

KYNETON & DISTRICT OLD TIME DANCE CLUB INC.

'KEEPING IN TOUCH' (NO. 6) – 7 JULY 2020

Hullo to all.

(John Code tells me that the correct spelling for this greeting is 'hello', but I like 'hullo', which is how it is pronounced, so I will keep spelling it 'hullo'. Sorry, John)

Well, here we are again, still with restrictions to keep us safe but also which tie us down. We were starting to see positive signs that the situation was improving when, very suddenly, it all went pear-shaped. It is such a shame that Victoria, and Melbourne in particular, is in this position with more confirmed cases every day. Some of our dancing friends are resident in the affected suburbs, such as Sunbury, Kilmore, Taylor's Lakes, Glenroy, Beveridge, Wallan and other places, which are completely locked down at this point in time. I'm sure that I speak for everyone to send our love and thoughts to these folks. It is not easy to go backwards to tighter restrictions, which are so limiting. It is looking less likely that we will be able to dance again this year. The majority of us are able to move around a little more easily, but we have to continue to exercise patience and care for ourselves and others.

A few days ago, I overheard in Aldi two staff members talking about the length of the queue earlier that morning waiting for the store to open for Saturday specials, and how, when the doors did open, the crowd flocked in to the specials displays. One girl told the other how she tried to tell people as they fought for the sale items to maintain social distancing, but was completely ignored. The other staff member replied, "They're putting us at risk, so selfish, they couldn't care less."

Who would have thought six months ago that this situation could happen? But it has, and we have no idea how or when it will end. It is testing some of us more than others, depends such a lot on our health and our lifestyle. Hang in, keep positive, care about each other, and do what you must to keep safe and well.

.....
On Sunday 21 June, 20 K&DOTDC members met at the Shamrock Hotel in Kyneton for lunch. The first twenty to book were those who were able to attend. We had the big dining room to ourselves, it was set up so that it was quite easy to keep the social distancing limits. It was just great to be able to have a meal and chat together. Present were Ina and Graeme Bertrand, Eileen and Kelvin Cardillo, Marie Clifford, Jack Edmondson, Pam Brooks, Mary Thornely, Bill Darling, John and Yvonne Code, Joan Lawrence, Kate Healey and Dion Pethybridge, Jo White and Keith Bell, Norma Proctor, Klaus Sieber, Steve Kelly and myself (Julie Wilson). We all enjoyed the chance to catch up, the hotel looked after us very well, and a good time was had by all.

The plan was, if this went well, to follow up with other groups meeting for lunch in venues within the region. However, the very next day, with numbers of the virus growing quickly, restrictions were tightened. So, that plan is now on hold until who knows when. One day, we'll meet again for sure.

.....
President Mary Thornely has asked me to pass on that the Club's AGM, which was postponed until September, has now been further postponed till later in the year, when we will hopefully have more idea of when dancing can recommence. The date when Annual Meetings must be completed has been extended until the end of December. She is aware that you are all wanting to know what is happening, but it is impossible to make plans until the restrictions around dancing have been lifted.

.....

Thanks so much to all of you who let me know that you had received the video I re-sent, and also that you enjoyed it. Thank you to Anita – Jeanette’s daughter – for suggesting how I could send the videos by attaching them separately. It appears to have worked okay, so I will have another go later.

.....
I had a really nice long phone talk the other day with Jill Bennett. In the last ‘Keeping in Touch’, I gave the credit for an email to John, but it was actually Jill who sent it to share their news with us. So thanks heaps, Jill. Sorry, John, for getting that wrong.

Jill told me that she and John have caught up with a several different people separately and spent great time with them. She has started playing social tennis with a few of the tennis group in Gisborne, but that bush walking in Trentham has to be done in small groups to meet the social distancing requirements.

.....
It was lovely to have a phone call from Dorothy Brown. She and Ray are staying home for the most part, doing their shopping when they need to, but quite enjoying the enforced rest. Phillip is working from home in Ballarat, he is finding this a little restrictive as he has always worked at his work place, but he is doing well. Dorothy said to pass on their best wishes and love to everyone, they look forward to a future time when dancing can happen again.

.....
Congratulations to Jeanette Ford on the BIG occasion of her 70th birthday on 27June. She said she had planned a family celebration for herself and four other family June birthdays, but was unable to have the crowd of 50 she had hoped. However, she said, “I was very spoilt by my children and husband. They had a ring made for me with my birthstone, my husband’s and each of the children. It brought me to tears. I had a very special day, restricted to 10 people (4 of her children and their families) outside, it was a lot of fun, and I just feel so spoilt.” *What a unique and lovely gift.*



Jeanette’s special birthday present.



Jeanette also sent this - which I can relate to.

.....
The husband of a friend of mine has suffered from Restless Legs Syndrome for many years, a debilitating and painful neurological sensory disorder affects quite a lot of people. My friend was thrilled when her husband found a GP, who specialises in treating this illness, who has been successful in giving him relief that he did not ever think he would find. *If this contact would help you or anyone you know, I can give you his details.*

.....
I heard from John Bennett the sad news that Carmel Phelan has passed away suddenly, she was only in her early 70’s. Many of you will have known Carmel as she played for dances in Ballarat and at Spring Gully, and perhaps other dances around the area. Whilst I did not know her, I have often heard her mentioned, and I am sure she will be sadly missed. Sincere sympathies go to her family and friends. Her music was much appreciated by many dancers around the region.

.....

Steve and I had a long talk on the phone with Paul Mallia, who has been using a device he got from the chemist, which uses some sort of strap for support for his broken foot. He is now able to walk so much better and is feeling really positive about his progress and improvement.

He talked to Steve about his life as a jockey, how risk taking is part and parcel of this sport, and how he rode 1800 winners in both metropolitan and country race meetings. The photos (below) are from the Bendigo Advertiser of Paul winning the Cup and looking back on this day when he booted home five winners from six races on Wycheproof Cup Day in 1977. This was a record at Wycheproof, which he held until 2016, when Harry Coffey rode six winners from seven races.



Paul Mallia rides Crystal Prince to win the 1977 Wycheproof Cup.



Former jockey Paul Mallia reflects on the day when he rode 5 winners from 6 rides.

.....
I received a rather special email from Vicki Sabo (Trentham), who many will remember as a lovely dancer, particularly at Kyneton and Trentham dances, but probably from many other dances locally and around Victoria. She loved to dance and, from what I understand, now travels far and wide most of the time, seeing Australia and going dancing wherever she finds a dance. I think maybe Sarah Hargreaves may have sent her a 'Keeping in Touch' letter, because Vicki said that it was lovely to read the newsletter. She is heading to Darwin, where she says dancing has resumed, also says that she has met a few dancers from Victoria from time to time. Vicki sends her love to all, wants us to stay well and be safe.

(Comment – Beaut to hear from you, Vicki. Enjoy yourself, keep safe and please keep us informed how you get on in Darwin and wherever else you find yourself thereafter.)

.....
Ray Sharrock (Bendigo) said that the last few months have been very stabilising and productive for him – he has survived the Corona challenge (thus far) by not becoming sick, he has got his teenage eye sight back, and has probably forgotten how to do any of the dances, BUT it has given him time to find his 'quintessential piece of music'. He is listening to Kevin Shegog's "One Small Photograph of You" on his pocket sized recorder, dreaming of what it was like when we used to dance.

(Comment – made me think of what I liked Kevin Shegog singing all those years ago. "Wolverton Mountain" and "You Weren't Invited But You were There" were another couple of his songs that I liked. Kevin was a Tasmanian, who moved to Victoria to further his music career.)

.....
John Bennett emailed me that he and Jill had passed a cold Saturday July afternoon watching the video recorded in 2019 'Christmas in July' Club dance at Kyneton with Rita & Bob. He said it was so good to see everyone and remember the fun and laughter we had at the dances. He is thoroughly recommending to everyone who wants to re-live the good old times to watch this video again.

.....

My Steve (Kelly, from Ballan) had his left hand carpal tunnel operated on this week. It seems to have been very successful as he is no longer feeling any pain, particularly at night. He has had the bandage removed and it is looking good, but he is not able to use it or drive, at least until we see the surgeon for a fortnightly follow up visit. In the meantime, I am the designated driver, chief cook and bottle washer. I am doing my best but I don't think I would get 'Carer of the Year' – but it is great that he is no longer feeling pain now. He will hopefully be able to better do the things he wants to in future.

.....
As the weeks move along and the covid-19 restrictions continue, there is less and less news, because most of us are not able to do anything out of the ordinary. So, I thought something we could do to keep these letters interesting and viable is to contribute stories and anecdotes about ourselves – for example, what our work life was, interesting holidays we have had, funny stories that have happened in our lives, magic moments. So, I asked a wonderful dear friend of mine if I could share a story (see below) about her, which I feel illustrates the sort of person she has always been.

Many of you will know June Wishart from dances that she and Robbie Wright attend at Trentham, Newstead, Majorca etc. June is one of my very best and dearest friends, a friendship which started when I used to babysit her three older children when I was about 17 years of age. She is such a gutsy, feisty lady, a lovely personality, who always faces up to whatever comes her way with courage and good humour. I think this is a lovely story that illustrates June's wonderful approach to life.



(So you can recognise her - June at my 70th birthday shindig.)

When June was about 15 years old, a young country kid from Macedon, she answered an advertisement for employment as the breakfast cook at the Chevron Hotel on the corner of St Kilda and Commercial Roads in Prahran, the first really smart 'country club' hotel in Australia (according to the website history). She had been working in the catering kitchen at Prince Henry's Hospital in St Kilda Road and felt she wanted a change. She says that 'they' didn't think such a young girl could do the job, but they gave her the job. It was a live-in job and she had to be up at the crack of dawn ready to get the menu started early. Most of the time, she did all the work herself, having got it set up for breakfast the day before. If it was very busy, she would have someone to help, but most of the time she was on her own. She said that she had no doubt she could do the job, she enjoyed the work and did not have any problems with it, and worked there for some time. She also says that she would sometimes go to VRI dances at Flinders Street Station with some of the other girls who worked there. I just think this is an amazing story - for such a young girl from the bush to be in complete charge of the breakfast service at such a prominent and smart Melbourne hotel – which says such a lot about her attitude and self-belief. *(When I was 15, it was all I could do to get my own breakfast, certainly I couldn't have managed a large breakfast menu for large numbers of people, often influential and quite wealthy business men or country aristocracy. It was a different world back in the 40's and 50's, it wouldn't happen now, but what an amazing story.)*

.....



Hark back to the toilet paper crises. Elbow greeting is one thing, but is this going a bit too far?

.....
A story from my own past (You may get a laugh out of it. I must say that I do).

I have had an interesting work life, lots of different jobs with many different experiences. At one stage, I was a security officer at Myer Melbourne in Bourke Street, which involved walking around, acting like any old shopper, whilst looking out for shoplifters, pickpockets and other villains. We worked in pairs to provide each other with security and collaboration. On this particular occasion, I had come back from Melbourne Magistrate's Court to the store and was trying to locate my work mate, waiting on a phone on the ground floor of the Lonsdale Street store while the switchboard made contact with her. (This was in the 70's, well before mobile phones.) Suddenly, I saw one of our regulars circling around the counter, checking me out. I pretended I was deep in conversation on the phone. She circled me several times, I took no notice whilst watching her surreptitiously, until she finally decided I was no threat to her and went across to the Bourke Street store. I quickly hung up the phone and followed her. She stole several items from various departments on the ground floor then left the store. I stopped her and took her to a security office, where police attended and took her to Russell Street. This lady was what you would now call a 'bag lady', she was basically homeless and stayed in a small hostel in Flemington Road for destitute women. Her name was Gwennie, she had would yell and swear loudly protesting her innocence to everyone in the vicinity whenever she was picked up. This is the background to my story. The following morning, she appeared at Melbourne Magistrate's Court before Mr Cuthill, who was the Senior Magistrate at that time. It was an extremely busy court, with many people having their cases heard, lots of solicitors, police, defendants, and others present, waiting their turn. When her case was called, I gave my evidence then Mr Cuthill asked her what she had to say. She thought about it, then said from the witness box, "Well, Your Worship, I saw this **BIG HEIFER** on the phone and I thought, 'Is she or isn't she? It just shows you how wrong you can be.'" The whole courtroom burst out laughing, Mr Cuthill guffawed into his hand, and I had to laugh too. When everyone settled down again, Mr Cuthill then said to her, "You have been locked up often and this time I am going to do something different with you. I'm going to release you on a Bond. What do you think of that?" She replied, "Oh, no. I'm really disappointed. I was hoping to get to see all the girls at Fairlea." (The women's prison in those days) More laughter as she was released grumbling to sign the paperwork for the Bond.

.....
Lois Makepeace and Noel Aplin (Bendigo) are missing dancing, particularly Tuesday nights at Kyneton. They realise that it will be quite some time before dancing is permitted again, but not enjoying having to stay distanced as time goes on, particularly now the winter has arrived. They send their love and best wishes to all.

.....



Leunig - From 'The Age' of 11 July 2020 – (A message for all of you who have 'decluttered'.)

.....
News from Riddell's Creek is that Mary Thornely is filling in time restoring furniture, Pam Brooks has decluttered her front and back gardens and, now that she is able to walk again without pain, is enjoying replanning and replanting, whilst Sheila Salas was making ice-cream for a friend and planning making a trellis for wisteria when I last spoke to her by phone. Along with these three ladies, Steve and I were planning to drive to Kilmore to check out Bill Darling's new home on the day that Mitchell Shire was placed into tight isolation so he, and we all, were most disappointed.

.....
I caught up by phone with Eileen Cardillo, who said she and Kelvin are managing social distancing quite well on the farm, their sons are visiting to help around the farm but staying outside for the most part, but they are only going out of town when they have something important to go for. She said to pass on best wishes to everyone.

.....
A good thing that happened was that I found a very old email from Phillip Brown, so, now that I have his email address, I can send this on to him. I am sure you would all join me in sending him our very best wishes and telling him that we really miss him, Ray and Garry. Keep practising your music, Phillip. One day in the future we will need you to lead us back to some level of competency at dancing.

.....
Don't forget that I would really appreciate it if you feel you could send me a thumbnail sketch of something from your life – maybe what you did for work or interests, holiday experiences which you enjoyed, what you do now for interest or volunteering. Most of us don't know each other very well and I think it would be interesting to have a little window into your life. Or send your favourite recipe, a rundown of the pastimes that fill in your retirement time, or just a favourite day in your life. It was suggested to me that it would be a good idea to include an accompanying photo for those who can't put a face to the name? Let me know whether you think this would be helpful or too intrusive.
.....