

Welcome everybody. I am very pleased to present to you tonight my first Presidential report especially as it contains only good news.

Jack, our Treasurer will tell you in more detail when he presents the financial statements but I'd like to thank him for keeping our chins above water in spite of ever increasing costs. We have managed to cover all our expenses – not just the usual rent, tea bags and milk but the replacement of expensive capital equipment like a new computer. We end this financial year with a very modest profit. The tangible benefit to you, our members, is that we are able to once again avoid any increase in the cost of membership or classes.

Membership and attendance at classes have been stable throughout the year although we are always working at building these. To this end we ran a dedicated 8 week Beginners Class on Saturday afternoons beginning in February and run by Christine . Our beginner dancers had the most patient, skilled and committed teaching from all the teaching staff both on Saturdays and at the Thursday morning class. The club introduced two new time- limited card systems as an incentive to keep as many of the beginners engaged as possible and this has been reasonably successful. When you think that in the 2015 calendar year Nirkoda chalked up 4,343 individual dance sessions you will appreciate that a lot goes on behind the scenes to achieve this number.

Nirkoda continues to respond to requests from the community for demonstrations of Israeli dancing an area that Margaret organizes almost single handedly. Most recently, Nirkoda dancers performed at St Michaels Nursing Home and at the community event celebrating Yom Ha'atzmaut.

Last December Nirkoda hosted a very successful end of year dinner at the home of Jack and Gita Ginger where we got a rare opportunity to concentrate exclusively on chatting, eating and socializing without trying to squeeze it in between dances. All things going well, we hope to make this a regular end of year party where the club is able to offer our members at no charge a purely social event.

Of course, the club would be nowhere without the ongoing commitment of our teachers. This was perfectly exemplified by the initiative they took in coming up with the idea of theme nights, the first of which was the recent incredibly successful Yemenite night. The plan is to have 3 or 4 of these events a year so keep a look out in your email inboxes for forthcoming events. If you've seen the pictures on Facebook or on the website, you'll know that they've set the bar very high in the costume department and the warm and enthusiastic atmosphere created on the night.

Nirkoda also welcomed as Guest teacher this year, Sharon Elkasslasy, He has unfortunately suffered an injury that will keep him off dancing for 6 months. We wish him a speedy recovery and hope he'll be back soon.

2017 will be a big year for the Club with our Workshop weekend scheduled for 10 - 13 November. Out two international choreographers are making very welcome return visits to Nirkoda - Sagi Azran and Nona Malki. So please keep these dates in mind when you're booking your future holidays.

It's a measure of how capable efficient and dedicated our volunteer committee members are that it all runs so smoothly. Thank you Denise for every beautifully worded email and facebook post – we may title you the Secretary but you're pretty much the backbone of this Club. Thank you Jack, Hillary, Marlana, Naomi, and Natalie for all your input, your fruit platters and cakes, your shopping and general organizing of anything and everything. Thank you Martin for your always reliable technical support. Thank you Margaret for making sure every i is dotted and every t crossed at the door.

Thank you to everyone who takes a turn helping Margaret on the door on a Tuesday night. We would be thrilled if some of you might like to join the roster – you get to dance on that night for free – please see one of us later.

Finally thanks to you all. There would be no pleasure to be had from dancing if it was in an empty hall.