
Silver Slipper

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Nanaimo Ballroom Dance Society

Island Fantasy Ball

With months of planning, the big day finally arrived. The morning started with Louise Severn commandeering her team of underlings blowing up trillions of balloons, climbing up and down ladders putting up silhouettes, signs, banners and lights on the walls, placing center pieces and flower vases on tables, setting up wine glasses with pink paper napkins, getting the competition trophies in place etc. etc. etc. Under the able guidance of our respectable leader and the sweat and smiles of our volunteer members, the place was transformed in a matter of hours (more like all morning and a few hours in the afternoon) from a plain hall to a grand ballroom.

While Louise and her team of slaves were busy with the hall decorations, Chester Scott, our booze man, with the help of his able assistants, Sieggy Fredrich and Edmond Leung, were uncorking and sniffing the booze at the bar (I mean unloading and stacking - sorry guys, typed too fast!) getting them ready for the evening.

Up on stage our Music DJ, Nelson Wong, was setting up the stage lights and music equipment with the light and sound technicians from Beban Park, blasting us once in a while with music intertwined with static while trying out the sound system, and that was entertainment for the volunteers. This year, a practice session was set up for competitors between 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. and according to Ed Hong, who looked after the music during this time, it worked out really well because this pre-scheduled time prevented competitors from drifting in any hour of the day while the hall was being decorated.



A delicious meal was served by Diners Rendezvous. Then the Pacific Gael Pipeband opened the event with a grand march joined in by our members, competitors and spectators. The evening ran fairly smoothly but there were a few minor problems such as the music equipment going bonkers a few times (don't blame the DJ, it was the remote microphone receiver), a T.V. camera man being hassled by some guests, squabbling between the Judges and the M.C., running out of wine (but thanks to Chester who whipped out to get some more, the wine was replenished in no time).

Over 40 couples from Nanaimo, Victoria, Vancouver and as far as Issaquah, Washington, U.S.A. competed in the Standard and Latin divisions. The four couples who represented Nanaimo in the competitions were Robert Creese and

Jane Garcia, John and Tina Maher, Bruce Joiner and Marilyn Metcalfe-Joiner, David Duncan and Evelyn Matthews. They all did exceptionally well with Robert Creese and Jane Garcia placing second in both the Newcomer Standard and Latin divisions; and with David Duncan and Evelyn Matthews placing fifth in Gold Standard, Fourth in Pre-Champ Standard and Third in Bronze Latin. Way to go guys, we are all very proud of you!

Following the competitions, we were honored with a spectacular and mesmerizing performance by the renowned Pierre Allaire and Mireille Veilleux, the 12-time Canadian Professional Standard and Canadian Professional 10 Dance Champions from Montreal, Quebec. Their list of titles include British Rising Star Latin Champions, North American Champions, Grand Finalists at the World Championships. They were also winners of the International Championships in Montreal and the

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Ohio Star Ball Championships, and were recent recipients of the Feather Award for the Most Outstanding Couple outside U.S.A. For those who had only seen them compete on television at the Ohio Star Ball Championship, this was a great chance to finally meet and see them in person for they had announced their retirement from professional competition following their victory in the Closed Canadian Professional Standard Championship held on February 9, 1996 in Montreal.

Not to be outdone by Pierre & Mireille, Louise Severn and Irene Scott also performed their best by putting on a wonderful feast at the reception which was held at the end of the evening. It was enjoyed by all who attended and gave everyone a chance to mingle and meet others.

The evening was a tremendous success with a sold out crowd of over 500. Again, this would not have been possible without all the volunteer help from the members. Three cheers for every one who helped.

Be sure to mark your calendars for next year's Island Fantasy Ball which will be held on Saturday, May 3, 1997.

Dance Facts

If you are wondering why every one is now calling the "Modern" style of dancing "Standard", it is because internationally "Modern" was often confused with Jazz and Modern Dances and that is why the term "Standard" is now used to prevent this confusion.

What does B.C.A.D.A. stand for. It means British Columbia Amateur Dancesport Association and is a provincial organization. Competitions held in B.C. are sanctioned by B.C.A.D.A. There are five provincial organizations, B.C., Alberta, Atlantic Canada, Ontario and Quebec. These five provincial organizations which currently has about 1,000 members make up C.A.D.A., the Canadian Amateur Dancesport Association. C.A.D.A. sanctions numerous competitions including the Canadian Closed Championships. The winners of the Canadian Closed Championships represent Canada at the World Championships. C.A.D.A. in turn is part of I.D.S.F., the International Dance Sport Federation which has over 300,000 active

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competition couples in over 60 countries. (Isn't this confusing or what!)

Do you know that the Standard and Latin International Style Dance Syllabus have been revised by the Canadian Dance Teachers Association in September, 1995 and adopted by B.C.A.D.A. at the Annual General Meeting on May 26, 1996 and to take effect on July 21, 1996, the day following the Okanagan Ballroom Classic in Penticton. Competitors, please adhere to the current syllabus until then.

Meet Our Local Competitors

Robert Creese and Jane Garcia

Rob and Jane are relatively new to Nanaimo, they moved here since 1995. Rob started dancing in 1989 when he signed up for ballroom dance lessons at the West End Community Centre in Vancouver. Jane, on the other hand, had only started dancing in 1992 after she met Rob. They had both taken West Coast Swing classes and basically just social danced until they came to Nanaimo.

They enrolled themselves in ballroom dance classes in Nanaimo and found them to be very enjoyable. With encouragement and support from their instructor, they decided to enter into the Newcomer's Standard and Latin events at the recent Island Fantasy Ball Competition. They did very well and came away with second placing in both the Standard and Latin events.

When asked if they will compete in the upcoming Dance Pacifica Competition on June 8, 1996 in Victoria, Rob indicated that he finds that he cannot concentrate on dancing in the summer months and would like to take a break until the fall. Jane, however, doesn't mind competing again in June but without a partner it will be quite difficult. Jane's favorite dance is the Quickstep. Rob's least favorite dance is the Cha Cha.

John and Tina Maher

John and Tina moved to Nanaimo in 1992 from Toronto. Tina had always loved to dance and

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when John landed a job in Nanaimo, Tina refused to move out here until John could find a place where she could dance. If it wasn't for Nanaimo Ballroom Dance Society, I guess John and Tina will still be in Toronto.

They took up ballroom dance lessons in 1990 in Toronto. As Tina is a natural with dancing, she was learning faster than John. In order to keep up with Tina, John had to sneak off to take private lessons so Tina couldn't tell him what to do.

After they arrived in Nanaimo, they immediately became a member of our Society and had been taking dance lessons since. Their very first competition was at the 1993 Island Fantasy Ball where they entered into the Newcomer's Standard and Latin divisions. They remembered this competition very well because they happened to be in Vancouver that day and had to travel back to Nanaimo for the event. They didn't even have a Latin routine until when they were on the ferry back the date of the competition where they made one up and practiced it on the car deck of the ferry. Even with a last minute routine, they placed third in Latin and sixth in Standard.

Their goal is to have a good time. Their favorite dance is the Rumba in Latin and Slow Foxtrot in Standard.

Bruce and Marilyn Joiner

Bruce and Marilyn started dancing in 1990 when their friends asked them to join them in taking dance lessons at Bowen Park. They both enjoyed the dance lessons and had carried on since. Although they adore their children, Charla, age 12 and Devon, age 6, they find that dancing gives them a break from the kids, as well it is something that they can do together.

Their first competition was at the Snowball Classic in Vancouver in 1992. They remember being very nervous at the competition and Marilyn thought that Bruce looked like he was going to die on the floor. A year later they competed again at the Newcomer level in the 1993 Island Fantasy Ball and placed third in Standard and Fourth in Latin. Their latest accomplishment was placing eighth in Bronze Standard at this year's UBC Gala Ball.

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The comment I hear about the partnership of "Marilyn and Bruce" is that "they never argue". Marilyn's favorite dances are the Rumba and Viennese Waltz and Bruce likes the Samba.

David Duncan and Evelyn Matthews

The dance partnership between David and Evelyn was established about two and a half years ago. David had danced classical ballet for ten years before switching to ballroom dancing when he found that ballet was too strenuous on his back because of the lifting he had to do. Evelyn is married to Ray and has a 4 year old little boy named Erik.

Both David and Evelyn grew up in the Okanagan and they had known each other for at least 25 years. They cannot agree on as to "who asked who" to start ballroom dancing.

Their first competition was the 1994 Island Fantasy Ball where they entered into the Newcomer's events and placed first in Standard and third in Latin. Ever since, they have been competing in as many competitions as they could possibly make in each year and usually placing in the top three. They had even travelled as far as Montreal, Quebec to compete at the prestigious La Classique du Quebec in February of this year and placing second in the Over 35 Gold Standard event.

They practice between 6 to 10 hours each week. David's incentive for practising is "the donuts" they go for after each practice. David's goal is to dance in the B.C. Championship while Evelyn wishes to keep both family and dance priorities in perspective. Their favorite dance changes one day from the next because one day they would feel really good with one dance and the next day that dance would feel really awful. They, however, prefer the Standard dances over the Latin dances.

Much Music

by *John Maher*

At the fall executive meeting, some of our more forward thinking senior members pointed out that the average age of NBDS members was rising, and that unless something was

done to recruit and retain younger members, the society would soon disappear. Proposed actions included putting on demonstration dances or lessons at Friday night dances, and playing “younger” music at dances, as ways to retain graduates of dance classes, few of whom come to the Friday night dances more than once.

To start off the idea of lessons, the Music Committee polled those who attended two dances in December and January for your opinions on the subject. You said you wanted lessons and demos, and would come a half hour earlier to start (i.e. 8:00 PM start) for a lesson. You said you wanted lessons, in order of popularity, in Emmerdale Waltz, Paso Doble, Tango, Square Tango, Mambo, Rumba, and others. At recent dances we provided demos and lessons, after the break. Many thanks to Peter Willis (line dances), Nelson and Pinky (Macarena), the Barnetts (Jive line dance) and Melanie Ransom (Argentine Tango).

This has not gone down well with some members who have complained about the amount of time being taken away from dancing. “There are other places where line dancing can be done, why do we need to do it on Friday night instead of ballroom dancing?” they say. The Music Committee therefore does not plan any further demos or lessons after the break, and will add a lesson to the program at 8:00 when there is a commitment at least 2 weeks in advance (to allow announcement at the previous dance) from an instructor. The person doing the music will be delighted to accept a commitment from an instructor for 8:00, preferably in one of the requested dances.

Regarding “younger” music, the type of music most warmly received at dances has been carefully evaluated. People at dance classes have asked why ballroom dance music has to sound like elevator music. You have clapped, sent notes, asked for repeats, and commented on the ones you liked (when EVERYONE is up dancing, the tune must be at least satisfactory). There were specific requests for more pop tunes, more vocals, less vocals, and new tunes. Ten new CDs were purchased, selected from those on sale at The Grand Ballroom after listening to each, that best fit what you requested (we now have 85 CDs in the club collection). However, when all-new CDs were played on May 17, there were complaints from the corner tables

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about the number of vocals (“crap”; “strange”). There was a suggestion that the music should be all instrumental, like the Tuesday morning seniors classes.

There is a sign-up board at each dance for duties such as preparing food, the door and tables, and music. So far this year, ONLY ONE person has signed up to do the music (and a big thanks to Jim and Della Burrell).

If you would like to apply your taste in music, you are encouraged to make a selection from the NBDS collection and/or other CDs, and play them for all of us at a dance. Any member of the Music Committee would be delighted to show you how to operate the system. If you have a request for a particular selection or type of music for the next dance, please contact the person doing the music for that dance as shown on the sign-up board.

Upcoming Events

Saturday, June 8, 1996 - Dance Pacifica '96 featuring “Vancouver Island Open Championships”, Saanich Commonwealth Place, Victoria, tickets \$45.00 front row \$40.00 2nd row includes dinner, Contact: Nelson Wong 758-7007 for ticket information.

Saturday, June 20, 1996 - The Okanagan Ballroom Classic, Trade and Convention Centre Ballroom, Penticton, tickets \$20.00 front row, \$17.50 2nd row, Contact: Nelson Wong 758-7007 for ticket information.

Saturday, June 22, 1996 - World Class Latin Shows with Corky & Shirley Ballas, The Grand Ballroom, Richmond, tickets \$36.00, Contact: Nelson Wong 758-7007 for ticket information.

Saturday, January 25, 1997 - Snowball Classic featuring IDSF “Open to the World” Competition, Hyatt Regency Hotel, Vancouver, Contact: Nelson Wong 758-7007 for ticket information.

Editor

