

# KYNETON & DISTRICT OLD TIME DANCE CLUB

## 'KEEPING IN TOUCH' NEWSLETTER No 15

10 FEBRUARY 2021

Firstly, I have some very sad news to pass on to those of you who have not already heard. Our dear friend and treasured club member, Don Clifford, passed away at his home yesterday (Tuesday 9 February) morning, with Marie at his side. Whilst he had been unwell for a long time, his death was a real shock.

Don had a great interest in people, he talked to everyone and, with great social skills, would welcome people in and bring them together as a group. Anyone who has been at a dance whilst Don was still able enough will remember how he would urge us on – “C’mon everybody, raise your voices and sing”. Then he would lead us through “Why, why, why, Delilah....etc.” Don had a very good singing voice, he told me once that he would have loved to have had singing lessons as a boy, but that these things weren’t available in a little country town like Macedon in the 1950’s.

Those of you who know ‘Donny’ will know what a fight he put up to stay on top of his illness.

At a personal level, as a child I lived across the road from Don, his parents and three brothers – his older sister was married by this time and had moved out. I was so lucky, as they treated me rather like a little sister. One of my memories, still quite vivid, was one quiet still night, as I lay in bed, someone was singing very loudly, but very tunefully, getting louder as it got closer – singing Johnny Ray ‘s “Cry”. It echoed around the mountains and hills. I knew it was Don on his way home from somewhere, just singing for the joy of singing.

When I started dancing in about 2007, it was great to renew my friendship with Don and his beloved Marie, the love of his life since they were very young. Marie has been there with such care and strength for Don all along and particularly through the years of his illness, a true and staunch life’s partner.

I am sure that I speak for all who knew Don when I pass on deepest sympathies to Marie, their three daughters and families, his two brothers and extended families.

The funeral details have not been finalised as yet, but it will probably be on Wednesday 17 February. Marie has said that she will let me know when they are definite, so that I can forward them on to you. Rest in peace, Don Clifford. Wherever you are, raise your voice and sing loud and clear.

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NB ----\*\*\*February 17 Club Lunch

The Club lunch planned for Wednesday next, 17 February, has been postponed out of respect for Don and the Clifford family, and to allow all of us who plan to attend Don’s funeral to do so. (See below for details of changed date)

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Therefore, the above Club Lunch has been changed to Wednesday 24 February - same place (Shamrock Hotel, Mollison St., Kyneton), same time (12ish for 12.30 start). If you wish to attend, please confirm with Julie Wilson on 0400 126 870 or by email reply at your earliest convenience. If you had booked for lunch on 17<sup>th</sup>, please re-book for the new date.

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January Lunch

On January 14, the Club held a luncheon to give all our dance friends – members and non-members – a chance to meet up for a meal and a chat, to have a few laughs and to see each other again. **We had 55 people attend what was a very happy day**, noisy with talk, laughter and just the joy of being together. The management looked after us very well and I think everyone enjoyed the meal. Thank you to all who did attend for helping make it such a good day. **Because this was such a great and happy event, we have planned a further lunch in February (details above).**

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### **March Lunch**

We are also planning to have another lunch on **Sunday 21 March**. A request was made for a Sunday event, so that those of you who work through the week can attend. Put this date into your diary and let me know if you are interested. *(More details shortly.)*

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It is with sadness that we also note the recent death of Elsie Jackson. Many of you, who have been involved with dancing at Kyneton over the years, will remember Elsie, who was a keen member of the dance community all her life.

Bill Darling, who knew Elsie well, has written a few thoughts about her for this letter. He says – “Vale Elsie Jackson, a founding member of the K&DOTDC, was a very active member of the dancing community prior to the formation of the Club. She recalled to Bill going to dances, riding on a farm cart from Newbury, where she often spent weekends with family friends, and where she met her husband, Charlie. Retiring to Trentham, Elsie took an active part in the local dancing community and supported the formation of the present club. Along with Dick Green, she organised bus outings to various venues around the state, which helped to establish the core of the Club, where membership doubled in the first year. She is now at rest with her husband in the Commemorative Wall at Trentham Cemetery.”

*(Thankyou, Bill, for your memories of Elsie Jackson and her input into the early days of K&DOTDC)*

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### **Memorial Service for Beverley Kingston**

In mid-2020, we reported that **Bev Kingston**, who was a previous Club President some years ago, had passed away. Because it was during the strict Covid restrictions, it was not possible for her to have a traditional farewell. For those of you who knew Bev, **a Memorial Service to celebrate her life will be held at the Jubilee Chapel, cnr Clarendon & Inkerman Sts., Maryborough on this Friday, 12 February 2021, commencing at 2pm.** (Phelan Funeral Services in Maryborough will officiate.)

*(I apologise for this late notice, hopefully it will arrive in time for you to attend, if you want to participate.)*

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**Jo White**, who is very much part of the dance community in so many places, had surgery on her lower back on January 28, something which sounded to me to be quite BIG. She is now in **rehab for 3 weeks at Brunswick Private Hospital** and says she is recovering slower than she would like but she IS getting there. I know that we wish her a successful recovery so that she can get back to the dance floor. Best wishes to you and Keith, Jo.

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It is very frustrating and disappointing to hear of the latest Covid numbers, where cases are again growing in the Melbourne metropolitan area. It really is a war we are fighting, against an unseen and highly mobile enemy. It seems that we need to continue our vigilance and compliance, we are not yet able to relax and drift into complacency however unlikely it seems that this disease will infiltrate into rural Victoria. It does appear that, with the best of intentions, it only takes one visitor from somewhere else or one visit to a potential hot spot to possibly create real and debilitating havoc. Please be careful, keep safe and stay patient – we love and need you all to come safely through this ongoing and savage virus.

To our friends in metro areas, we are thinking of you as this latest scare evolves, hopefully brought quickly under control. You have had to put up with so much frustration and isolation from family and friends over the past twelve months and done so well. Then it pops up again and you have, once more, to restrict your movements and contacts. Please, keep safe and hang in there.

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*This is just a short letter to inform you at the earliest possible time of the loss of our Donny, Elsie's passing, information on Bev's memorial service tomorrow, and the February lunch change of date. Best wishes to you all. Keep your news coming in. I will let you know the details of Don's funeral.* JW

