

**IN SEQUENCE DANCE**  
**AUTUMN NEWS LETTER**  
**SEPTEMBER 2023 – NOVEMBER 2023**

Looking out at yet another dismal rainy day, I can't quite believe that we are looking towards the autumn season already. It seems only a little while ago that I was preparing our Spring Newsletter, with all the excitement and anticipation of the new year, and the hope of a long and warm summer ahead of us. But summer is not over yet, so let's hold on to the prospect of warmer and sunnier times ahead before we are plunged into the grey of winter.

This year has, however, been an eventful one and Colin & I are so grateful that so many of you shared our amazing journey thus far.

We do not want to become "wedding bores", so we shall just say a big thank you to those of you who shared the day with us. We deeply regret that we were not able to spend more time with each of you on the day, but somehow there always seemed to be something needing our attention, and to be honest, the whole event wooshed by in something of a big blur. It was sad that a few people were unable to attend due to illness/accident or prior engagement, and of course, they were sorely missed. There are, of course, some of you for whom we were unable to extend an invitation, and if this is you, please accept our apologies. We would have loved to have been able to invite all of our dance friends, but hall capacity and budget dictated our limits. I hope you understand and forgive us.

Colin and I would also like to thank all of you who gave us gifts (despite our protestations on the matter). We will treasure every reminder of that glorious day.

As we mentioned at the reception, after more than a year trying to find a new house, we took the decision this Easter to put in an application to purchase my council house here in Hutton. It was never our intention to make a home in either of our previous properties, but to find something new to us both. However, our search was taking us so far North into the county that continuing our businesses would have been virtually impossible, and so we reluctantly decided to try and stay put for the foreseeable future. Fortunately, our application was agreed, and we are now in the hands of solicitors awaiting the final stages of the purchase. This has now enabled us to look to the future of our respective businesses with a little more certainty. We are very grateful for the financial gifts we received, both in cash and vouchers and, where possible, these will be used in the coming months to transform my old house into our home.

Also, I just wanted to confirm that I have NOT changed my name. I am still being known as Miss Woodward, and not Mrs White. I love Colin dearly but have no desire to give up my identity.

On a final note, if anyone has any pictures of the day, we would be grateful if you could share them with us.

OK, enough about Colin & I – on to the important stuff:

## **CLUB**

Firstly, thank you for persevering with the difficult parking situation we face each Thursday evening. Please do remember that, if the car park is full, there are no parking restrictions along the road to the side of the hall.

It has been lovely to see the return of some old friends recently, especially welcoming June back from her visit to Thailand and it was lovely to see Sue & Mick the other week, especially as I know Thursday evenings are tricky for them. And a very big warm welcome to Mark & Debs who joined us for the first time on the Hen & Stag night, and it is wonderful that we did not put them off and they returned last week.

And also to Debbie & Dave who have been joining us for some weeks now, and Susan who joined us two weeks ago.

It is also lovely that we have the company of Ian & Eileen throughout August, as their Thursday dance class is taking a summer break.

Our thoughts and best wishes go to those who have been unable to join us for a while, especially Ernie & Carol and Gordon & Brenda. We wish Ernie and Gordon speedy recoveries. Best wishes also to Martin who faces a medical procedure this month.

## **NEW REFRESHER SPOT**

Our 15 minute refresher has been warmly received, and I thank all of you who have come along throughout June/July to learn the lovely Rumba Sirocco.

Last week we started a new refresher (although brand new to a lot of you) for the Mojito Mambo. We will continue to go through this dance in small sections throughout the remainder of August and, hopefully, we shall then have another new sequence dance to add to our repertoire.

Going forward into the autumn season, please let me know if there are any dances you would like to break down and learn or refresh, and I shall schedule them in over the coming months

## **LESSONS**

We have some very exciting news in respect of lessons. We are very lucky to be able to welcome our new instructor, Karen Gardiner (Kazdance) to the club. Karen has been teaching Colin and myself for many years, and recently started teaching her advanced ballroom class at Ramsden Bellhouse from 6.30pm – 7.30pm each Thursday. Karen is a qualified IDTA instructor (Licentiate level), and we are honoured that she has agreed to start a new Beginner's Ballroom & Latin American Class commencing Thursday 7th September. We shall be doing a little rescheduling to accommodate this. The advanced ballroom class will now run 6.30pm – 7.15pm with the new beginner's class 7.15pm – 8pm. Both classes cost £5 per person, although the beginners class will be sold as a 4 week course £20 so that we can monitor its success. If there are enough pupils to make it viable, classes going forward will be on a "pay as you go" basis.

Therefore, regrettably, there will be no sequence classes during the month of September. We are continuing as usual throughout August 7.30pm – 8pm and this Thursday we shall be looking at the Tango Sereda. These 30 minute classes cost £4 per person (reduced to £3 per person if then staying for the club night). I shall review the sequence classes in October and accommodate if anyone is interested. There is a possibility I may re-introduce on a Thursday night, but more likely I shall consider Saturday Workshops, either before our monthly socials or on a bespoke basis. I also have the option of holding one to one classes at the community space in Tesco on the A127. So if there are dances you wish to learn, please speak to me and we shall work something out.

## **SATURDAY SOCIALS**

Our next Saturday social is on 19th August, 8pm – 10.15pm. Cost £5 per person including tea/coffee & cake. We took the decision a couple of months ago to change the format of our Saturday socials and make them akin to our Thursday evening instead of a 3 hour dance night. This proved very popular in June, and we shall be keeping this for the foreseeable future, with the exception of our Christmas dance on 16th December. We are keeping these gatherings limited to current club members, previous members (both Ramsden Bellhouse and Doddinghurst) and current and former pupils, A great opportunity to catch up with friends, have a good old chat and a few dances. So whether you regularly attend each Thursday or used to attend one of the former clubs or classes, these socials are just for you.

Further dates are Saturday 16th September; 21st October; 18th November.

## **SUNDAY EVENTS**

As I mentioned last time, the tea dances have not proven to be popular, and I have now cancelled the last scheduled tea dance. In November. I do still have the hall booked for Sunday 3rd September, and if there is sufficient support, I am considering holding a tea dance in conjunction with the Macmillan Coffee Morning Appeal, with all proceeds going to the charity. Please let me know your thoughts, as, if there is insufficient interest, I will need to cancel the hall booking shortly.

## **CHARITY EVENTS**

Our first charity event took place on Sunday 2nd July. A huge thank you to Steve and Janet who put together a wonderful quiz night for us all. I think everyone enjoyed themselves, and I am pleased to announce that we made a staggering £600 for the Village Hall charity “Billericay Food Bank”. The money has been paid into the Village Hall charity account and will be added to the annual total which will be presented to a representative of the food bank at the AGM next year.

Our next charity event was 13th July, when we took the decision to accept donations at our Hen & Stag night to support the Village Hall charity. Again, your generosity was astounding, and I presented the Village Hall with a cheque for £130.00. They were very appreciative of our efforts.

## THEME NIGHTS

Despite a blisteringly hot day resulting in very soft ice cream, our Jolly Hollies theme night was a great success. So I am pleased to announce that the next theme night 24th August will proceed as scheduled. This is our Aloha Hawaiian night. So please feel free to dress in colourful attire and celebrate with us with Hawaiian punch and fruit platters (make a change from cakes, doesn't it?)

Looking into the autumn, we shall be cheering ourselves up with the following frolics:

Thursday 7th September – Back to School – we did this last year, and it was a good laugh. So look out your old school tie or prefects uniform. You may even get homework.

Thursday 28th September – Harvest Feast – ival. Again, we did this last year but a little bit of a twist this year. We are calling this The Great Ballroom Bake Off. Like last year, bring a small food donation for us all to share, but this year we make it a home bake. This can either be sweet or savoury and only needs to be a small amount but has to be home made. Who will be crowned “star baker”. I am going to have the night off from baking and provide crisps & drinks.

Thursday 26th October – It's that spooky time of year again. This year, the theme is Terror on the High Seas (Pirate theme). So get those parrots and eye patches out of the closet.

Thursday 2nd November – All That Sparkles – As we approach bonfire night let's light up the skies with some fireworks of our own whilst enjoying hot dogs and hot soup – YUMMY. Wrap up warm.

## LOOKING FORWARD

Just a couple of things to consider looking further ahead. Firstly, Steve has very kindly offered to organise another quiz night with a Christmas theme. I will liaise with him, and we shall arrange a date for this event shortly.

Another thing I am considering. New Year's Eve. I know that Margaret & Selva will be hosting their wonderful New Year's Eve dance this year, and I am aware that there are some of you who will be attending this. It is not my intention to detract from their event, or to try to encourage anyone away from their dance. However, it did occur to me that it may be nice to do something as a club. Obviously I am aware that, for some of you, this is a family time, and you will have made other arrangements, or you just prefer not to celebrate New Year at all. But there may be others who would appreciate seeing in 2024 with friends. So this is my idea: 8pm – 9pm reception with buffet and drinks. 9pm – 10pm games (pass the parcel, charades etc) followed by tea and bikkies, then some dancing for a couple of hours followed by Big Ben & Auld Lang Syne and last waltz, finishing just after 12pm. I would obviously have to check this with the Village Hall but thought I would put some feelers out first to see if anyone is interested. Please do let me know. I won't be offended if you think it's a bad idea but would rather know up front.

## **FINALLY – I PROMISE**

I think this is probably the longest newsletter to date, but I have so much bubbling away now that I know we are not moving away, and I am very excited to take the club forwards. To this end, I am in the process of amalgamating my website ([www.insequencedance.com](http://www.insequencedance.com)) with a new club domain ([www.ramsdenbellhousedanceclub.com](http://www.ramsdenbellhousedanceclub.com)). I currently have my website off line while I build a new format which will incorporate club events, sequence lessons and our new Ballroom & Latin American lessons. Please bear with me as I am not a natural at this sort of thing, but I hope it will give wider exposure in respect of our activities.

In the last newsletter I mentioned updating the members list to include birthdays, anniversaries etc. Some of you have responded, but my apologies, I have put this on the back burner at present as I shall be producing new membership forms for everyone so that you can chose how much (if any) information you wish to share with the club.

However, I am hoping to put together some WhatsApp groups for general updates to you all, so I would appreciate knowing whether or not you are WhatsApp users, as that will make my life a lot easier going forward.

My last point relates to our commitment to the village hall again. I am obliged to take a fund raising stall at the village hall Christmas Bazaar, which this year is 25<sup>th</sup> November. I have offered to make and sell decorated Christmas Cakes, but I shall be asking for your support. Obviously this is not a cheap thing to produce, so I shall be imposing on you within the coming months for donations of mixed fruit, margarine, flour, sugar etc. I shall work out what quantities of ingredients I need, and I shall break them into small, inexpensive chunks. Your help will be much appreciated.

As always, thank you for your support and please share any ideas for events and/or improvements. This is your club and Colin and we merely the custodians.

***Leigh & Colin***