

Presidents Report 2020

Well it has certainly been an interesting year. We swung into it energetically with a very successful Hogmanay event run by Rod and Kristin Downey, they and many willing helpers ensured that dancers in the Region saw the New Year in with style. Thanks to all that were involved in making this a great night.

In January and February Summer Dancing again took place at the Old Government Building. This is a lovely venue, it is great that Victoria University and Heritage NZ are willing for us to use it. It is always great to see dancers from around the Region meet and greet after a few weeks without dancing. Thank you to the tutors who volunteered to run a night and an especial thanks to Alison Kay who helps us to gain permission for use of the venue, and assists with access to the building.

Clubs then started off in the usual manner but, just when we were getting into routine, things came to a grinding halt with the announcement of the Covid Lockdown in late March. Unfortunately the restrictions also meant that the Region's Basics and Lower Intermediate classes were unable to be run this year.

However despite the restrictions it was fantastic to see clubs working to keep the dancing community connected and interested in Scottish dance and music with regular emails, newsletters, etc.

In May I set a challenge for the dance devisors in the community, to devise a dance which allows for "Social Distancing" to be demonstrated. We received 16 dances in total and we will run a couple of afternoons early next year to try these out. They are certainly very varied and congratulations to all who took on this challenge.

In June Covid-19 restrictions lifted and most clubs slowly recommenced with the appropriate measures in place. With the ongoing uncertainty however many clubs sadly had to cancel annual dances but the few that went ahead were well attended and club theme nights and musicians have added a buzz to club dancing.

By August there was enough certainty to go ahead with the planned Region events. The Basic Teachers Skills Course went ahead under Jeannette Watson's capable tutorage. There were 9 attendees, some from as far afield as Nelson, Marlborough and Manawatu. The weekend was a mix of discussion and practice and we have received very positive feedback from the attendees. Thank you Jeanette for persevering to make this event happen.

Upper Intermediate and Advanced classes also went ahead in August. These classes are always a great challenge to brain and limb for those who do attend. Thanks again to Jeanette Watson and Rod Downey for teaching these. Also a big thanks to Mary, Lynne, Iain, Jason and Jean for providing music to keep us on our toes.

And so before we knew it, the year was nearly gone and the New Dancers' Celebration was upon us. Although there was some concern about numbers of New Dancers, and preparedness, Waikanae Club took the leap of faith and ran the event. And it was fantastic, the hall was full, the music lively, instructions clear and the emerging butterflies had a ball. Thank you very much Eileen, Romaine and Waikanae club for making it happen despite many setbacks.

This year the Region Committee has taken time out to review its role and we asked dancers in the Region to help us with this by participating in a survey to indicate what they felt the committee should be doing. This has resulted in the Mission Statement for the Committee "To promote and facilitate a vibrant and sustainable dancing community in the Wellington Region". We look to use this to guide our activities for the coming years.

Finally I would like to recognise the efforts of everyone who contribute their time and energy willingly to the dancing community. Thank you to those who have assisted and supported the Region by being on the committee and particular thanks to James who is leaving the committee but is prepared to assist with website updates and Jeannette, who is standing down as Treasurer but will continue to be on the committee.

Ann Oliver, President
10 November 2020