancer, it can give exercise that is effective without being too strenuous; to the busy man or women it will provide that mental relaxation which is so necessary to physical health.

A little further in the book under the heading 'THE NOVICE' The novice whose initial desire is to learn sufficient about dancing to be able to move both comfortably and unobtrusively in the ballroom will only need to assimilate a very little of the information. To many people dancing is a hobby, a recreation, or a pleasant means of obtaining healthy physical exercise. Others approach it from different aspects, one of the most important being the mental relaxation that an evening's dancing can give.

The unambitious beginner need not be alarmed by the (to him) intricate details which follow the simple descriptions of the various figures. They are as unnecessary to him as the intricacies of motor racing are to the ordinary car driver.

As a matter of interest. Alex Moore was a well known name in the dancing world. He competed in the Ballroom Championships in London in the early 1920's. The book was published in 1923. The comments are as relevant today as they were back then.

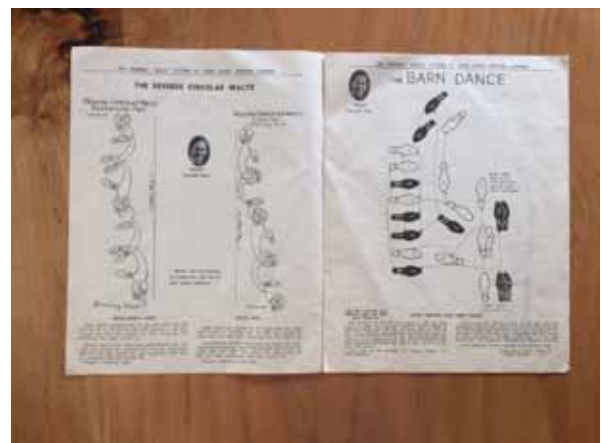
Having experienced a long period of inaction and social interaction, seeing light at the end of the Covid tunnel gives one hope to soon resume our much loved social activity and get that much needed physical and mental exercise.

For the love of dance Andrea & John Barwick

Thanks John, It is amazing the stuff you find, we started looking and found these dance books in our library among a heap of other old tutorial books and equally old scripts of dancing in our library. These samples were given to us some years ago by Brenda.

We tried to find out how old they are but there is nothing about "Bolot Dance" on the internet. Perhaps one of you out there might be able to give us a clue.

If anyone else has some old dance memorabilia, if you have, why not share it, send in a picture in for the next edition.



RUSS 'N' LES

While putting this newsletter together we are reminded of Julie Wilson from the Kyneton area of Victoria, Julie edits a newsletter called "Keeping In Touch", you would have seen the latest copy in last month's issue.

That is what we are doing through this newsletter, keeping many of us in touch with each other, It is wonderful to receive articles from many of our dance friends and we trust that you will enjoy reading of their thoughts and activities and what they've been up to.

We hope that you enjoy this issue of Stepp'n Out 'n' About, it is different to what is normally published, put on the pot, make a cuppa and start reading and have a laugh.

Thank you to everyone who has submitted something for this edition.

A first-grade teacher, Ms. Lee, was having trouble with one of her students.

The teacher asked, "Harry, what's your problem?"

Harry answered, "I'm too smart for the 1st. grade My sister is in the 3rd. grade and I'm smarter than she is! I think I should be in the 3rd. grade too"

Ms. Lee had enough. She took Harry to the principal's office. While Harry waited in the outer office the teacher explained to the principal what the situation was. The principal told Ms. Lee he would give the boy a test . If he failed to answer any of the questions he was to go back to the 1st. grade and behave. She agreed.

Harry was brought in and the conditions were explained to him and he agreed to take the test.

Principal: What is 3 x 3?"

Harry: "9"

Principal: "What is 6 x 6?"

Harry: "36"

And so it went with every question the principal thought a 3rd grader should know.

The principal looks at Ms Lee and tells her, "I think Harry can go to the 3rd. grade."

Ms Lee says to the principal, "Let me ask him some questions.."

The principal and Harry both agreed

Ms. Lee asks, "What does a cow have four of that I have only two of?"

Harry, after a moment: "Legs.."

Ms. Lee "What is in your pants that you have but I do not have?"

The principal wondered why would she ask such a question!

Harry replied: "Pockets"

Ms. Lee: "What does a dog do that a man steps into?"

Harry: "Pants"

The principal sat forward with his mouth hanging open.

Ms. Lee: "What goes in hard and pink then comes out soft and sticky?"

The principals eyes opened really wide and before he could stop the answer,

Harry replied, "Bubble gum"

Ms. Lee: What does a man do standing up, and a woman does sitting down and a dog does on three legs?"

Harry: "Shake hands"

The principal was trembling.

Ms.. Lee: "What word starts with an 'F' and ends in 'K' that means a lot of heat and excitement?"

Harry responds: "Firetruck"

The principal breathed a sigh of relief and told Ms. Lee,

Put Harry in the fifth grade, I got the last seven questions wrong...

PARTNERS PLEASE

The aim of this puzzle is to find the names of seven dance associated words by combining a blue square with a red circle.

Here's one to get you started

ENJ

OY

AL
TZ

TA
N

IL
YN

GO

ELA

CAR
OU

RE
SS

SA

EMP

MBA

ME
RR

SEL

INA

NVW

Well, how did you go with sorting out this lot? here are the answers
N V Waltz, Tango, Carousel, Samba, Empress, Merrilyn, Elaina

DANCE WORD SEARCH

All the words can be found in the grid,reading forward, backward, up, down or diagonally except one, this is the key word, what is it?

WALTZ, RUMBA, QUICKSTEP, ZUMBA, STEPPNOUT, CAROUSEL, TANGO,
CONTRA, TANGOETTE, SERENADE, BRACLAYB, STEP, LEADS, SHOE,
TEMPO, SETS, FLOOR, BEAT, DANCERS, MOVE, SUIT, JIVES, TURN, SAMBA

A	B	M	U	R	W	A	L	T	Z	P
B	E	T	T	E	O	G	N	A	T	E
M	B	S	U	I	T	O	P	M	E	T
A	B	E	T	O	P	A	L	M	E	S
S	Y	V	A	E	N	E	P	O	T	K
A	A	I	N	T	S	P	H	E	N	C
R	L	J	G	U	M	S	P	G	R	I
T	C	X	O	O	L	F	D	E	U	U
N	R	R	V	Z	U	M	B	A	T	Q
O	A	E	E	D	A	N	E	R	E	S
C	B	D	A	N	C	E	R	S	G	L

Quick Quiz

- 1: In what year was the Parma Waltz introduced?
- 2: How many steps are there in a basic 18?
- 3: Which dance is considered to be the oldest of all ballroom dances?
- 4: In what year was the foxtrot first danced?
- 5: Who Composed the music 'Haunted Ballroom'?
- 6: Who choreographed the 'President's Daughter's Waltz'?
- 7: How many dances have Andrea & John Barwick choreographed?
- 8: On what beat do we use to start dancing a Rumba?
- 9: How many beats of music are there in a standard 4/4 16 bar sequence dance?
- 10: What is the date of the next Rutherglen Ballroom Dance Festival planned for?



Tony & Patti Gilbert

Hi Dancers

We thought we would let you all know how much we are missing your smiling faces! Another year mostly in lockdown has had its challenges but we keep positive by still creating, rehearsing and trying to keep in touch.

When all this Covid started, it was a great chance to clean up, sort cupboards, throw out, donate, repair, paint and renovate but that housework just seems to always be ongoing and quiet honestly, I'm over it! Haha

"Get us back to work!"

Our health remains very good which is a blessing and we keep up the strength with gardening, walking and pilates.

Like everyone we are missing our family and our travel plans have been on the back burner.

Hi Russell & Lesley

Just a few words Lourdes and Myself, well we have missed the lockdown, How did we do that well After the last lock down in June we left to come to my sons place here in Mount Isa, we came up here to help him and his wife do some renovations, which we have just about completed.

The Laundry area just about completed waiting on Bunnings to get the cupboards in should be soon now been waiting a month for them.

I have done the skirting, now this was a bit of a job as his house is concrete and steel so not your normal skirting same as the skirtings around the doors. plus new lights in the Kitchen and changing the down pipe on the gutters well at the back of the house. would you like a couple of photos.

Here are some photos of Max busy at work

And while he is busy working, I have been busy crocheting and donating..

And baking..

Yours Sincerely

Max and Lourdes

Gamble

Unfortunately our Entertainment Industry has been decimated. We did manage one Dance event at Twin Towns Services Club NSW first week in June to a packed house but Covid restrictions came back and that was that. We have been very grateful to Coolangatta Senior Citizens Club for inviting us back to perform our music and although it's been with limited numbers and strict Covid Compliance, it has been so wonderful to see our Dancing friends. Dianne Fowler once again came to the rescue with handling the bookings and cancellations plus the many phone calls she has taken, Di has also been happy to have the contact with everyone even though she resides in NSW and hasn't been able to attend due to the closures of the States.

We are trying to keep positive with the future and we are confident once all our States work together with a plan for reopening, our dancers will recommence, fingers crossed.

A special mention, Andrea and John Barwick's new Dance Script book - a fantastic idea! Congratulations A & J

We look forward to working with them as soon as there is a clear road out of this health crisis.

Tony has a fabulous NEW CD coming out very soon and we hope to launch that with a spectacular event - keep your eyes open for that one!

If all goes well we are holding an "International Night" at Coolangatta Senior Citizens Club on Saturday 31st October 2021 - a booking can be made by contacting Dianne on 0417 650 859

Stay well and we look forward to seeing EVERYONE as soon as can be!

Love and Best Wishes

Patti & Tony

IF YOU LOOK AT THIS SPACE LONG ENOUGH YOU WILL STILL NOT SEE ANYTHING INTERESTING



Lourdes & Max



Sunny & Lian

Thank you Russel for the ongoing news which you have sent regularly.

Sunny and I are busy although we have no dancing. We occupy ourselves with gardening and we enjoy the space and the environment.

Sunny in spite of his impaired vision is still reading on the computer with some difficulty. He can still do some cooking which he enjoys.

I am involved in choir singing via zoom on weekly basis and playing /learning the ukelele in my own time.

However we still miss the freedom of movements and family contacts like everyone else.

We love to have the info for the zoom which you are planning.

The last time the venue opened for dancing here I was unfortunate to be inflicted with inflammation of the knee, thus had only attended a few sessions when Covid Delta forced the venue to close. We were learning our dancing all over again.

Our best regards to Leslie and you, Russell

Take care and stay safe. Enjoy life in whatever way.

Cheers Lian and Sunny



The Windsor Senior Citizens' Club, Inc.
 Invites you to attend the Seniors Festival "Welcome Back" Charity Dance
 at The Malvern Town Hall, Cnr High Street & Glenferrie Road, Malvern
 Dancing 12pm – 4pm on Tuesday 9 November 2021
 Music: CDs Afternoon Tea Provided



The Windsor Senior Citizens' Club, Inc. proudly supports the Prahran Community Learning Centre's Youth Scholarship with the help of the Stonnington Council who has provided us with this terrific venue for the Seniors Festival.

Join Windsor celebrating 57 years of dancing.

Cost of Ticket: \$10.00pp.

Cheque/Money Order to:

WSC Club, P O Box 1198 Werribee Vic 3030

Info/Booking: Sylvia: 0455 523 496

Nilda: 0438 594 929

Tram 6 Stop 44

*For all the latest news,
 events and updates
 about
 dancing in Canberra,
 and other places*

go to

<https://Canberradance.weebly.com>

or contact

canberradance1@gmail.com

ALWAYS INTERESTING

ALWAYS INFORMATIVE

ABERCROMBIE - TOMORROW AND YESTERDAY

Christopher & Xanthe Morgan
 request the pleasure of your company at the
10TH ANNUAL
ABERCROMBIE
H^oUSE
BALL
SATURDAY
12th. FEBRUARY 2022

311 Ophir Road, Bathurst NSW 2795
 Dress: Great Gatsby Era

TWO DAY PACKAGE \$150pp..
 (Inc Lunch Sunday)

PLANING IS NOW
 UNDERWAY FOR THIS
 EXCLUSIVE EVENT

Explore the stables, antique shop, mansion and grounds
 Enquiries to Mariena Welch
 Ph: 0428 615 080
 Email: repairs@welchshighwaysmash.com.au
 Complete the RSVP on the rear and
 return with your payment or
 bank payment notification



A cranky older woman "in her senior years" was arrested for shoplifting at a grocery store.

She gave everyone a hard time, from the store manager to the security guard to the arresting officer who took her away.

She complained and criticized everything and everyone throughout the process.

When she appeared before the judge, the judge asked her what she had stolen from the store.

The lady defiantly replied, "Just a stupid can of peaches you old fool."

The judge then asked why she had done it.

She replied, "I was hungry and forgot to bring any cash to the store."

The judge asked how many peaches were in the can.

She replied in a nasty tone, "Nine! But why do you care about that?"

The judge answered patiently, "Well, ma'am, because I'm going to give you nine days in jail -- one day for each peach."

As the judge was about to drop his gavel, the lady's long-suffering husband raised his hand slowly and asked if he might speak.

The judge said, "Yes sir, what do you have to add?"

The husband said meekly, "Your Honor, she also stole two cans of peas."

COROWA FESTIVAL OF DANCE

Changes to Corowa Festival of Dance Date The Corowa Festival of Dance (CFOD) Committee have made the decision to defer the Festival to the January dates Thursday 27th January to Sunday 30th January 2022.

We anticipate travel restrictions including interstate permits that may require evidence of vaccination. We are confident that you are all watching the news, and following the plans that are emerging related to opening up.

Accordingly, we wish to advise everyone that the CFOD Committee will manage the Festival with evidence-based health and safety plans for the conduct of the event. CFOD health and safety plans will follow all local, state and commonwealth government requirements that apply for Covid-19, and we will be considering actions that similar events take in order to keep everyone attending safe.

In line with this advice we would like to take the opportunity to encourage you all to get vaccinated, and we understand that there may be some of our ticket holders who will have a valid medical exemption. High vaccination rates of those attending will be a factor of decision making relevant to the Committee and provides protection for those who have a medical exemption.

We are very proud of the dance community, as we know that there are very high rates of vaccination among dancers, and we know that most of you are already vaccinated for Covid-19. We, like all of you, would love to be able to get back to enjoying your company and our joint passion for social dancing. We are excited as always to bring you a wonderful Festival that is well organised and takes into consideration the risks associated with running an event, under these circumstances and as communities open up.

Take care, we have all our fingers and toes crossed that January is a goer!

CFOD Committee



Barry & Bette

Hello Russell / Lesley

One of the things I have spent some lockdown time on has been putting together and publishing a collection of poems that I have written since 2012. This new collection, 'Monument Guide', contains about 60 poems, including several about dancing.

I was intending to advertise the book at dances, but who knows when that will be possible? The cost is \$20 per copy, and \$5 from each copy sold goes to the Albury Wodonga Regional Cancer Centre Trust.

For information or orders contact Bette Cunningham, 0419 493 575 (text message) or email: bettecunningham@icloud.com

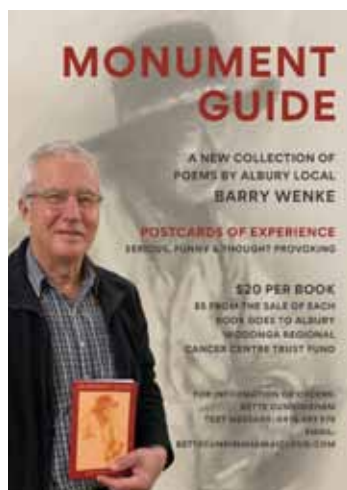
NUDE ANTS

At first it seems a tangle
Of foreign, cryptic clues
Until we see the pattern
In another form of Blues

Persistence is important
Repetition for the bold
No matter how we stumble
If we're shown or if we're told

In all of us there is a switch
To turn the light bulb on
Another dance another chance
Before the power is gone

It is a way of saying
That we have some more to give
Ourselves and to our partners
And a richer life to live



John & Pat

Yes, woe is me, woe is us. Over the last couple of days I have been, in my mind (and no smart comments please) drafting an email about how we might celebrate coming out of lockdown and the prospect of resuming dancing.

A sit down dinner, a picnic style outing or my preference, a celebratory dance with sumptuous afternoon tea at Brogo. Any other suggestions most welcome.

So news of a couple of cases of Covid in Merimbula yesterday shattered such make believe thoughts. Cases in Merimbula? Where there has not been a case (including the whole Bega Valley Shire) in something over a year!!! @#%^&\$%\$#@ with great feeling.

Pat and I might even be close contacts of a real close contact so we are going down for a test this morning just to be sure. She is fully vaxxed and I have had one.

We hope you have all been exercising so that you do not collapse in a heap when dancing does start again. Pat is fine, she is doing lots of long walks with Dorothea and dog or bike rides with another friend. Electric bike mind you, a matter of contention between her and me - where is the exercise in riding an electric bike? I will not go into the prolonged discussions/diatribes arguing the effort she says are needed to push an electric bike along. Stupid me. Needless to say I do not raise the subject any more. Fortunately my arthritic ankle prevents such mindless activity.

It may be a while until we have better news so till then, chin up, easy on the booze and try to remember your dance steps.

Cheers all John & Pat

ZOOM DANCES

We have conducted a few of these dances lately and they are becoming quite popular, our last one saw dancers from Vic. N.S.W. and N.Z. and have had many requests for more of them since then.

They give us the opportunity to not only participate in a semi organised dance (albiet in our own kitchens) but also catch up and see many of our friends, a great way to spend an afternoon or evening.

John & Jill Bennett and Wilma & Robert Saunders conduct theirs Fridays and Thursdays respectfully. and of course we conduct ours Sundays.

If you conduct a zoom dance and would like more to attend, we'll advertise it for you as well. Have fun dancing

Take Your Brain Dancing

Was born in Merimbula, 6 June 1918. On that day, 33 people who had NEVER danced before turned up at the Uniting Church hall to learn to dance New Vogue and Sequence dance. Daunting? Yes! Doable? Yes, definitely!

At that time my husband Peter and I were active members of U3A Sapphire Coast and the call was out for new courses, new group leaders. You've all heard that sort of call before?

We had been dancing with Merimbula Uniting Church Dance Group for about 10 years at that stage, and it had often become evident to me that there were people 'out there' in the community who wanted to learn to dance and just 'following someone' really didn't cut it, if you had never ever danced before. So - you have probably guessed by now, we put our hand up to start a new U3A group and we called it Take Your Brain Dancing.

No, I'm not an accredited or professional dance teacher and I've always made that very clear. I'm a schoolteacher and in the 50 years before I retired, I've taught hundreds of kids to dance. Bush dancing, folkdancing, square dancing, Old Time, barn dance, Pride of Erin, you get the drift. (Just wish there was more of it in schools today.) At least when you get 33 adults who rock up to learn to dance, they all want to be there. Out of a group of 33 kids, there's a percentage that definitely do not want to be there!

So - we offered a 10 week course for beginner dancers. Starting through U3A solved all the insurance problems, music licence etc. We had a fabulous group of dancers, everyone was very enthusiastic. That 10 weeks flew by and needless to say, we continued throughout 2018 and 2019, by which time we were dancing twice weekly and had a monthly social dance. The music is Peter's domain and he does it well, plenty of variety and always something new. There was no way we were stopping. UNTIL ... of course, Covid stopped everyone and everything in mid March 2020.

In July 2020, dancing in restricted numbers was again allowed in Community halls. However, considering U3A constraints about allowable activities we decided to go it alone and I'm happy to say, we've never looked back, well that is until mid August 2021, when the dreaded lockdown came again.

We have 55 registered dancers now, but of course we can't ever have that many at one session. We manage numbers by grouping people into classes and roster the class times. It works for us. We dance with a lesson format on Wednesday afternoons and Friday evenings.

We have a monthly Friday night social dance where we have a theme for the night and a charity or good cause that we support via raffles etc. In the short time we've been operating we have donated \$4475 to worthy causes eg Beyond Blue, McGrath Foundation, Movember, Smith Family etc especially where there is a local component like Bushfire relief. Our dancers all like the idea of offering a helping hand to others while doing something we all love.

Our numbers are still limited of course as the church hall is quite small, so dancers have to book in, and it's a first come, first served basis. We really do have the best group of people, all so supportive of each other during the learning process. Lots of laughs, fun, lots of encouragement, and always positive! Check out our Facebook page Dance Merimbula to see what we get up to.

Before lockdown, some of our dancers had begun joining in the monthly Sunday afternoon dancing at Brogo hall and also at Club Sapphire. This year, some of our dancers were ready and very keen to travel further afield to dance elsewhere, but you all know why that hasn't happened yet! We are here for the long haul though and it will happen. Perhaps we'll see you on the dance floor in 2022?

Walk through life, Run for your dreams, dance to eternity.

Wendy and Peter Colhoun.



*When dancing returns,
we think we're off to
MERIMBULA
Looks like fun there.*





Wendy & Peter Colhoun

GEELONG BALLROOM DANCE WEEKEND
 Corner of Bayview Parade & Carey Street, Hanlyns Hughes
 8th, 9th & 10th October 2021

Friday **Welcome Dance**
 featuring Newsound Duo (Ossie & Anna)
 8pm - 11.30pm includes supper

Saturday **Black Tie Ball**
 featuring Paul & Christian
 8pm - midnight includes supper

Sunday **Farewell Dance**
 featuring Annmarie
 10.30am - 2.30pm includes light lunch

BOOK NOW!
 Tickets selling fast.

Ticket Pricing
 Dance package \$70:
 Includes Friday, Saturday and Sunday
 Includes Supper & Light Lunch
 Package does not include workshop

Individual dance tickets:
 Friday - Welcome Dance \$25
 Saturday - Black Tie Ball \$40
 Sunday - Farewell Dance \$20
 Saturday - Workshop with Andrea & John Barwick \$10

Saturday **Dance Workshop**
 featuring instructors Andrea & John Barwick
 11am - 1.30pm
 Additional \$10 per person, price not included in package

Tickets & Booking
 For tickets and/or booking of tables, contact:
 Gwenda ☎ 0418 584 051
 ✉ lesfacer@ncable.net.au
 Please advise of any special dietary needs at time of booking.
 Tickets issued and booking confirmed once payment is cleared.

FOR THE LOVE OF DANCE
 ANDREA & JOHN BARWICK
 A & J's Love Dance

Would you like a copy of the complete set of Andrea & John's scripts, they can be contacted by email, john.andreabarwick@bigpond.com precise and clear instructions. Only \$25.00



Kyneton and District Old Time Dance Club Inc.

Corner of Hight St. and Crescent St. Lancefield

8.00pm - 12.00 midnight 4th. Friday monthly



Are you coming to Queensland?

Come to the beautiful Toowoomba area, we have lots of places to DANCE, something available every day of the week! There's lots to see & do!

For more information phone Di on 0413 106 445



SOCIAL SEQUENCE DANCING

*Returning
to Coolangatta
Senior Citizens*

*The Fabulous Music of
Patti Gilbert*
COOLANGATTA SENIORS

Tuesday's
12.30 - 3.30pm.
Don't forget your masks
and social distancing
QR Check in

BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL

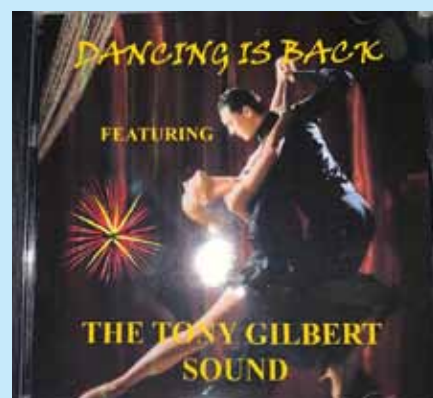
Contact: Dianne Fowler

Mobile: 0417 389 650

ARE YOU MISSING YOUR DANCING?
WOULD LIKE SOME NEW MUSIC?
THEN TRY THIS LATEST CD FROM
PATTI & TONY

All Tracks on this
CD in sequence

Order your copy
direct from
Patti and Tony at:



WWW.VIEWVOGUEMUSIC.COM

Cha Cha	California Dreaming When You Walk In The Room
F.Trot	California Girls Wouldn't It Be Nice
Mambo	Mambo # 5 Zambezi
N.V.W.	Waltz Of My Heart
Paso Doble	El Relicario Tierra Del Fuego (Land Of Fire)
Q.Step.	I'm Old Fashionad /Stelle By Starlight / Love Letters Sunday Afternoon
Rumba.	Nature Boy The Story Of My Life
Saunter.	It Could Happen To You / But Beautiful I've Never Been In Love Before / For Sentimental Reasons
Swing.	Knock Knock Who's There Portuguese Washerwoman
V. Waltz	Invitation To The Dance
Waltz	Coming Home Endless Journey

Answers to page 2 questions

- 1: 1920, N C Locke 2: 18 3: Vienesse Waltz
4: 1914 5: Tony Gilbert 6: Russ Hesketh 2011
7: 29, up till August 2021
8: 1, 1 is a change of weight, 2nd is when you take your first step.
9: 64 (16 x 4 = 64) 10: March 31 - April 4 2022

And From John (Magic Monday) Dykun

A man goes into a bar and seats himself on a stool. The bartender looks at him and says,
"What'll it be buddy?"

The man says, "Set me up with seven whiskey shots and make them doubles."

The bartender does this and watches the man slug one down, then the next, then the next,
and so on until all seven are gone almost as quickly as they were served.

Staring in disbelief, the bartender asks why he's doing all this drinking.

"You'd drink them this fast too if you had what I have."

The bartender hastily asks, "What do you have pal?"

The man quickly replies, "I have a dollar."

**LRE DANCE
Ballroom Dance Dj's**



**Music For
Your
DANCING & LISTENING
ENJOYMENT
0412 995 590**

Good evening,

I'm sending you a little message to say a huge thank you for what yourselves and the dance committee done for our beautiful wee possum miss Rosalie,

it means so much to us that you would even do that.

Honestly can not thank you enough, it was lovely.

All our love Harley, Pip, and the children Xoxo



Every year the Rutherglen Ballroom Dance Festival donates monies to certain charities and organisations, mainly the local CFA and the Leukemia Foundation and this year was no exception.

With the blessing of Andrea and John we always set aside a sum of money for the Leukemia Foundaton, such funds are from the income of the dance workshop.

This year we chose a slightly different path and donated those monies to a family who were not only under the same covid restrictions as most everyone else but also had the added burden of a three year old grandchild needing urgent medical assistance with chemotherapy.

She has now had most of the chemo and in now well and truly on the road to recovery.

Hence the short note above.



OUR JOURNEY

Nothing can prepare you for cancer, no emotion will ever be powerful enough to explain the splintering of one's heart, the holding tightly of your chest as you try to rein in the grief for fear it may consume you.

I spent two weeks turning up at Doctors surgeries, pediatrician appointments and two different hospital emergency departments, demanding someone look at my daughter. I knew deep in my soul something was seriously wrong. Less than a week later turning up at our last destination, the royal children's emergency department, we were about to receive the news that would change our lives. I remember the Doctor taking a steadying breath before she delivered the devastating blow. "Rosalie's results are in, your daughter has cancer. A rhabdomyosarcoma, we need to start treatment immediately.

The Doctor went on going over every detail patiently answering all of our questions as best they could. They gave us a print off from the internet, this is the only internet source we were allowed to read, they told us not to google this cancer as there is a lot of misinformation and things you just don't need to read.

Roughly 70 children a year are diagnosed with a sarcoma in Australia, with only a small percentage being a rhabdomyosarcoma. As a general statistic sarcomas overall have a 20-30% survival rate, my daughter had just turned 3 and was already having to go head to head against some of the worst survival rates in childhood cancer, due to her cancers aggression time was very much against us. My daughters' cancer had likely only been there for maybe 5 weeks before diagnosis.

The issue with sarcomas is by the time they are diagnosed it's usually too late. Our oncologist would not discuss statistics because what's the point, statistics are guide and not a very good one with low diagnosed numbers, there's too many factors to consider also all patients respond differently to treatments. They couldn't tell us if our daughter would survive this. The main issue being here is sarcomas don't respond well with chemotherapy. 3 months and we still didn't have a prognosis, they couldn't, cancer is such a hard world to navigate, everyone's journey is heart wrenching in its own way. I couldn't hold her enough, how long would she stay in my arms for, I remember silently offering a piece of my soul to any and every God, someone who would listen, don't put her through this, my babies third birthday was the day she had a biopsy, she's not lived her life, please let me take the burden. But that's not how the world works. As her parents we had to stand back hearts breaking as they poked and prodded at our little girl. This aggressive chemo taking it's took on us all. Every week she in getting rounds of chemotherapy trying to get this aggressive sarcoma under control.

You never get used to seeing your child crashing from chemotherapy drugs, the colour changes of her skin and the life dulling in her as the medication dragged her down. But even in the darkest of times there is a little glow, however subdued. I remember reading once there are different types of darkness, calming, fear, anger, joyful. The hollows of a fear driven darkness are hard to penetrate, there is always that what if circling like a vulture ready to swipe at any hope that is brave enough to surface. It took me watching my daughter battle through the intensive radiotherapy for me to snap out of it. She was my glimmering light, she was that little star in my mind of adamant darkness, shining as she endured things that would have most adults crumbling in defeat. She was laughing at her nurse the day I woke up from mental pity party. If she could find the time to laugh and play lion king with her nurse, who was I to sit here and lose myself to the darkness, what right did I have to feel sorry for myself when this little girl was the one fighting. She had more fight in her than sense and I have never been more proud. After the longest two weeks of surgeries and radiotherapy at the royal children's and peter mac, the radiologist coming in on Rosalie's last day with peter mac, he looked very serious with his duck tie on, was this more bad news, had she not responded well. "Our main concern for Rosalie now moving forward is when she's older she may not be able to give birth naturally, she will most likely need a C-section." I blinked up at him with tears pricking my vision and I scoffed a laugh. He looked at me eyes wide as I had just slapped him, 'you're telling me she's going to grow up and have babies one day?' His eyes softened when he took my face in properly this time.

"I'm telling you your daughter is going to one day have the choice if she wants to have children or not, yes that's exactly what I'm implying, she will get to that day mum. Faster than you might realise." I let the tears and snot unleash thanking him with every ounce of my being for saving my little girl. I hugged Rosalie and kissed her. She's going to beat this, she's going to kick its arse for lack of a better term.

Pip



Lemon Meringue Pie (using puff pastry).

Filling
4 Lge Lemons
45g Cornflour
300 ml water
2 egg yolks
85g caster sugar
Topping
3 egg whites
145 g caster sugar



Line 8 inch pie dish with Pastry. Prick base and leave to cool in fridge for 20 Mins. (use baking paper to cover). Fill with rice and bake for 15 mins.

Put lemon rind and juice in a bowl with cornflour, add 2 tbsp water and blend until smooth.

Boil remaining water and pour it onto the cornflour mixture. Return mixture to pot and bring to boil. Simmer for 3 mins until thick. Remove from heat, add egg yolks and Sugar. Cool slightly and spoon into Pastry base.

Whisk Egg whites until they form soft peaks. Add sugar a teaspoon at a time, whisking well after each addition. Spoon over the meringue filling. Bake in a moderate oven for 15 Mins
Les

Eartha Kitt once sang a song called:

“It’s So Nice To Have A Man
Around The House”

and now it is sung by Vicky

And who wouldn’t like to be in that position, especially when he can cook like Les, he and Lesley have been swapping recipes over the past months during lock down.

Banana Bread

Lemon Meringue Pie

Coffee & Walnut Cake

Scones with whipped cream and Jam

All Yummm,

And to top it off we get texts inviting us to afternoon tea knowing full well that we cannot possibly attend.

How cruel.

Anyone remember the poetress Pam Ayres? Well, she’s 73 and still going strong.

This is her latest ode to coronavirus...

I’m normally a social girl
I love to meet my mates
But lately with the virus here
We can’t go out the gates.

You see, we are the ‘oldies’ now
We need to stay inside
If they haven’t seen us for a while
They’ll think we’ve upped and died.

They’ll never know the things we did
Before we got this old
There wasn’t any Facebook
So not everything was told.

We may seem sweet old ladies
Who would never be uncouth
But we grew up in the 60s -
If you only knew the truth!

There was sex and drugs and rock ‘n roll
The pill and miniskirts
We smoked, we drank, we partied
And were quite outrageous flirts.

Then we settled down, got married
And turned into someone’s mum,
Somebody’s wife, then nana,
Who on earth did we become?

We didn’t mind the change of pace
Because our lives were full
But to bury us before we’re dead
Is like a red rag to a bull!

So here you find me stuck inside
For four weeks, maybe more
I finally found myself again
Then I had to close the door!

It didn’t really bother me
I’d while away the hour
I’d bake for all the family
But I’ve got no flaming flour!

Now Netflix is just wonderful
I like a gutsy thriller
I’m swooning over Idris
Or some random sexy killer.

At least I’ve got a stash of booze
For when I’m being idle
There’s wine and whisky, even gin
If I’m feeling suicidal!

So let’s all drink to lockdown
To recovery and health
And hope this awful virus
Doesn’t decimate our wealth.

We’ll all get through the crisis
And be back to join our mates
Just hoping I’m not far too wide

To fit through the flaming gates!

