



Ballroom Dance Society

Silver Slipper

February 2009

President's Corner

By Andy Mundy

I read that ballroom dancing was good for both body and mind. Apparently, it can even help prevent the onset of Alzheimer's. So, I wasn't worried at a dance the other night when a lady asked me my name. I replied "Just give me a minute; it'll come back to me". She said "What will?"

Learning to dance requires concentration and some memory. It's great for keeping the body fit but also exercises the mind – one complements the other. Trouble is, it is hard enough trying to remember some of the steps, let alone how to do them, how to lead them or the hundred and one other things such as footwork, body position, posture or timing.

When I first learned to dance I even had problems recognizing the music but, with practise and experience, I learned the difference between rumba and foxtrot, and between quickstep and jive.

How does one remember dance steps? For many beginners the easiest way is to learn a set number of prescribed steps in a particular order. But, dancing routines creates problems beyond the beginner's level. One partner will remember the routine differently from the other; one or both may forget it; it can become boring to dance the same sequence repetitively; it does not teach how to lead or follow; it relies on both partners knowing the routine – one cannot dance with someone else who does not know it.

Without a routine we improvise and choose the order of steps, taxing the memory even more - we also have to remember which figures can be preceded by or followed by which others.

Forget the names of figures? Don't worry - just give the step a name you can relate to. For many years the ball change in samba was known to me only as a "dinky-doo"; the outside change in waltz was known as the "walkie, walkie, side"; dancing a switch in the waltz was referred to as the "change your mind"; contra-botafogos were called the "pat-a-cake". All these terms were very descriptive of the movement and so became easy to remember. Invent some of your own if it helps.

I knew the foxtrot amalgamation of feather step, open telemark, passing natural and outside swivel as "the 10½" because that's how many steps it took to perform. Whatever works for you is fine but please don't ask your instructor to revise "that twiddly bit" because he won't have a clue what you are talking about.

AM

Tickets for the New Island Fantasy Ball

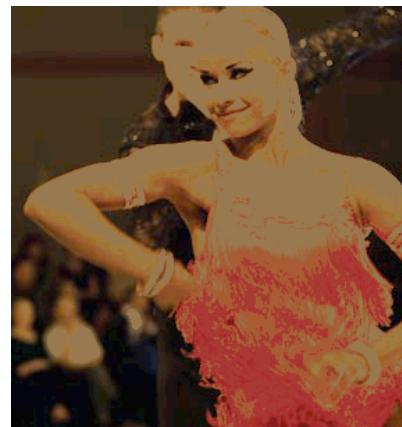


The IFB will, for the first time, be a 2-day event in 2009. The 2-day schedule leaves room for several events new to the IFB; these include open Adult and Senior I Championships in both standard and Latin. The open amateur championship will feature cash prizes and invited international competitors - raising the standard of performance to a new level. The BC Closed Championships now include Senior I and II events as well as Adult.

Check the schedule for events on Saturday daytime, Saturday evening and Sunday daytime. All the details are posted on the IFB web page at www.islandfantasyball.com. Tickets will be on sale, to members only, at the dance on February 6 starting at 7:00 p.m. in the lobby at Bowen Park, and will go on sale to the public on February 7. Pick up a ticket order form that explains the range of tickets available, and then see Dave Stevenson to buy your tickets.

In the Comps

Watch this space for news about Snow Ball Classic 2009 (February 13 to 15) and future competitions. In fact, if you are competing or just attending, please send in your stories!



Minutes, in a Nutshell

The NBDS Board met on January 31. Here are the highlights.

1. Income and expenses are running very close to the expected rates with a net loss to date of approximately \$1900. Attendance at DanceSport practices has been increasing and revenue from drop-in fees better than expected. A grant was received (much appreciated) from the City of Nanaimo in support of the IFB. About 1/3 of members have renewed their memberships so far in 2009 (similar to previous years).
2. Plans are under way for the next dances at Bowen such as promotion for Movies Night on April 3. Vicki will need extra help with set-up due to her new job schedule.
3. The Nanoose committee reported positive feedback on the trial of bar service. Toni Bowen has taken over coordination of decorations and is doing a great job, and Barbara Yee has been providing the food – much appreciated.
4. The IFB will be a 2 day event this year, with invited amateur open championship competitors rather than a professional show couple.
5. Joyce Welford will return to Nanaimo to teach a pre-dance cha cha workshop on April 3, and the Bradley Centre has been booked for a series of workshops on Saturday April 4.
6. Further improvements were made to the guidelines manual to incorporate changes in committee structure over the last two years.

The next board meeting will be on Saturday, May 9, 2009.

Instructional Workshops

Workshops are scheduled on the calendar on our web page at www.ballroomnanaimo.ca. The next NBDS pre-dance workshop will be on February 21 at Nanoose when Gwen Spinks will teach West Coast Swing. Dave and Norma will teach a waltz workshop at Bowen on March 6, 2009.

Weekly Practices

Practices are scheduled for Tuesday and Thursday evenings at Nanoose, and before each regular dance. **NEW!** We now have Sunday practices also, two or three days per month. Check the practice calendar on the web site: www.ballroomnanaimo.ca. Drop-in fees are \$2.50 per person for the weekday practices and pre-dance practices are free.

Video Library

Videos can be a very helpful aid when practising at home. Videos are available (two at a time) at no charge to current NBDS members for a three-week period. Contact our librarian, Bruce Joiner, to sign out a DVD or video.

Calendar Updates

The 2009 dance calendar is now posted on our web site. Don't forget to take a look occasionally to check for updates. The workshop topics and instructors for January to **July 2009** are now posted, as are the planned DJs for the regular dances.

COMING EVENTS

MONTHLY DANCES

Second Friday Dance at Royal Canadian Legion

1630 E. Wellington Rd., Nanaimo.

Next Dance: Friday, February 13, 2009

7:30 – 10:30 pm Cost: \$5

Hosts: Dave & Norma Stevenson 751-8669

Email: evads@shaw.ca

Valentines Dance

Forever Yung Dance Studio

Sunday, February 15, 2009, 2:00 to 4:30

Cost: \$8 (pot luck)

Host: Ken Yung: yungdance@live.ca

NBDS "Third Saturday" at Nanoose

Next Dance: Valentines Dance February 21, 2009

7:30 Workshop: West Coast Swing with Gwen Spinks

8:30 – 11:30 Dance

Music: Latin & Standard ballroom by Norm Whelpdale

Milonga at Norm's Place

Next dance: Sunday February 22, 2009 at 5:00

Cost: \$7

Music: 90% Argentine tango by Gwen

Host: Gwen Spinks (wannadance@shaw.ca)

NBDS First Friday Dance at Bowen Park,

Next Dance Friday, March 6, 2009

7:30 Workshop: Waltz by Dave & Norma Stevenson

8:30 - 11:30pm Dancing

Music: Latin & standard ballroom by Dave Stevenson

Salsa at Basque

Every Thursday from 8:30

Cost \$ includes lesson

Host: Chris Wood and Warren Scott

See the full colour version of the Silver Slipper on line at www.ballroomnanaimo.ca.

The Silver Slipper is published occasionally by the Nanaimo Ballroom Dance Society. The editor is John Maher (johnmaher@shaw.ca). Please send any dance related news that you think would be of interest to NBDS members and guests. If you don't send something, we may have to make something up about you, which could be worse than not sending something in your own words. Please share your stories! Thanks.

PS, if you don't send me your photos I will use the ones I have...

John