



Israeli Folk Dancing Club Inc.

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Established 1988

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Newsletter July 2009

President's Report

PRESIDENT'S REPORT JULY 2009

The heat was on when Nirkoda began the Summer Program 2009.... it was hot outside but we danced in the air-conditioned comfort of CSCC for all of January and February. I think our members really appreciated the cool, pleasant environment.

2009 continues to be a busy year for our hard-working Nirkoda committee, comprising Secretary Denise Setton, Treasurer Helen Rawicki, our email queen Hillary, and Rosie who is our venue and events co-ordinator and all purpose helper and mentor. The committee devoted many, many hours dealing with day- to- day issues, organizing parties for Jewish life-cycle celebrations, events, finances and planning for the future etc etc. I cannot thank them enough for their work, support and enthusiasm. This committee has put Nirkoda in a solid financial position.

Our other committee members have had an interrupted year on committee. Diane Cherny and Lilach Levy. (Lilach being very busy with a new baby). Thank you Lilach and Diane for your assistance and support. Thanks also to Anne Paul assisting our treasurer.

Nirkoda continues to contribute to the community, dancing at King David Fete, teaching dance to Disabled adults at Jewish Care, performing at a Bush Fire Relief Fund

concert and the annual Yom Ha'atzmaut Gala.

Without the dedication and true professionalism of our teachers Denise, Rosie, Marg, Ilana, Rita, and Ami, who is currently on leave, none of our classes, parties and communal activities would be possible. The co-operation between the teachers enables Nirkoda's activities to run so smoothly!! Great support for our partner classes has been provided by Martin and Uri..Martin has also been editing, transferring and repairing all manner of things related to our music and sound...so patient and generous with his time. He is unwell at present and Nirkoda's thoughts are with him.

Nirkoda is pleased to welcome Sagi Azran at the end of August. He is a young, dynamic choreographer who will be running a Thursday night and weekend workshop at Booran Road. Sagi is fun, new and exciting. Nirkoda runs well ONLY with the help of many. Thank you to all who have contributed, even in a small way. Thank you Helen Walker for the enormous work in editing the newsletter. In addition, without the support of our partners, none of us could do what we love..dance!

Nirkoda will be celebrating her 21st birthday in November this year. I think I can safely say Nirkoda has come of age.

JUDI BANKY
President



Please note that the Flu season is upon us.

For your own health and wellbeing, we discourage the use of cups or mugs from our dance halls.

"Don't be a MUG....bring your own and take it home".

Class Reports

THURSDAY MORNING CLASS held at Birch Street, Scout Hall, South Caulfield.
9AM – 10AM Beginners 10 AM – 12MD Intermediate.

The new beginner dancers have increased their repertoire in circle and line dances. Various new and reintroduced dances have been taught in recent weeks to both groups. Every 6 to 7 weeks a 'dance through' is held for the intermediate members to enable them to get through the 120 dances in their repertoire, and for members to enjoy their favourite dances. Several of the class dancers also attended other Nirkoda classes. All enjoyed the special event of the Yom Ha'atzmaut Class Party and joined in the spirit by dressing in blue and white. The shared feast was delicious!

New dances introduced to the class in 2009 include:

El Hachofesh (circle) – To Freedom ; Avi Perez 1993

Minei Kolech Mibechi (circle) – Try to stop crying; Gadi Bitton 2009

Tirkedi Et Halayla (line) Silvio Berlfein 2009

Mei Hanechalim (circle) – Waters of the Stream; Avner Naim 1994

Many thanks to Ilana Cohen, Judi Banky and Rosie Tusia who are rostered when they are available. Special appreciation to

the members who assist with the door. Once again my special thanks to all of the Nirkoda Thursday Morning Class Members for their regular attendance, hard work, support and enthusiasm they bring to the class.

Margaret R Robinson

SATURDAY REVISION CLASS

We are half way through another year. Starting with beginners at 2pm, intermediate level at 2.45 and peaking at advanced level at 3.45pm, the afternoon moves along at a rapid rate. Challenging dances such as Pnei Malach, Bukra and Abba Shimon have been introduced and enjoyed along with favourites such as Bamin Hashstika, Mei Hanechalim, Min'ei Kolech and Yam Hadmama.

Since most Saturday dancers dance at other mid-week Nirkoda classes, revising dances on a Saturday offers a great opportunity for repertoire to be consolidated or to fine tune those difficult steps.

We are extremely happy to revise those troublesome dances on "request", too !! Come and be part of the Saturday fun.

Judi Banky and Ilana Cohen

THURSDAY NIGHT CLASS

Congratulations to the NEW beginners that have started this year as they are showing huge "leaps" in their standard of learning and dancing ability.

This is due to their amazing commitment of attendance and "the dance addiction" already showing in their willingness to improve.

Some have even braved the Sunday night partners class and are enjoying the challenge of couples dancing.

At this rate its time for a new intake mid year.. so everyone ! Reach out and grab a friend and bring them along for a fun and fantastic dance class.

Our intermediate dancers are progressing nicely and are enjoying some of the beautiful new dances and as well as the classics.

Over all a great night of fun learning and much laughter.

A special thank you to all the teachers that roster with me, and help make it a great night.

Rosie.

SUNDAY PARTNERS CLASS

We have a dedicated group in our Sunday beginners this year who after a short time were joined by Raanan and Gilat who had some dancing experience and have proved to be fast learners and beautiful dancers.

Brent, John and now Sharon from our Thursday circles beginners class joined us soon after and they have proved to be fast and enthusiastic learners. The high quality of the dancers who have joined our

beginners class has enabled us to teach them many more intermediate dances which they will be able to practice more often and will be valuable additions to their repertoire. Louisa, who joined our class in the middle of the semester, heard about our club through Panim - a Jewish social networking group - and is enjoying learning after being thrown in at the deep end with many intermediate dances.

My husband Walter is partnering with Esther who is also coming along very well. Walter has now been dancing for only a couple of years and can follow most advanced dances. He is really enjoying his newly acquired skill and is a great asset to Nirkoda helping new beginners come through and is in demand as a floating partner in the intermediate and advanced parts of the night.

We now have an excess of male students in our beginners/intermediate class and this represents an excellent opportunity for any women who wants to try partner dances to do it with an actual man.

The dances which choreographers select for partner dancing are often romantic and generally more melodic than circle dances - in fact, IFD partner dancing has more in common with other partner dance forms such as ballroom and swing, as the key is 2 people moving as one.

We have already learnt 9 new partner dances this year - more than the number of circles, which gives some idea of the quality of partner dances being created by the talented Israeli choreographers.

A regular group now attends the intermediate and advanced parts of Sunday night and we have been pleased to see many dancers from other clubs who have returned to Nirkoda after some absence. There have often been in excess of 15 couples in an evening.

Our partners class has been very well supported by the other teachers including Judi, Ilana, Rosie and Rita who have also filled in for me in the beginners hour when I have been away, and Martin has been a constant in his role as the mirror to me. He helped start this report before the stroke and I want to express my thoughts for a full recovery and let everyone know how much I miss his assistance, inspiration and ability to learn dances quicker than I can suggest them!

We miss Doris too in all her brightness and flowing movement - and hope she has the strength to cope with this unexpected and sad event. May they both be back sooner than expected to our class.

Helen is now extending her teaching range by assisting the teaching in Beginners Partner's with me on Sunday night. She got off to a great start on Sunday 21st June with a brilliant teaching of two new (for the beginners) dances -Mechol Haohavim and Rak Shir Gaaguim - resplendent in a bushy moustache to ensure students identified the male dancer.

Bushfire relief fundraising concert

Finally I must thank my Sunday "man" Uri, who is a pleasure to dance with and always makes me smile and I really appreciate his assistance and support.

For all of you dedicated partner dancers as well as those that want to extend their repertoire or just get more practice, remember that we also run an intermediate partners half hour on Tuesday nights from 7:30 to 8 pm as well as a further advanced hour from 10 to 11 pm.

We will be starting a new beginners intake on 6th September 2009 so this represents an excellent opportunity to try partner dancing. I'm sure you will love it as much as our current wonderful group of dancers.

Keep your eyes glued to your email for upcoming special events like request nights, parties and marathons which we hold from time to time throughout the year. See you on the dance floor.

Denise



Ilana's birthday



Yom Ha'atzmaut

Book recommendation.

Hang on we are a dancing club, what do we care about books for?

Judi Banky has brought to my attention an article in a recent edition of "The Australian" (21/5/09 by Caroline Overington)

Author Norman Doige, MD has written a best selling book called "The Brain that changes itself"

The Canadian author states your brain, if you are middle aged or older, is as nubile and elastic as it was when you were a child." You must keep it active or parts of it will atrophy."

He specifically mentions dancing "It's the same with dancing. If you go and dance all the old dances, that won't help your brain, but new dancing will. It will improve your balance and your left right coordination and the mild cardio exercise will trigger the growth of new brain cells"

Dr Doige was a guest at the recent Sydney Writers festival.

For more information, ask your local book shop or Google his name, he has a website.

Ahh! Now I see what she means!

Interview with Yonat Chameides

When did you first join Nirkoda?

I was actually among the "founding members" so I guess the answer is -from day one.

Describe your involvement at that time?

I was not among the most active members, but participated in many of the activities. I really enjoyed the dancing, both circles and partners, and was fortunate to have excellent dancing partners (Moshe Lichtenstein, and afterwards - Avi Liraz who is back in Israel). On top of the regular weekly dancing classes (Back then, like today, I was also dancing only one night a week but my close friends were much more involved) , we had a BBQ, a sing-along party, few performances etc. After each class a group of us went to a café called "your place", and had a great time. Then, the "bus to Doncaster" as we were called (since few of us lived there), had to leave... It was all early days then, and the line between the social and "professional" was a bit grey. I even taught a dance once or twice (Ilana still remembers "Shir Al Re'I" thanks to my wonderful teaching skills - joking.....). At the time I was a teacher at Mount Scopus (secondary school) and also taught Israeli dancing there as an extra-curriculum activity. The students performed in school assemblies and other communities events, so I was quite busy with that as well.

Who is still in the club you remember from then?

Ami, Uri, Ilana and Rita , and perhaps few others

What was your dancing highlight from those days?

It's really hard to tell. If I try hard - I once went with y-11 students for a 2 weeks trip to Kakadu, and on the way we slept in Coober Pedy, in a youth hostel. The kids wanted to dance and I had the tape (cassette tape, for those who remember what it is...). I put it on and we all danced. The other guests at the hostel were first amazed, than impressed, and joined us. It was a wonderful surrealistic sight. We kept dancing few times along the trip (only when the kids asked, I wasn't pushing

it), and it never failed to draw attention and participation of other travellers.

How have you been occupied in the last few years? Life changes?

When I first came to Melbourne, in 1987, I had been working as a lawyer in Israel for few years, and just gave birth to my daughter. We were relocated by my husbands' work, and knew it was for a limited time. Since I was a teacher in the Israeli army, and working as a lawyer while having small kids was very problematic, I went teaching at Scopus. I think I'm one of the few Hebrew teachers who thoroughly enjoyed the teaching there. When we went back to Israel I resumed my career as a lawyer. The second time we came to live in Melbourne, in 1996, I was working as a lawyer in the company that relocated us. This, plus having two kids (the third was born later in Australia), left me with very little free time, and I did not



dance at all. Approximately two years ago a decided to change my career, withdraw from the "rat race" and become a full time ceramic artist. I've been doing ceramics as a hobby for quite some time, and decided to take it to a professional level, and I'm now at my second year of full time ceramics studies. This change also allowed me to return to my other hobbies, such as dancing. The end result is that I have a huge gap in the repertoire, which I try to fill in.

What was the funniest event you recall from the old Nirkoda Days? *Nothing dramatic. I remember we used to tell new comers from Israel that they will have to go through an exam in order to dance in the advanced group (some actually believed it...)*

Why did you come back to Nirkoda? *See above. Obviously, I love the dances, the atmosphere, the people etc.*

What is your all time favorite dance? *It's like choosing the favorite book or movie. I can't say. In general, I love the "middle of the road" / pop song dances (did I mention I have a shallow musical taste?).*

27th - 30th August 2009

Sagi Azran Workshop

Nirkoda is excited to welcome Sagi Azran to Melbourne.

Sagi is a young, fresh and dynamic choreographer born in Tel Aviv. He started dancing at an early age with Mishael Barzilay as his mentor and has been teaching IFD for 13 years. He has created over 20 dances, the best known of which are Siasamba (L),

Kubayo (L) and Libi Yotze Elayich (P). He is also a magician and teaches dance and magic to kids. You really need to see this gifted man dance!



He is full of charisma and fun and it shows in his dancing.

Venue is Ormond Uniting Church Hall, Corner of Booran & North Rds, Ormond.

Cost and more details to follow...

Thursday 27 August

Workshop: Time: 7.30 pm to 10.30 pm

Dance with Sagi

Beginners to intermediate level

Friday 28 August (evening)

Kabbalat Shabbat / Shabbat Dinner
No charge for the dinner. Bring a plate.

Venue: CSCC, 8 Cedar St, Caulfield South
Time: 7:00pm

Saturday 29 August

Workshop 1: Time 10.00 am to 1.00 pm
Workshop 2: Time 2.00 pm to 5.00 pm

Circles and Partners in both sessions.
For those attending both sessions, lunch is included.

Saturday 29 August 7:30pm

Special Event - stay tuned

Sunday 30 August

Workshop 3: Time 3.00 pm to 6.00 pm Circles and lines only.
Workshop 4: Time 7.00 pm to 10:00 pm Partner dances only.